A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AND CHRISTIAN PRACTICES AMONG MILLENNIALS

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
By
Nancy Watkins Flanagan

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA
2021
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ABSTRACT

While emotions management is critical to effective leadership, literature describes present and emerging leaders in the millennial generation as not being proficient at managing their emotions. If this is true, how could the Christian community promote leadership development for millennials? Toward determining if a connection exists between emotions management and faith, this non-experimental quantitative correlational study explored the relationship, if any, between millennials’ emotional competence and Christian practices. Survey instrumentation was employed. The survey included two validated instruments, one for emotional competence and the other for spiritual growth. Study invitations were emailed to 395 millennials at a church in VA’s Richmond metro region. The electronic survey was available for four weeks. A sample of 45 millennials participated in the study. Results showed a statistically significant positive correlation between emotional competence and three of four Spiritual Development Modes: (a) growing with God, (b) growing with the Word, and (c) growing with others. There was no statistically significant correlation between emotional competence and critical reflection.

Keywords: leadership, emotional intelligence, emotional competence, Christian practices or Christian disciplines, spiritual formation or spiritual growth, millennials
Dedication

I dedicate my research and this dissertation to the memory of my parents, Eddie and Grace Crawley Watkins. Along with my siblings, mom and dad showed me love beyond measure and personified Christ’s love in a blended family. I am eternally grateful to my husband (Donnell) and my children (Stacey Edward and Grace) for their patience, open-mindedness, and support as I relinquished time with them in favor of this work. To God be the glory for His sustaining power, His guidance, and His love as He nurtured me throughout this process. In Him, I shall bear fruit...
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With humble gratitude, I acknowledge the shepherds at ABC church who provided me access to the sheep whom God had entrusted to their care. I loved and learned from them – the millennials. Thank you all for your support and encouragement. God has begun a “good work” in me… (Philippians 1:6).
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List of Abbreviations

Bible Reading and Study (BR)
Christian Spiritual Performance Profile (CSPP)
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)
Confidence Level (CL)
Critical Reflection (CR)
Emotional Competence (EC)
Evangelism (E)
Fellowship (F)
Global Emotional Competence (GEC)
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Intelligence Quotient (IQ)
Inter-personal (Inter)
Intra-personal (Intra)
Margin of Error (ME)
Meditation (M)
Prayer (P)
Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC)
Questionnaire-Topic-Statement chart (QTS)
Repentance (R)
Richmond Metro Statistical Area (MSA)
Service (Se)
Spiritual Development Mode (SDM)
Spiritual Development Mode: Growing through critical reflection (SDM-CR)

Spiritual Development Mode: Growing through a relationship with God (SDM-G)

Spiritual Development Mode: Growing through a relationship with others (SDM-O)

Spiritual Development Mode: Growing through a relationship with the Word (SDM-W)

Stewardship (St)

United States of America (U.S.)

Worship (W)
CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

Introduction

The impetus for this research surfaced during the turn of the 21st century when persons in the millennial generation (born from 1981 through 1996) began entering the workforce. Entering the workplace along with them were values about work that often competed with the values of existing staff, primarily persons in the baby boomer generation. Jassawalla and Sashittal (2017) describe work scenarios full of generational conflict and contention. Millennials entered the workforce “with attitudes and behaviors older coworkers and supervisors found aberrant” (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017, p. 644). Competing viewpoints laid the foundation for conflict – conflict that these researchers presented as having been initiated aggressively by millennials often as emotional responses to perceived hurt. Inappropriate emotional responses, such as aggression and conflict, may indicate emotional immaturity or low emotional intelligence.

Research studies have shown that millennials have difficulty with emotional intelligence or one of its derivatives, empathy (Dolby, 2014; Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017).

As of 2016, the millennial generation became the largest in the American workforce (Fry, 2018). Eventually persons in the millennial generation will lead every aspect of life: family, church, government, and work. Given the literature claim that millennials have difficulty with emotional intelligence, is the next generation ready to assume leadership roles?

Effective leadership relies on emotional intelligence (Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011). To understand millennials as America’s present and emerging leaders, this study sought to measure emotional
competence\(^1\) within a segment of the millennial generation. Previous studies have shown a connection between emotional intelligence and religiosity (Hartman, 2015) or between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence (Malik, 2017). Based on the previous findings, this study measured the Christian practices of persons in the millennial generation in addition to measuring emotional competence. Participation in Christian practices or disciplines leads to spiritual growth (Smith, 2009; Thayer, 2004) which may influence emotional competence.

This chapter provides an overview of this study’s topic, its background, and the problem which compels the study. Taking a social science research approach, the aforementioned information will be followed by the research purpose statement, research questions, hypotheses, as well as assumptions and delimitations of this study. Chapter One includes a section which defines key terms. The chapter ends with discussion of the study’s significance and a summary of the study’s design.

**Background to the Problem**

The underlying concern of this research is whether millennials, as society’s present and emerging leaders, are prepared emotionally to assume leadership roles. One way to understand emotional preparation or intelligence is through the lens of participation in Christian practices. For purposes of this study, emotional preparedness is synonymous with emotional competence (Brasseur et al., 2013). Additionally, there were theological, historical, and theoretical influences that informed this study.

\(^{1}\) Emotional competence and emotional intelligence are foundationally interchangeable terms. Brasseur et al. (2013) distinguish competence from intelligence due to their contention that competence can be taught and learned (behavioral growth) and intelligence cannot. Beyond this distinction, their model is consistent with other literature about emotional intelligence.
Theological

This section provides a theological backdrop for the study. It includes the researcher’s worldview and a biblical basis for the research concern. The focus here centers on the importance of the topic for Christian believers.

Worldview

A Christian worldview is based on the belief that God is the Creator and is centered on Jesus Christ - deriving understanding of the world through biblical truths (Summit Ministries, n.d.). Christian views within this study were apparent as the researcher sought to discover the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices. The results may influence leadership development strategies for some millennials who may have difficulty with emotional intelligence or competence and potentially leadership. A review of literature suggests that church attendance by persons in the millennial generation has declined (Pew Research Center, 2018; Reed, 2016). If a relationship exists between emotional competence and Christian practices for this population, churches have a responsibility to focus on millennials as a part of evangelical outreach.

Biblical Basis

Preparing the next generation is a biblical obligation. In 2019, millennials became America’s largest living adult generation (Fry, 2020). U.S. Census data indicate that there were 72.1 million persons in the millennial generation compared to 71.6 million baby boomers and 65.2 million persons in Generation X (Fry, 2020). Eventually, millennials (and post-millennials) will lead every aspect of life whether they are ready to lead or not.

It is a believer’s biblical responsibility to transmit matters of faith to rising generations (Pazmino, 2008). Moses urged Israel to abide by the Great Commandment and to teach their
children about God so that the “next generation might know him” (*Revised Standard Bible*, 1962/1973, Deut. 6:4-9; Ps. 78:6-8). Knowing about God includes knowing godly principles and practices, like leadership.

Leadership is a functional calling (Langer, 2014; Seidel, 2008). God calls certain people into leadership. The Bible outlines a great deal of action achieved through leaders raised up by God. The Scriptures depict the evolution of leadership from patriarchs to tribal leaders (*Revised Standard Bible*, 1962/1973, Gen. 17:3-6) to judges (Judg. 3:9-11) to kings (1 Sam. 10:1) and ultimately to Jesus Christ (John 18:37).

Christ is the perfect model of leadership today. As persons in the millennial generation assume leadership roles, preceding generations must assess the ability of the latter generations to lead. When Moses transitioned out of leadership, God sent Joshua (*Revised Standard Bible*, 1962/1973, Deut. 31:7-8). Preparing for His ascension, Christ prepared the disciples to lead. As caretakers of God’s creation, believers must prioritize the development of emerging leaders.

**Historical**

This section provides a historical backdrop for emotional intelligence. While not always called emotional intelligence, the construct has been studied in the field of psychology as far back as 1920. This section’s focus is on pivotal stages in the evolution of emotional intelligence which influenced this study’s use of the term – emotional competence – the fulcrum of this study.

**Social Intelligence**

Social intelligence is a pre-cursor to emotional intelligence. Robert Thorndike is credited with originating the concept of social intelligence in 1920. Social intelligence involves the ability to understand and manage others and to act wisely in human relations (Thorndike, 1920 as cited...
Understanding others and interacting appropriately with them are aspects of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). When testing for social intelligence during research, Thorndike (1936) included the following variables: (a) judgement in social situations, (b) recognition of mental state, (c) observation of human behavior, (d) memory for names and faces, and (e) sense of humor. The first three variables provide glimpses of forthcoming emotional intelligence theories.

**Multiple Intelligences**

Howard Gardner is best known for introducing his theory of multiple intelligences in 1983 (Gardner, 2011). The theory includes the following intelligences: (a) linguistic, (b) musical, (c) logical-mathematical, (d) spatial, (d) bodily-kinesthetic, (e) naturalist, (f) existential, and (g) personal intelligences (intra-personal- and inter-personal). An important contribution to the field was Gardner’s inclusion of a definition of intelligence and the criteria needed for a phenomenon to be considered an intelligence. Gardner’s definition of intelligence is a “human intellectual competence” to solve problems, create effective products, and find or create problems that lead to new knowledge (pp. 64-65).

Whether the new knowledge gained is applied inwardly or outwardly is the focus of Gardner’s intra-personal and inter-personal subdivisions of personal intelligence. Intra-personal intelligence encompasses how a person identifies and processes feelings and emotions and for use in understanding and (potentially) guiding behavior (Gardner, 2011). Inter-personal intelligence involves more active use of what is learned from intra-personal intelligence to guide outward behavior such as influencing others (Gardner, 2011). The key distinction is whether the knowledge learned from personal intelligence is used to grow or manage self only (intra) or self and others (inter).
Acquisition of new knowledge underscores Gardner’s (2011) belief that intelligence should grow. Based on the perspectives of psychologists Sigmund Freud and William James, Gardner believed in the concept of a person’s growth and that self-growth “depends on one’s ability to cope with one’s surroundings” (Gardner, 2011, p. 252). Application of knowledge (growth) and whether it is used internally or externally became a distinguishing feature of emotional intelligence as this construct evolved, historically.

**Emotional Intelligence (Abilities-based)**

Psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer introduced an abilities-based model of emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). While their definition has changed some since it initially was introduced, major aspects are the same. Emotional intelligence is:

The capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2004, p. 197).

This definition of emotional intelligence focuses on cognition which takes an inward approach to emotional intelligence.

Salovey and Mayer view emotional intelligence as impacted by innate abilities. These psychologists believe that emotional intelligence skills can improve but improvement is limited by one’s ability to learn (IQ) which is set at birth (Ackley, 2016). This researcher did not locate studies regarding the limiting effects of general intelligence on emotional intelligence. A study was found which indicates that emotional growth is possible despite an average to low IQ.
(Chantrell, 2009). Chantrell reports on a child with low IQ scores (55-69) who developed stronger emotionally intelligent behavior through psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

Abilities-based emotional intelligence, as promoted by Mayer and Salovey, does not recognize the power of God to grow or change people despite human boundaries such as IQ. The Book of Mark illustrates how Jesus connects with believers toward improvement (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Mark 3:1-5). In this text, Christ heals a man with a withered hand after the man complied with a command from Christ to extend his hand. Christ’s healing required obedience from the man and interaction between the man and Christ. Interaction between believers as well as between believers and Christ is pivotal to spiritual growth (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Healing, in this text, represents a change that was beyond the man’s ability and that became possible through Christ. Believers are called to continual growth and formation into the image of Christ by the aid of the Holy Spirit (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, 2 Cor. 3:18). While general intelligence may be foundational to emotional growth, the Holy Spirit has the potential to improve emotional intelligence beyond the bounds of IQ. Through a Christian worldview of growth and intelligence, this researcher does not rely solely on abilities-based emotional intelligence but rather sees it as part of an ecosystem of connective growth processes.³

**Emotional Intelligence (Mixed Methods)**

Daniel Goleman is a psychologist and journalist who used the early research of Salovey and Mayer to form his approach to emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995; Mayer, 2004). Unlike

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² Wegenschimmel et al. (2017) designate a score of 100 as average IQ with 68 percent of scores between 85 and 115.

³ This view is based on Lowe & Lowe’s (2018) ecosystem of connective growth processes which is interactive, involving efforts of humans and God.
Salovey and Mayer’s ability-based model, in 1995, Goleman introduced a mixed model of emotional intelligence. Mixed models include ability plus personality dispositions such as motives, sociability, and warmth (Mayer, 2004). “Emotional intelligence is a part of human personality, and personality provides the context in which emotional intelligence operates” (Mayer, 2004, p. 10).

Goleman’s mixed model considers cognitive and social skills (Goleman, 1995) which allow for intra-processing and inter-behaving. The original model included five competencies: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-regulation, (c) motivation, (d) empathy, and (e) social skills. The model evolved to 4 domains with 12 competencies as sub-categories of the domains (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). While the configuration changed (Appendix A), the model’s sub-categories continued to include intra and inter-personal dimensions.

Goleman’s approach to emotional intelligence is a mix of science and practice. Much of his early work relied on the research of others from various fields, not just psychology (Ackley, 2016). Through Goleman’s association with other disciplines, knowledge of emotional intelligence expanded (Ackley, 2016). “He is an unusual psychologist in that he is able to write about psychology in ways that those outside of [the] profession can understand” (Ackley, 2016, p. 273). The value of Goleman’s contribution to the field is greater awareness of emotional intelligence and applicability of its concepts to fields outside of psychology.

With more emphasis on behavioral outcomes than the Mayer and Salovey’s abilities-

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4 Mayer and Salovey coined the categories of emotional intelligence (ability-based and mixed model) to distinguish their work (ability-based) from subsequent work on emotional intelligence. Their work emphasized the mental ability to reason about emotion and emotional meanings. Mixed models diverge from the specific focus on mental ability or cognition to consider other personality traits (Mayer, 2004).
based emotional intelligence model, Goleman believes that one’s emotional intelligence can grow. The basic criteria for growth are: (a) a desire to get better and (b) an ability to listen well and deeply to others (Goleman, 2011-b). These criteria involve motivation of self and interaction with others. Listening well and deeply to others requires active listening. Protocols for active listening usually involve asking clarifying questions and repeating what is heard. This demonstrates empathy or respecting another’s perspective (Sampson, 2011). Through his basic criteria for emotional growth, Goleman not only acknowledges that growth is possible he also indicates that connection and interaction with others are necessary for growth. These concepts are consistent with a Christian worldview. Spiritual formation or growth happens in community (Pettit, 2008) and involves reciprocal interaction (Lowe & Lowe, 2018).

Much of Goleman’s current work relates to the impacts of emotional intelligence in leadership or organizational development (Goleman et al., 2013). Goleman’s model familiarized persons outside of academia with the construct of emotional intelligence through a focus on behavioral or inter-personal aspects of emotional intelligence. Goleman’s model continues to demonstrate relevancy. For instance, leadership is a popular and highly valued topic (Northouse, 2016) and Goleman’s most recent model stresses the capacity of leaders to effect change considering the impact of emotional intelligence on the leader, followers, and organizational climate (Goleman et al., 2013). Goleman’s recent model builds on the foundation of the 1995 model and emphasizes the leader’s emotional intelligence. For instance, Inspirational Leadership is a competency in the model’s Relations Management domain (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017).

Goleman contends that effective leaders have and behave with high emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). In addition, Goleman believes that people with low emotional intelligence can learn to behave differently (Goleman, n.d.).


**Emotional Competence**

Emotional intelligence and emotional competence may appear as interchangeable terms. Emotional competence was coined by Brasseur et al. (2013) to focus on the practice of emotional intelligence (traits) and to emphasize the belief that competencies, unlike general intelligence (IQ), can be taught and learned. This study used the term *emotional competence* instead of the term *emotional intelligence* used more prominently in literature. This researcher’s use of emotional competence is in support of the belief that Christian persons can learn to behave emotionally different through the process of spiritual growth and maturation.

**Theoretical**

This section provides context for one of the study’s main variables – Christian practices. The preceding Historical section provided context for the study’s other main variable (emotional competence) through its discussion of emotional intelligence. Since a review of literature presents a “marriage” between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence (Bowell & Books, 2010, p. 10), it also was important to review spiritual intelligence\(^5\) theory in relationship to this study. Previous studies involving similar variables to this study are compared and discussed for contextual purposes.

**Emotional Intelligence – Spiritual Intelligence – Christian Spiritual Maturity**

The intention of Malik (2017) was to learn whether there was a relationship between individuals' spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, employee engagement, and employee burnout. Malik found a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence. A positive correlation means that as one variable (spiritual intelligence) \(^5\) Danah Zohar is credited with introducing spiritual intelligence as a term in 1997 (Skrzypińska, 2021; Srivastava, 2016).
increases, the other variable (emotional intelligence) also increases (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). On the surface, Malik’s finding appears relevant to this study due to the terminology used. Malik’s use of the term emotional intelligence generally corresponds with this study’s use of the term emotional competence. Malik’s use of the term spiritual intelligence, however, does not correspond with this study’s use of the term Christian practices.

A review of literature reveals that theories of spirituality and spiritual intelligence can assume religious (Emmons, 2000; Fry, 2005; Paloutzian, 2000; Sweeney & Fry, 2012), non-religious (Bowell & Books, 2004; 2010; King, 2008; Wolman, 2001; Zohar, 2018), or universal meanings (Zohar & Marshall, 2004). Definitions of spiritual intelligence vary (Malik, 2017; Skrzypińska, 2020; Srivastava, 2016). Malik relied on King’s (2008) definition of spiritual intelligence which takes a universal approach to spiritual intelligence (King, 2008; King & DeCicco, 2009; Malik, 2017). The term spiritual has varying connotations (Gardner, 2000). Gardner offers a connection with God as an example of a phenomenological spiritual connotation and meditation as an example of a physical spiritual connotation. Emmons (2000) speaks of spiritual information as part of a person’s knowledge base which is built through spiritual formation. Both King’s and Emmons’s models include transcendental approaches which receive mixed interpretations pertaining to God. Some interpret transcendental to mean that God is unreachable, while others interpret the transcendental God as being a royal yet reachable God (Frame, 2021). As discussed in literature, universal spiritual intelligence does not correspond to this study’s variable of Christian practices.

The intention of Hartman (2015) was to investigate and assess the relationship, if any, among Christian spiritual maturity (CSM), emotional intelligence (EI), and workplace engagement (WPE). Like Malik (2017), Hartman found a significant positive relationship but
between EI and CSM. Hartman relied on a mixed model EI theorist (Bar On). To assess CSM, Hartman used the same instrument as used in this study – the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP).

Because both studies were correlational and included emotional intelligence as a variable, Malik (2017) and Hartman (2015) were of interest to this researcher related to emotional competence. Christian practices also were included in Hartman (2015). Based on these previous studies’ findings of a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence (Malik, 2017) or Christian spiritual maturity (Hartman, 2015), this researcher explored if a similar correlation exists between emotional competence and Christian practices.

There is a decline in the number of believers who choose to affiliate with traditional communities of faith, such as churches (Pew Research Center, 2018; Reed, 2016), where Christian practices are more likely to occur. While there are various reasons for the general decline, this study focused on millennials – a subset of society that is underrepresented in churches (Barna Group, 2016). Declining church attendance may present less opportunity for millennials to participate in Christian practices. This could mean less access to spiritual resources that may influence daily functioning (Amram, 2009) such as problem-solving, emotional competence and leadership effectiveness. Issler (2008) shares that growth of one’s emotions requires trusting others for guidance. Faith communities should be safe environments for accountability and growth (Pettit, 2008).

Malik’s (2017) finding of a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence was gained through a generationally mixed sample. Hartman’s (2015) finding of a correlation between emotional intelligence and CSM also was gained through a generationally mixed sample (of working Christians). This current study assessed whether a
similar positive correlation exists between emotional competence and Christian practices amongst one generation - millennials. While emotional intelligence is a common theme between the previous studies and this research, spiritual intelligence (Malik, 2017) was replaced with Christian practices. The intent of this research was to explore the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation who reside in Virginia’s Richmond metro region.

**Spiritual Growth – Christ Centered**

Participation in Christian practices is likely to contribute to spiritual growth (Smith, 2009; Thayer, 1999). Growth occurs in a believer when there is demonstrable evidence of the fruits of the Spirit or other indicators that would suggest whole-person formation into the fullness of Christ. It is a process whereby believers progressively become more like Christ in their attitudes and actions while awaiting the consummation of this transformation at the appearance of Christ (Pettit, 2008; Samra, 2008).

Conforming to Christ results in a willingness to develop and grow spiritually, part of which is evidenced by behavior. “A mature believer is one who actualizes in contingent situations the character, thoughts, and will demonstrated by Christ” (Samra, 2008, p. 79). Jesus’s earthly ministry is described in the Gospels which reveal characteristics such as sacrificial love (*Revised Standard Bible*, 1962/1973, Matt. 26:2, 53-54), humility (Matt. 11:29), obedience (Matt. 26:39), and compassion (Matt. 15:32; Mark 1:34; Luke 7:13; John 4:46-53). Moreover, the writer of Luke’s gospel (Luke 2:52) indicates that Jesus grew in these same areas: (a) wisdom, (b) stature, (c) favor with God, and (d) favor with others. Spiritual growth also included growth in social maturation. Additionally, followers of Christ demonstrate these key indicators of growth and development.
Christian practices inform spiritual growth. For instance, knowledge can be gained through the practice of Bible study. As knowledge learned from the Bible is applied through actions, spiritual growth likely is occurring. During an interview, James A. K. Smith affirms that discipleship “isn’t just a question of how we can learn; it’s a question of how we can become different people [emphasis added]” (Wax, 2010, Question 1 Response). Vaughan (2002) describes spiritual maturity as exercising wisdom and compassion in relationships with other people as well as reverence and respect for all forms of life.

**Statement of the Problem**

“Seventy-five percent of careers are derailed for reasons related to [low] emotional competencies…” (Chappelow & Leslie, n.d.; DTS International, n.d.). Specific competencies, such as emotional self-awareness, comprise theoretical models of emotional intelligence (Appendix A). Emotional competencies are intrinsic to measures of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is requisite to effective leadership (Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011). This research studied the emotional competence and Christian practices of millennials – today’s new and emerging leaders.

Managing one’s emotions is critical to success and basic to maintaining successful relationships. By God’s design, emotions are intrinsic to the nature of humankind (Issler, 2008). Emotions are not necessarily good or bad; however, behavior that is based on emotions may have positive or negative outcomes. The key to emotional intelligence or competence is awareness and management - knowing when and what emotions to utilize in various contexts. Appropriate management of emotions involves discretion – the ability to discern the appropriate emotion to apply situationally. This study’s research problem centered on whether millennials possess...
strong emotional and social skills. It may be a beginning step toward understanding the leadership capacity of millennials in general.

Millennials’ emotional behavior has implications for leadership including church or ministry contexts. Advancements in technology have made organizational leadership more complex. Communication and change are instant and constant (Kotter, 2012). Higher demands and higher expectations are prevalent. Remaining calm in the context of today’s world can be difficult. When asked why emotional intelligence is more important than Intelligence Quotient or IQ, employers responded that employees with high emotional intelligence are more likely to: (a) stay calm under pressure; (b) know how to resolve conflict effectively; and (c) be empathetic to team members (CareerBuilder, 2011). These abilities are requisite for success.

There is substantial information about emotional intelligence in literature. In addition to Hartman (2015) and Malik (2017), researchers have taken various approaches and comparisons to study this phenomenon. Additional studies have evaluated emotional intelligence with religious orientation (Liu, 2010); and business concepts, like leadership (Carroll, 2017; Kotze & Venter, 2011; Levy, 2017). This researcher explored the connection between emotional competence and Christian practices particularly with Baptist millennials who comprised this study’s sample. While study participants in previous studies have been diverse, this researcher could not locate a study of emotional intelligence in the literature that focused exclusively on millennials and their Christian practices. Literature data have focused either on millennials and their emotional intelligence or millennials and their faith practices, but not both. This research adds knowledge to the field by exploring the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for millennials with implications for additional study and involvement by the faith community.
Purpose Statement

The purpose of this non-experimental quantitative correlational study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. Emotional competence is interchangeable with emotional intelligence when it refers to the ability of a person to manage emotions toward positive outcomes for self and others. Christian practices pertain to the disciplines designated by Thayer (2004) as contributors to spiritual growth.

Research Questions

RQ1. What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials?

RQ2. What are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials?

RQ3. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God?

RQ4. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others?

RQ5. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word?

RQ6. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection?

Statistical Hypotheses - Null

H₀₁: None established.

H₀₂: None Established.

H₀₃: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God.

H₀₄: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others.

H₀₅: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word.
**H06:** There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection.

**Assumptions and Delimitations**

This study sought to understand the emotional functioning levels of millennials who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. The study also sought an understanding about their Christian practices. Once scores for emotional competence and Christian practices were ascertained, the researcher explored whether there was a relationship between emotional competence and any of the Christian practices amongst the sample population. Statistical significance was determined. The study did not postulate the causes of scores or relationships, specifically whether certain Christian practices caused or produced high emotional competence or vice versa.

**Research Assumptions**

The study was predicated upon the assumption that strong emotional competence is intrinsic to effective leadership. The study also assumed, from a Christian worldview, that spiritual development is necessary for effective leadership. Finally, the study assumed that Christian practices nourish spiritual formation which influences the way one processes emotions.

**Delimitations of the Research Design**

The aim of this study was to determine correlation, specifically, whether a higher or lower measure in emotional competence corresponds to a higher or lower measure of Christian practices by millennials. The variables were emotional competence and Christian practices. Correlational designs evaluate relationships between variables and do not postulate causation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). This study did not determine whether Christian practices cause or produce higher emotional competence or vice versa.
The non-experimental design of this study limits interpretation of results. Without a control group, for instance, the study could not reveal if the same emotional competence scores would be present with or without Christian practices. In an experimental design, some study participants are assigned to a control group and do not partake in the variable being tested (Bennett et al., 2009). For example, in this study, the control group would have been comprised of millennials who were not affiliated with church or Christian practices. This would have allowed for a comparison of emotional competence scores between a group that incorporated Christian practices in their daily living and a group that did not. The goal would have been to determine if the presence of Christian practices influenced the emotional competence scores. Since causation was not a goal of this study, a non-experimental design was chosen.

The sampling method limits applicability of results and changed the intended scope of the study. Inferences cannot be made beyond the boundaries established by study participation:

1. This research was delimited to members of a Baptist church in a specific geographical region.
2. This research was further delimited to members at the Baptist church, who were born between 1981 and 1996 (millennials).
3. Participants in the study were 100 percent African American.

Limitations pertain to faith or church affiliation, race, and age. While the goal of the study was to explore the emotional competence and Christian practices of millennials in Virginia’s Richmond metro region, one church in one locality was accessible to the researcher and became the study’s sampling frame. Because ABC church is a Baptist church and there are other Christian denominations, the study is biased toward millennials who are Baptist. “A statistical study suffers from bias if its design or conduct tends to favor certain results” (Bennett et al., 2009, p.
12). Similarly, the study is biased to the city of Richmond and persons between 24 and 40 years of age as of January 2021. Further, the study’s resulting racial make-up limits generalization of findings to African American millennials. Additional limitations are discussed in the Limits of Generalization and Threats to External Validity sections of this report.

**Definitions of Terms**

This section provides definitions of terms that are pertinent to understanding this study. The descriptions clarify how this researcher understands and will use the terms to explore the topic.

1. *ABC Church*: A pseudonym to provide confidentiality to the church from which the study sample was drawn.

2. *Christian Practices*: Behaviors that promote a person’s spiritual growth (Thayer, 2004). These are sometimes called spiritual disciplines and are grouped into four modes of growth based on Kolb’s modes of learning (Thayer, 2004). Spiritual growth sometimes is called spiritual formation.

3. *Emotion*: The brain’s creation of what the body senses in relation to what is happening in the world (Barrett, 2019). Fields such as psychology, anthropology, neurology, and philosophy describe emotions from varying viewpoints (Elliott, 2006). There are cognitive and non-cognitive approaches to the study of emotions. “A cognitive approach to emotion integrates emotion and intellect while a non-cognitive approach has a tendency to allow or promote their separation” (Lazarus, 1993, p.6). While two approaches to emotion have been the tradition, contemporary cognitive and non-cognitive theorists generally agree that: (a) emotions have intentionality or the ability to represent a person’s intent, and (b) emotions are not structurally opposed to reason (Emotion, 2018). The latter implies that one can control emotional responses.

   This research assumed a blended approach to emotion. This researcher accepts the non-cognitive claim that emotion is a response to external stimuli. This researcher also accepts the cognitive claim that emotion can be reasoned. The blended approach serves as a foundation for the study of a leader’s emotional intelligence. An effective leader must be aware of external forces, such as followers and organizational demands, while being self-aware and able to reason between self, others, and the situation.

4. *Emotional Competence*: “Individual differences in the identification, understanding, expression, regulation and use of one’s own emotions and those of others” (Brasseur
et al., 2013, p. 1). Competence is distinguished from intelligence by the ability of competence to be taught and learned (Brasseur et al., 2013).

This researcher ascribes to the belief that emotional skills grow throughout life and uses the term emotional competence (as opposed to intelligence) in reference to this study. Emotional Competence involves five core competencies (dimensions) with two factors (inter-personal and intra-personal) in each dimension (Brasseur et al., 2013).

5. **Emotional Intelligence:** This study relies on Goleman’s definition which is the ability to manage the emotions of self, others, and relationships effectively (Goleman, 2011a). Goleman’s definition is further delineated into 4 domains and 12 competencies (Appendix A).

6. **Leadership:** The act of moving others from one point to another (Bredfeldt, n.d.-a.) via an influential process (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Sampson, 2011; Schein, 2010) that considers the needs of others to elicit desired behaviors from them while maintaining effective relationships with them.


8. **Post-millennial Generation:** Persons born from 1997 through present (Serafino, 2018).

9. **Spiritual Growth:** A process whereby believers progressively become more like Christ in their attitudes and behavior while awaiting the consummation of this transformation at the appearance of Christ (Pettit, 2008; Samra, 2008). This term is used interchangeably with spiritual formation and is based on Scriptures such as Romans 8:29 (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973).

10. **Virginia’s Richmond Metro Region:** A segment of Virginia’s Richmond Metropolitan Statistics Area (MSA) that represents the largest share of the MSA’s population. It is comprised of the City of Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico.

**Significance of the Study**

Given the complexity of leadership, this researcher reflects upon the emotional competence of leaders to be successful during society’s rapid change. In a context of constant change, it is vital to understand who will lead, what they value, and their dispositions toward others - their emotional competence. Emotional competence influences how leaders behave. In a crisis, people default to values, roles, and ways that are intrinsic to their upbringing and culture.
(Lingenfelter, 2008). That culture may not include a Christian worldview of leadership and treatment of others. Though with a limited sample, this study provided information about the emotional competence of Christian millennials (as present and emerging leaders) and connections to their Christian practices.

The researcher honors literature claims that emotional intelligence is essential to effective leadership (Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011) and contends that effective leadership usually reflects Christian virtues (Boa, 2005; Bredfeldt, 2006; Lingenfelter, 2008). Participation in Christian practices potentially instills values, such as empathy, into one’s belief system and “expert knowledge base” (Emmons, 2000, p. 9). The expert knowledge base serves as a resource to intelligences such as (emotional and) spiritual and are used toward adaptive problem-solving (Amram, 2009; Emmons, 2000). Understanding any relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices for emerging leaders, provides valuable information to assist with their leadership development.

This study adds new knowledge to the field of Christian leadership through its focus on the emotional competence of millennials who began entering adulthood in 1999. Literature, as far back as Deeken et al. (2008), provides characteristics of millennials that distinguish them from preceding generations. Deeken et al. describe the contrasting learning styles between millennials and previous generations. Similar comparisons were made by Schiffman and Krebs (2019) who describe the challenges of managing millennials at work compared to managing former generations. Both sources recommend adjustments in approach when interacting with millennials who appear self-absorbed (Dolby, 2014; Reed, 2016) as they focus on their own needs. Empathy is a factor of emotional competence (e.g., self-management and social
awareness) and requires the ability to focus on the needs of others. Additional characteristics of millennials described in literature include deficits with inter-personal skills (Dolby, 2014), interest in others’ cultures (Dolby, 2014), and understanding others’ perspectives (Dolby, 2014; Reed, 2016). Further, literature describes millennials as needing constant stimulation (Deeken et al., 2008; Livermore, 2016; and Schiffman & Krebs, 2019). These consistent and continuing behaviors influence the capacity for empathy, as well as emotional competence, and present opportunity for Christian leadership development. Christ, as a model of leadership, provides an image of leadership that is full of empathy. Christ taught and displayed a style of leadership that centers on others (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Matt. 20:26-28; John 13:12-16). To focus on others is to be empathetic, as well as Christlike, and is a necessary component of emotional competence.

Approaching the research problem from a Christian worldview, the researcher desires the faith community to assume responsibility to prepare the next generation of leaders (Pazmino, 2008). In addition to appropriate Christian leadership development, successful evangelism and outreach to millennials has the potential to counter the decline in faith community affiliation and participation.

**Summary of the Design**

This research was a non-experimental quantitative correlational study that used survey instrumentation. The population of interest was millennials who were affiliated with a Baptist church in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. Mostly numerical data was collected from a convenience sample to determine if there were correlations between emotional competence and Christian practices. Study participants responded to 106 survey questions which included 100 questions from already-validated instruments – 50 questions regarding emotional competence
and 50 questions regarding Christian practices. The responses provided data regarding the millennials’ levels of emotional competence and participation in Christian practices. The data was manipulated statistically to answer six research questions.

Chapter One provided an overview of the study’s topic including its background and the problem that compelled the study. Literature describes millennials in ways that do not support effective leadership. The chapter included a theological section which explained the topic’s importance to believers. Faith communities have responsibility to guide rising generations in matters of faith (Pazmino, 2008) and leadership.

Chapter Two presents an overview of literature related to the research topic. The chapter’s theological section provides biblical bases for the study’s variables. This is followed by a theoretical framework about the study’s major prongs: (a) emotional intelligence, (b) emotional competence, (c) Christian practices, and (d) leadership. Related literature is discussed regarding the characteristics of millennials. This is followed by a rationale for the study based on societal needs and a gap in the literature. The chapter ends with a profile of the study.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

This study was prompted by literature which expressed concerns about millennials and their emotional intelligence (Dolby, 2014; Randstad & Future Workplace, 2016; Reed, 2016). Not having strong emotional intelligence would be a problem since millennials are present as well as emerging leaders, and literature claims that emotional intelligence is a component of effective leadership (Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011). To understand more about behavior related to millennials’ emotional intelligence, one of this study’s variables is emotional competence. The study’s second variable is Christian practices. Related to Christian practices, literature claims that there is a positive relationship between spirituality and emotions (Hartman, 2015; Liu, 2010; Malik, 2017). Inspired by these literature claims, this researcher became curious as to whether (for millennials) Christian spirituality informs emotions and emotions inform leadership. The purpose of this non-experimental quantitative correlational study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for millennials.

Leadership is key to the success of organizations (Bennis, 1989; Northouse, 2016; Zalenik, 2004) including business, non-profit, government, and churches. While there are many facets to effective leadership, this study views leadership through the lens of emotional competence as impacted by Christian practices. Influenced by a survey of literature, this researcher posits the following:

1. There is a connection between Christian practices and emotional competence.
2. There is a connection between Christian practices and effective leadership.
3. There is a connection between effective leadership and emotional competence.
4. Millennials are trending away from religious affiliation.

5. Millennials appear to have low emotional competence.

This chapter provides data to warrant these observations and to justify the need for research. Theological and theoretical information are provided. Observations one and two are addressed in the theological section. Observation three is addressed in the theoretical section. Observations four and five are discussed in the Related Literature section. The chapter ends with the study’s rationale and profile.

**Theological Framework for the Study**

During the study, information was collected about the emotional competence and Christian practices of millennials. The primary purpose was to determine if there were a correlation between these two variables for this specific population. A review of literature indicates that there is a general connection between related topics of emotions and faith (Elliott, 2006; Issler, 2008); and, that both faith (Burns et al., 2014) and emotions impact leadership (Carroll, 2017; Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011). Understanding emotional competence, Christian practices, and related topics is meaningful to the practice of leadership.

The theological section shares information from literature that supports a connection between emotional competence and Christian practices. It summarizes what God has revealed in the Bible about emotions which provides a Christian understanding of how the topic relates to God’s creation and redemptive work (Erickson, 2015). The section also discusses God’s appointment to leadership and its connection to Christian practices.
Christian Practices and Emotional Competence (Observation 1)

Emotional competence has a theological foundation despite the term being coined in a secular context. Part of what it means to be created in the image of God includes the entirety of the human experience, including emotions. While scientists believe that the brain is responsible for emotions, from a spiritual perspective, emotions reside in the soul (Issler, 2008) and include such responses as love, fear, joy, and hatred (Elliott, 2006). Humankind is made in God’s image and God’s image reflects emotions (Elliott). While the Old Testament provides the revelation that humankind was created in God’s image, it is the New Testament that reveals God’s image in the person of Jesus Christ (Elliott, 2006; Kilner, 2015).

Through Jesus’s three-year earthly ministry, believers learn attributes of God (Kilner, 2015) and have a pattern to follow (Elliot, 2006). Jesus showed emotions and is moved by the emotions that He observed in His followers. “In His humanity, our Lord Jesus Christ displayed a wide array of emotions: He openly wept (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, John 11:35), He felt deep compassion for people (Mark 6:34), and He even displayed righteous anger (Mark 3:5)” (Issler, 2008, pp. 130-131). Jesus showed emotional restraint many times during His earthly ministry. This is evident during the 24 hours leading up to His crucifixion. Despite His knowing that He would be crucified, Jesus had the patience and self-control to serve others. He washed the disciples’ feet (John 13: 4-16). In the Garden of Gethsemane, while overwhelmed with sorrow (Matt. 26: 36-38), Jesus healed the ear of one of His enemies (Luke 22:50-51). In John 7:1-8, Jesus modeled emotional competence as He processed a request from His brothers to attend the Jews’ Feast of Tabernacles in Judea where it was dangerous for Him. His brothers were pressuring Christ to attend the feast to demonstrate that He was sent by God. Christ did not respond to pressure to attend the festival and suspected that His brothers did not believe in Him.
Christ modeled empathy by encouraging his brothers to attend the feast possibly because He sensed that they desired to go and by ignoring His conceivable disappointment in the brothers’ lack of confidence. Through Christ’s example, believers have a model for exuding appropriate emotions including empathy.

The study’s second variable, Christian practices, centers on behaviors such as participation in Christian disciplines like prayer. Christ demonstrated how participation in Christian practices contributes to emotional competence. Matthew 14 (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973) describes Christ’s behavior after learning about the beheading of John the Baptist. Crowds interrupted Christ’s attempt to be alone; yet, Christ responded with compassion, healing the sick and feeding the hungry. The ignoring of His own emotional needs required emotional competence. “After he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray” (vs. 23). More were healed the next day. The Christian practice of prayer, modeled by Christ, instills a connection to God and seemed to motivate Christ. As believers engage in spiritual disciplines, maturation or development is likely to occur with the potential to influence emotional competence. Christ demonstrated growth and maturity through His own practice of prayer to the Father and service to others while experiencing personal tragedy.

Spiritual formation is the goal of believers (Kilner, 2015) and encompasses Christian practices as well as emotional competence. To form or develop spiritually means to reflect the image of God in actions, thoughts, and emotions. There are internal and external aspects to spiritual formation that should not be ignored (Dorff, 2016; Issler, 2008). Thoughts are internal and include beliefs and values. The truth about beliefs and values are revealed, outwardly, through emotions (Elliott, 2006). To reflect God, an integration of internal thoughts and external actions must occur. Dorff describes integration as having consistency between actions, thoughts,
and feelings. The Apostle Paul teaches integration when he instructs believers to “do [action] as he made up in his mind [thought], not reluctantly or under compulsion [emotion], for God loves a cheerful giver” (*Revised Standard Bible*, 1962/1973, 2 Cor. 9:7). Smith’s (2009) theology of spiritual formation begins with actions such as Christian practices. Smith identifies the Christian practice of worship as prescriptive toward a passion for Christ when he states, “What Christians think and believe grows out of what they do” (p. 216). Practice, then, precipitates emotions. Elliott emphasizes that it is not until behavior influences belief and thoughts, that emotions then are impacted. Conforming to the image of Christ involves adopting and displaying Christian behavior, thinking, and emotions that are based on God’s image. No matter the order, for spiritual formation to occur, an integration of Christlike thoughts, behavior, and emotions must occur.

Scripture supports the first observation, posited by this researcher, that there is a connection between emotional competence and Christian practices. Christ modeled the connection which also sets an example for spiritual formation. The next section provides a basis for the second observation that there is a connection between Christian practices and leadership.

**Christian Practices and Leadership (Observation 2)**

A review of literature reveals a connection between religion or Christian practices and effective Christian leadership – the second observation posited by this researcher. The study sought to discover the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation. Study results may influence strategies for millennials’ leadership development. Christians are chosen by God to be His earthly eyes, ears, hands, and feet. Foundational to Christian leadership is God’s primary calling which is to live a holy life in relationship with God (Seidel, 2008). Leaders who commit to God strive to please
Him and this influences leadership actions. Leadership is a calling for one to be used by God (Langer, 2014).

**Shepherd Motif**

The shepherd motif provides theological data for the study of leadership (Langer, 2014; Laniak, 2006). Leaders are called by God (*Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Jer. 3:15*) to be shepherds. The motif uses biblical accounts of shepherding to symbolize leadership. Just as shepherds lead and care for flock, leaders care for followers. God is the ultimate Shepherd and earthly leaders, such as church pastors, are under-shepherds (Laniak, 2006). Shepherding requires the individual consideration of others or empathy (Langer, 2014). Moses, Christ, and Paul are biblical examples of shepherding and God’s call to leadership.

**Moses.** Moses was called into leadership by God (*Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Ex. 3:1-10*). His assignment was to shepherd the Israelites from bondage in Egypt toward the Promised Land. Moses, emotionally, was not prepared to lead. When called by God to lead the Israelites, Moses demonstrated a lack of confidence (Ex. 3:11), a concern about others’ perception of him and his authority (Ex. 3:13-15; 4:1), and self-doubt regarding his abilities (Ex. 4:10). These behaviors are based in the emotion of fear and were countered each time by God’s provision of a remedy in support of Moses’s call to leadership. Ultimately, Moses became the under-shepherd through which God’s provision for His people flowed (Laniak, 2006). A key ingredient of Moses’s leadership was his obedience to God’s call as well as his connection to God throughout the exodus (Ex. 14:10-14, 21-29).

**Christ.** Jesus is the (Good) Shepherd because He is God (*Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Matt. 1:18, 23*) and God is the ultimate Shepherd (John 10:11). After humankind was alienated from God due to the Fall (Gen. 3), humankind continued to behave sinfully despite
continual wise counsel from God. Christ came to earth to model righteous behavior including a reflection of God’s style of leadership. By example, Christ washed the feet of His followers (the disciples) as a symbol while He taught them about the serving nature of leadership (John 13:5, 12-16). Servant leadership is selfless – often to the discomfort of the leader. By Christ’s example, Christian leaders are drawn to servant-leadership. Modeling Christ, servant leaders desire to serve first and lead second (Frick, 2004).

**Paul.** Paul became a shepherd of God’s people when he was chosen by God to receive and share His Word with the Gentiles (*Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Acts* 9:15-16; 22:6-21). Like Moses, Paul obeyed God. The Apostle displayed a shared leadership style while working with others which is characteristic of servant leadership (du Plessis & Nkambule, 2020). Like Christ, Paul was a servant-leader. Servant leaders are willing to do the same work that they expect of followers. Researchers du Plessis and Nkambule cite biblical texts which demonstrate Paul’s sharing of leadership with his “co-workers” Priscilla and Aquilla (Acts 18:1-3), and with his “partner” Titus (2 Cor. 8:23). Paul’s primary call to leadership is evident by the way he shepherded believers.

**Servant Leadership**

Servant leadership follows a shepherding paradigm and is transformative (Langer, 2014). Servant leadership often is referred to as transformational leadership (Langer, 2014; Northouse, 2016) and is a biblical concept (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Both secular and religious communities describe transformation as a process that changes people. In secular culture, a transformational leader assesses followers’ motives, satisfies their needs, and treats them as full human beings (Northouse, 2016). In a Christian context, a servant leader is motivated to fulfill God’s purpose in the lives of people for whom the leader is responsible (Lowe & Lowe, 2018). Transformation
was modeled by Christ during his earthly ministry; and it is the goal of Christian communities. As each believer in a Christian community conforms to the image of Christ, the community is transformed (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, 2 Cor. 3:18). The researcher’s second observation is warranted as biblical examples of servant leadership reveal the connection between Christian practices and leadership.

The connection between Christian practices and leadership begins with the divine appointment into the leadership role. The shepherd motif provides a Christian leadership metaphor that is based in Scripture. A common theme in the shepherding examples of Moses, Christ, and Paul is that God commissioned leadership and obedience followed. Another presenting theme is their reliance on God for affirmation and motivation through practices like meditation and prayer. The style of leadership displayed most often was servant leadership. Servant leadership includes empathy which, in the Related Literature section of this chapter, will present as a component of emotional intelligence or competence. The shepherding examples of Moses, Christ, and Paul support the researcher’s observation that there is a divine connection between leadership and Christian practices.

Summary

The theological section of Chapter Two provided information to support the researcher’s first two observations based on literature reviewed. There is a connection between Christian practices and emotional competence. In support of this observation, the Theological Framework section discussed God’s creation of emotion-filled humankind, Christ’s display of emotions and emotional control, and believers’ goal of transforming to Christ’s image. Secondly, there is a connection between Christian practices and leadership. To support this observation, the section discussed the shepherding motif, emergence of leadership by divine appointment, biblical
examples of leadership, and displays of servant leadership. There are biblical bases for emotions and for leadership which accentuate the connections between Christian practices and these two constructs.

**Theoretical Framework for the Study**

This section provides the theoretical framework for major prongs of this study, including information to support of the connection between leadership and emotional competence (the researcher’s third observation from literature). Theories are a set of interrelated constructs or variables, definitions, and presuppositions that provide a systematic view of a phenomenon by specifying relations among its variables (Kerlinger, 1979). Through a discussion of theory, the researcher provides the origin and nature of the phenomena included in the study. This study explored connections between emotional competence and Christian practices, if any, as lenses toward understanding the leadership capacity of millennials. Emotional competence is related to and distinguished from emotional intelligence - a phenomenon that formally began in the 1990s and that continues in current discussions of leadership and organizational theory. This section highlights major contributors and dominant theories related to the main aspects of the study: (a) emotional intelligence, (b) emotional competence, (c) Christian practices, and (d) leadership. Brief histories and seminal studies also are included. The section ends with a summary that includes how these phenomena are connected to this research.

**Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence first was introduced as a theory in 1990 by psychologists Peter Salovey and John Mayer. In their initial study of literature, the psychologists describe emotional intelligence as a “subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide
one’s thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). While there had been studies about emotions and how emotions are used to solve problems, there had not been a “guiding framework” to compile and focus previous study results (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This was accomplished through Salovey and Mayer’s research and their coining the term “emotional intelligence.” Salovey and Mayer’s initial framework had three mental processes (a) appraising and expressing emotions in self and others, (b) regulating emotions in self and others, and (c) using emotions in adaptive ways. Later, this was expanded to four abilities that have remained consistent, as follows:

1. Identifying emotions in self and others.
2. Regulating one’s own emotions and the emotions of others.
3. Integrating emotions into thought processes.
4. Effectively processing complex emotions.

The difference between the 1990 framework and what followed is the further delineation of how to use emotions in adaptive ways. The integration and processing of emotions allow one to be adaptive.

Since 1990, in the field of psychology, the study of emotional intelligence has been vibrant with several theorists and practitioners adding to the field. Two of the more prominent are Daniel Goleman (1995) and Reuven Bar-On (1997). According to Bar-On, emotional intelligence is defined as ”an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures” (Kumar, 2018, p. 591). Like Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1995) offered emotional intelligence components including: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-regulation, (c) motivation, (d) empathy, and (e) social skills. In addition, Goleman provided a process for activating emotional intelligence.
The theorist describes emotional intelligence not only as a theory and a cognitive skill but also a process for assessing and controlling one’s own emotions, the emotions of others, and that of groups. Goleman further describes emotional intelligence as a behavioral skillset (2011). Yet, another definition of emotional intelligence was offered by Kanoy et al. (2013). It includes components from the previous definitions advanced in the literature but added the component of self-reflection – “the way we perceive … ourselves” (Kanoy et al., 2013, p.11) as a critical distinction. While the Goleman and Bar-On definitions have this element, self-perception is not in their definitions.

As studies are completed and new information is learned, theoretical models change. Goleman’s (1990) original model had five components. In 2000, the model was comprised of 4 components (capabilities), 21 sub-components (competencies), and 6 leadership styles (Goleman, 2000). Goleman’s most recent model (Appendix A) includes 4 domains and 12 competencies (Boyatzis & Goleman, 2017).

It is important to this study that key differences between the theories of the first two major theorists of emotional intelligence are highlighted. Salovey and Mayer (1990) and Goleman (1995) approach this construct differently. Mayer and Salovey’s theory of emotional intelligence focuses on cognitive abilities of the construct. Mayer et al. (2004) define emotional intelligence as:

The capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (p. 197).

This definition is more detailed than the original 1990 definition and adds more emphasis on
cognitive functionality using words like reason, thinking, perceive, thought, knowledge, and intellectual growth.

These theorists made efforts to distinguish their work from other theorists especially Goleman (1995) who had based his work on the Salovey and Mayer model of emotional intelligence. Mayer (2004) contends that Goleman’s model is broader and more expansive than the Salovey and Mayer model of emotional intelligence. Concerns were raised about Goleman’s inclusion of qualities such as motives and social skills as components of emotional intelligence. These were not considered related to emotions or intelligence but rather attributes or traits. Salovey and Grewal (2005) present a conceptualization of emotional intelligence as a set of skills or competencies, not personality traits.

Goleman’s model of emotional intelligence is a mixed model of abilities and traits, unlike the Salovey and Mayer model which is abilities-based. Goleman combines cognition with behavior as demonstration of emotional intelligence. Several features of Goleman’s emotional intelligence models align with leadership theories of the 21st century. This is important to this study since millennials currently and will lead during the 21st century. The functional nature of Goleman’s model may separate it technically from “intelligence” which is cognitive (Kihlstrom & Cantor, 2011; Mayer, 2004). For that reason, the term “emotional competence” surfaced.

**Emotional Competence**

Researchers Brasseur et al. (2013) acknowledge the debates as to whether “emotion-related differences” are abilities based in intelligence or traits based in personality (p. 1). The researchers credit Mikolajczak (2009) and Mikolajczak et al. (2009) with a model that clarifies the debate. The model presents three levels for considering emotional intelligence: (a) knowledge, (b) ability, and (c) trait. Knowledge refers to what people know how to do. Ability is
the capacity to apply knowledge. Trait is consistent behavior or practice of the knowledge. 

Salovey and Mayer are distinguished from Goleman who includes traits in his approach to emotional intelligence. While Brasseur et al. focus their research on the trait level (behaviors), they acknowledge that “intelligence” may be a misnomer and prefer the term “competence” (p. 1). Emotional competence is a variable in this study.

**Christian Practices**

Christian practices are the second variable of this study. The study explored the degree to which there is a correlation between Christian practices and emotional competence (the other variable). The practices are assessed using the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile or CSPP (Thayer, 2004). The CSPP’s design is based on the theory that spiritual growth can be facilitated by a balanced, in-depth use of all spiritual development modes which provide different learning opportunities (or practices) that God uses to transform believers (Thayer, 1999). This study explored whether emotional competence correlates with, or is nurtured by, the Christian practices which make up the CSPP’s Spiritual Development Modes (SDM).

Learning theory was used to develop the CSPP - a tool that assesses spiritual growth (Thayer, 2004). Christian practices are grouped into four SDMs. Thayer aligns the 4 SDMs and 10 Christian practices with Kolb’s (1984) model of learning theory. The CSPP modes are:

(a) growing through a relationship with God,
(b) growing through relationships with others,
(c) growing through a relationship with the Word, and
(d) growing through critical reflection.

The CSPP indicates how well a person uses modes of learning during spiritual growth. Thayer (2004) presents Kolb’s (1984) assertion that people learn in four different ways:
(a) concrete experience (your own personal experience);
(b) abstract conceptualization (reading or listening to others’ experience);
(c) reflective observation (critically thinking about your experience); and
(d) active experimentation (doing something).

Table 1 displays the alignment between Kolb’s (1984) learning modes and Thayer’s (1999) SDMs as well as Christian practices.

**Table 1**

**Learning Modes and Spiritual Growth Alignment**

|------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Apprehension: Concrete Experience | Your own personal experience | Growing through my relationship with God | • Prayer  
• Repentance  
• Worship |
| Comprehension: Abstract Conceptualization | Reading or listening to others’ experience | Growing through the Word | • Bible reading or study  
• Meditation |
| Intuition: Reflective Observation | Critically thinking about your experience | Growing through critical reflection | • Critical reflection |
| Extension: Active Experimentation | Doing something | Growing through my relationship with others | • Evangelism  
• Fellowship  
• Service  
• Stewardship |

Thayer’s (2004) model asserts that growth and learning are analogous and transformational. The model specifies Christian practices for each SDM based on the intended spiritual growth outcome. For example, prayer is a Christian practice that is deemed as a

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*Table 1 is based on Thayer (2004).*
concrete experience as it is done directly by the person. As a concrete experience, Thayer contends that prayer grows one’s relationship with God. The CSPP’s 10 Christian practices are aligned (parenthetically) with Kohl’s learning theory:

- Concrete experience (prayer, repentance, worship)
- Active experimentation (evangelism, fellowship, service, stewardship)
- Abstract conceptualization (Bible reading or study, meditation)
- Reflective observation (critical reflection)

Participants in this study were measured on each Christian practice toward tabulation of four SDM scores. These scores were compared to the Global Emotional Competence (GEC) score to determine relationships, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices. Subscale scores also were assessed.

**Leadership**

Leadership is not a variable in the study but lies in the background. Langer (2014) identifies leadership as a calling by God. At a minimum, this means leadership involves action. One must do something to lead. Leadership theories provide descriptions of how humankind enacts leadership. At its core, leadership is the act of moving followers from one point to another while understanding reality and the preferred state, future, or vision (Bredfeldt, n.d.-a).

“Leadership is one of the most complex and multifaceted phenomena to which organizational and psychological research has been applied” (King, 1990, p. 43).

This section provides an historical view of leadership, major contributors to the field of leadership, seminal leadership studies, and dominant theories. At the close of this section, the field of leadership is linked to this research.

While the term “leader” was noted as early as the 1300s and exemplified during
biblical times, the term leadership has existed only since the late 1700s (Stogdill, 1974). Empirical research on the topic began in the twentieth century (Bass, 1990). Dating back to the 1800s, leadership theories are described in literature by era (Yukl, 2013). Each era represents an orientation toward leadership practice and includes theories on how to approach leadership using that orientation. The time periods assigned to leadership eras vary in literature but there is general agreement on descriptions. King (1990) describes nine eras, without chronological dates, to delineate the flow of leadership themes and eras. To eliminate chronological confusion, King’s flow is used to describe the eras and is supplemented by information from subsequent theorists to provide a comprehensive overview of leadership theory.

**Personality Era**

The study of leadership began with the Personality era which included leader-focused approaches such as the Great Man and the Trait theories (King, 1990). Inherent in these theories was the belief that leadership effectiveness was determined by personal characteristics of the leader. Historian Thomas Carlyle offered the Great Man Theory in approximately 1840. There were hundreds of trait theory studies in the 1930s and 1940s (Yukl, 2013). The Great Man and Trait theories purport (respectively) that leaders are born or are made with certain qualities that make them effective leaders.

Ralph Stogdill studied trait theories (1948, 1974). The 1948 study found similar traits among leaders as being different from followers such as intelligence, alertness, insight, responsibility, initiative, persistence, self-confidence, and sociability (Northouse, 2016). “Whereas the first [1948] study implied that leadership is determined principally by situational factors and not traits, the second [1974] survey argued more moderately that both traits and situational factors were determinants of leadership” (Northouse, 2016, p. 21). In part, the 1974
study validated the original idea that a leaders’ characteristics or traits are part of leadership (Northouse, 2016).

**Influence Era**

“The Influence Era improved on the Personality Era by recognizing that leadership is a relationship between individuals and not a characteristic of the solitary leader” (King, 1990, p. 46). The focus was on the leader convincing followers to act. The mode of operation was power and influence with no thought for the wants and needs of the followers (King, 1990). Woven into this timeframe was the Scientific era (1880s to 1940s) and the Bureaucratic or Classical era (1930s-1950s). The focus of the Scientific era was efficiency, planning, and procedures while the focus of the Bureaucratic era was hierarchy (Bredfeldt, n.d.-b). Leaders used structure and control to influence subordinates.

**Behavior Era**

The Behavior era began in the early 1950s (Yukl, 2013) and “took a completely new direction by emphasizing what leaders do as opposed to their traits or source of power” (King, 1990, p. 46). “In shifting the study of leadership to leader behaviors, the behavior approach expanded the research of leadership to include the actions of leaders toward followers in various contexts” (Northouse, 2016, p. 71).

**Situation Era**

“The Situation Era made a significant step forward in advancing leadership theory by acknowledging the importance of factors beyond the leader and the subordinate” (King, 1990, p. 47). King asserts that these factors, not the leader or the relationship with followers, determine leadership effectiveness. The factors include: (a) environment, (b) social status, and (c) social parameters (King, 1990). The Situational Leadership theory was developed by Paul Hersey and
Ken Blanchard in 1969 (Northouse, 2016). The model’s foundation is that leadership style must change to suit the situation to be effective. “The situational approach stresses that leadership is composed of both a directive and a supportive dimension and that each has to be applied appropriately in a given situation” (Northouse, 2016, p. 93).

**Contingency Era**

Leadership approaches of this era advanced the thought that effective leadership is the result of moderating situations well (King, 1990). Personality, relationships, influence, and behavior all contribute to effective leadership if the leader uses them appropriately to navigate the situation or environment. Contrary to situational theory, leader effectiveness is contingent on the leader’s style matching the situation, not adapting to it.

**Transactional Era**

This era is reminiscent of the influence era in that it addresses influence between the leader and subordinate. The transactional era adds reciprocity (King, 1990). The subordinate influences the leader; and the leader influences the subordinate. Transactional leadership theory was offered by Max Weber and is the basic management process of controlling or influencing subordinates by linking rewards to the attainment of goals (Northouse, 2016).

**Anti-leadership Era**

After numerous empirical studies, the anti-leadership era evolved. It represents disappointment that no one thing could predict, conclusively, when leadership would be effective (King, 1990). Thoughts, during this era, ranged from leadership being a perception to the belief that leadership does not exist. King (1990) purports that “the task and the leadership characteristics can prevent leadership from affecting subordinate performance” (pp. 48-49).
**Culture Era**

This era’s foundational belief is, “Leadership is not a phenomenon of the individual, the dyad, or even the small group, but rather is omnipresent in the culture of the entire organization” (King, 1990, p. 49). The leadership focus is quality of work, not quantity of work (King, 1990).

**Transformational Era**

Sociologist James V. Downton, Jr., first coined “transformational leadership” in 1973 (Northouse, 2016). Theories began surfacing in the late 1970s. Transformational leadership believes that motivation is intrinsic, as opposed to extrinsic (King, 1990). It is visionary and embraces reciprocal change between the leader and subordinates (King, 1990).

Transformational Leadership. Northouse (2016) credits James MacGregor Burns with advancing transformational leadership theory in 1978. According to Northouse, Burns defines leadership as “the reciprocal process of mobilizing by persons with certain motives and values, various economic political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by leaders and followers” (p. 425). Theories of this era view leadership as a process that changes and transforms people (Northouse, 2016).

In 1985, Bernard Bass advanced Burns’s work by introducing the Four I’s of Transformational Leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) individualized consideration, and (d) inspired motivation (Northouse, 2016). These transformational leadership factors are crucial if a leader wants to inspire, nurture, and develop their followers (Bass, 1985, as cited in Northouse, 2016):

- **Idealized Influence** - The leader must provide vision and mission and must be charismatic such that followers perceive and observe positive behavior that followers wish to emulate.
The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®. Kouzes and Posner (2017) offer The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership® to transform the leader and the follower as they achieve organizational goals. The leadership practices are: (a) model the way, (b) inspire a shared vision, (c) challenge the process, (d) enable others to act, and (e) encourage the heart. Believing that leadership is within the grasp of everyone, Kouzes and Posner describe the leadership practices as:

- **Model the way** – demonstrating the values and principles of the team.
- **Inspire a shared vision** – imagining an exciting, highly attractive future and inspiring the same vision with followers.
- **Challenge the process** – changing from the status quo by listening, being innovative, overcoming obstacles and embracing opportunities for self and others to grow.
- **Enable others to act** – achieving greatness by trusting others, fostering collaboration, and focusing on serving others rather than self.
- **Encourage the heart** – creating a caring community culture by showing appreciation and recognizing others’ contributions.

Studies were done to assess team member engagement when compared to a leader’s use of the five practices. Kouzes and Posner (2017) report that “responses from 3 million people around the
world show that 95.8 percent of direct reports are highly engaged when leaders “very frequently” or “almost always” use the five leadership practices (pp. 20-21).

**Spiritual Leadership.** Spiritual leadership theory blends spirituality and leadership (Fry, 2005). Spiritual in the leadership context “relates to acknowledging and developing the essence or animating force that makes people human” (Sweeney & Fry, 2012, p. 98). Since God created humankind and believers should reflect Him, godly virtues are central to spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership operates in both the “temporal and spiritual realms” (Sanders, 2017, p. 10). It involves motivating and inspiring both leaders and their followers to love and serve others (Sweeny & Fry, 2012). As a theory, spiritual leadership is consistent with and can be used with other iterations of transformative leadership theory. Spiritual leaders are keenly aware of the responsibility to re-direct followers “away from the impossible and toward the greatness of God” (Sanders, 2017, p.139). For instance, a leader who trusts in God’s provision may find it easier to encourage the setting of stretch goals or goals that do not immediately seem reachable. Such an effort illustrates how spiritual leadership could influence or be an overlay to Bass’s Intellectual Stimulation approach (as cited in Northouse, 2016).

**Conclusion**

As movement from one leadership era to another occurred, the focus of leadership shifted historically. The first era was one dimensional, focusing on the leader. Over time, other leadership factors were considered such as relationships, situations, group processes, and organizational needs. “Finally, the Transformational Era saw leadership as occurring at all levels of the organization, affected by the persons involved, their situations, and their influences on each other” (King, 1990, p. 50). This present-day era has a shared focus between the leader and followers who both are transformed for mutual and organizational benefit, to the glory of God.
Leadership and Emotional Competence (Observation 3)

A review of literature reveals that there is a connection between emotional intelligence and leadership (Carroll, 2017; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016). Emotional intelligence or competence is a component of leadership. Effective leadership requires strong emotional competence (Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017). Carroll found that the level of leadership in the organizational hierarchy will have a statistically significant effect on measuring the relationship between emotional intelligence and charismatic transformational leadership behavior. Northouse (2016) shares a 2006 study by Jung and Sosik which found that charismatic leaders consistently possess traits of emotional intelligence such as self-monitoring, engagement in impression management, and motivation to attain social power. These data support the researcher’s observation that there is a relationship between leadership and emotional competence.

Summary

This section rehearsed the theoretical bases for the study by reviewing its major prongs. Seminal emotional intelligence theories were shared. Discussion regarding the distinction between major theories revealed the need to develop a new term, “emotional competence,” which was a variable of this study. Christian practices comprise the second variable. The major theory is that spiritual growth is stimulated by participation in Christian practices and aligns with learning modes. The evolution of leadership was rehearsed, moving from the Great Man theory to transformational or servant leadership.

As millennials become leaders, emotional competence may impact their leadership effectiveness. Understanding if spiritual growth through Christian practices is related to emotional competence is helpful. Several leadership theories have been advanced to assess the
effectiveness of a leader. The current predominant theory is servant or transformational leadership which is a blend of secular practice and biblical truth. Reciprocal benefit between leader and follower is a distinguishing feature of transformational leadership. Reciprocity implies empathy which is one’s ability to understand feelings and to provide emotional support to people when needed (Rahman et al., 2016, p. 239).

Transformational leadership, which includes spiritual leadership, is the prevailing approach as millennials lead and emerge as leaders. This researcher will consider components of transformational leadership, in particular its tendency toward empathy, as a backdrop while exploring the relationship between the emotional competence and the Christian practices of millennials. “Emotional intelligence [competence] is easily considered supportive of transformational leadership because a transformational leader must be able to know and control his or her own emotions before they can speak to their followers in order to support each individual in a ‘caring and unique way’” (Goleman, 1995 as cited in Momeny & Gourgues, 2019, p. 231; see also Northouse, 2016).

The next section will provide data from the literature that describe the characteristics of millennials. The characteristics inform the study’s research through implication that millennials may not have strong emotional competence which supports effective leadership. The data in the next section warrant the researcher’s fourth observation presented in the opening of this chapter: Millennials are not inclined toward religious affiliation. It also supports the fifth observation: Millennials may have low emotional competence.

**Related Literature**

Christian leadership establishes a balance between biblical or divine truth and living in God’s created world. “The fact that one’s call to leadership is divine in origin does not mean one
leads or follows in the absence of human skills” (Langer, 2014, p. 78). Langer recommends learning leadership from Scripture as well as the world. From this view, the study explored the emotional competence of millennials. Determining the connection, if any, between their emotional competence (secular) and their Christian practices (spiritual) may inform leadership development strategies and Christian ministry practices for this population of interest.

The predominant prongs of this research were (a) leadership, (b) Christian practices, and (c) emotional competence. Previous sections of the chapter provided theological and theoretical data about the topic. At the onset of the chapter and based on a review of literature, the researcher offered the following five observations:

1. There is a connection between Christian practices and emotional competence.
2. There is a connection between Christian practices and leadership.
3. There is a connection between leadership and emotional competence.
4. Millennials are trending away from religious affiliation.
5. Millennials appear to have low emotional competence.

Theological data were provided in support of the connections between Christian practices, emotional competence, and leadership (the first two observations). Theoretical data were provided in support of the third observation, a connection between emotional competence and leadership.

The next section of the chapter focuses on the population of interest – millennials. It provides data in support of the fourth and fifth observations. Data and trends are provided regarding church affiliation and characteristics that speak to millennials’ emotional competence. The section concludes with a comparison of millennial characteristics to transformational or servant leadership.
Millennials

Millennial is the name given to the generation of people who were born between 1981 and 1996 inclusive (Serafino, 2018). The grouping of people into generations has been credited back to German Sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893-1947) and does not rely solely on one’s birth year. Mannheim’s theory is that generations are based on shared experiences such as noteworthy historical events within a set time-period (Deeken et al., 2008; Wolff, 1993). Wolff contends that shared experiences must occur during formative years to impact one’s development. Similarly, Koulopoulos and Keldsen (2014; 2016) contend, “…that generations represent distinct and separate groups of people with a common set of beliefs, experiences, and values about the way the world works” (p. 1). Depending on the source, the birth years assigned to generations vary. This study relied on the parameters articulated by the Pew Research Center – “a nonpartisan fact tank that informs the public about issues, attitudes, and trends shaping the world” (Dimock, 2019). Shared experiences of a generation may be the source for development of common characteristics between members of the generation.

Today, five generations have been identified (a) Silent, (b) Baby Boomer, (c) Generation X, (d) Millennial, and (e) Post-Millennial. This study focused on millennials. While all millennials are adults in 2021, (24 to 40 years old), post-millennials recently have begun to age into adulthood (18 to 24 years old). Literature is scant on post-millennials. For that reason, post-millennials did not join millennials as a population of interest in this study.

Trends | Millennials and Religious Affiliation (Observation 4)

Millennials became the largest segment (35 percent) of the American labor force in 2016 (Fry, 2018). The share of other generations in the labor market was: (a) Post-Millennials, 5 percent; (b) Generation X, 33 percent; (c) Baby Boomers, 25 percent; and (d) Silent Generation,
2 percent (Pew Research Center, 2018). This depiction is important to the study as it demonstrates that millennials are set to be leaders in American society today.

A 2015 study indicates that church is important to a small share of millennials. Thirty percent of that study’s participants stated that church is important, thirty percent stated that church is not important, and forty percent expressed indifference (Barna Group, 2015).

Millennials do not feel church is necessary. The reasons stated are:

- One can find God elsewhere,
- Church is not personally relevant,
- Church is boring,
- God is missing from church, and
- Church is out of date.

These data provide reasons why millennials may be trending away from church or religious affiliation.

In another Barna Group (2017) study, church attendance was shown to be inconsistent. A random sample of Americans was interviewed by telephone and online to discover patterns of church attendance. Three categories were set to measure attendance:

1. Churched – Participants had attended church within the past 7 days, except for special events.
2. Unchurched – Participants had not attended church within the past 6 months and had never attended church.
3. De-churched – Participants had been active previously but had not attended church within the past 6 months.

Of those interviewed: (a) 38% were churched, (b) 43% were unchurched, and (c) 34% were de-
churched. The data reflect that 77% of those interviewed had not attended church in the previous 6 months.

The church attendance trends reported by Barna Group (2017) may have adverse implications for millennials. Pew Research Center (2018) found that people who rarely or never attend religious services are younger, on average, than those who attend more regularly. About seven-in-ten are under the age of 30, while one-in-five are between the ages of 50 and 64, and just 7% are over the age of 65. The seven-in-ten group pertains to millennials and post-millennials; however, most of them are millennials.

These trends, as reported in the literature and included in this section, provide compelling information to support the researcher’s fourth observation. Millennials appear not to affiliate with communities of faith. Reasons range from lack of interest to the perception that they can find God elsewhere. Church affiliation or attendance usually is the launch pad to participation in Christian practices. Given the affiliation trends shown, millennials may not have opportunities for Christian practices. This would limit opportunities to positively influence emotional competence based on the results of this study.

**Characteristics | Millennials and Emotional Competence (Observation 5)**

Empathy is a component of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995) and is described as the ability to see the world as others do (Dolby, 2014) or to understand the emotional makeup of other people (Goleman, 1995). In literature, millennials appear to have difficulty with empathy as a trait and an ability. Dolby, a college professor of education, made observations about her students’ empathy which she connected to a study (Konrath et al., 2011) that found a 40% decline in college students’ capacity for empathy over the prior 4 decades.

Dolby (2014) prepared a case study for students in undergraduate Multiculturalism and
Education classes. The case involved sending toys to Haitian orphanages. The goal was to determine the students’ abilities to meet the needs of orphans based on empathy - the viewpoint of the orphanage, not the students’ viewpoints. Despite information from the orphanage that receiving toys would be problematic and potentially hazardous for orphans (i.e., small parts, cleanliness, batteries, etc.), the students moved forward with sending toys and considered the project successful. The students did not demonstrate capacity for empathy (Dolby, 2014). They did not consider information from others about how dangerous and harmful toys would be. The professor declared the case study exercises as anecdotal but acknowledged that research (Konrath et al., 2011) points toward similar conclusions. “The generation currently coming of age in our classrooms is not equipped to take on the challenges the world faces” (Dolby, 2014, p. 42). This behavior is relevant to the study because literature data show that emotional intelligence or competence and effective leadership include empathy.

Bland (2017) provides an undergraduate student millennial perspective. The author describes millennial classmates as disenfranchised and difficult to reach, possibly caused by having lived through a recession and constant war. This behavior is important to the study because emotionally intelligent or competent people are engaged with others, especially when in leadership roles.

Reed (2016), a religion professor, examines the priorities of persons in the millennial generation using identity theory. “Identity theory is a socio-psychological approach that hypothesizes that individuals are engaged in multiple identities” (Reed, 2016, p. 158). The key notion in identity theory is salience or relevance. One chooses the identity that is most relevant. Reed believes that, for persons in the millennial generation, “personal identity is more salient than group identity” (Reed, 2016, p. 159). Based on trends, Reed ascribes a large share of
millennials to be “nones,” describing them as persons who have selected no religious affiliation on national surveys (Reed, 2016, p. 154). The number of nones has grown significantly and contributes to the general decline of membership in institutional churches (Lipka, 2015). On behalf of the Pew Research Center, Lipka reports that 35 percent of adult millennials are religiously unaffiliated. The contention is that persons in the millennial generation may not affiliate with a church or faith if the church is contrary to their personal identities or beliefs. Personal identity trumps group identity or church affiliation. Reed acknowledges, however, that the salience of identity can be situational.

As a group, millennials have been described with positive and not-so-positive attributes, often in polar extremes (Appendix B). For instance, they are optimistic (Houlihan & Harvey, 2015); impatient (Terrero, 2016); and inclined toward volunteerism (Reed, 2016). While baby boomers have been characterized as hard workers who strive toward self-sufficiency, millennials are described as needing more hands-on guidance, continuous feedback, and structure when completing a task (Deeken et al., 2008). Other (workplace) needs assigned to millennials relate to motivation preferences, training, working styles, and inter-personal skills. While Appendix B descriptions have a wide scope, some descriptions align with discussions and trends which question the emotional competence or the religious affiliation of millennials and the overarching concern about effective leadership.

It is important to understand the shared experiences of persons born during the millennial timeframe. “The new Millennial cutoff of 1996 is important because it points to a generation that is old enough to have experienced and comprehend 9/11 while also finding their way through the 2008 recession as young adults” (Serafino, 2018, p. 3). Thus, millennials have experienced crisis and a poor economy during their formative years. Life’s experiences pour into one’s beliefs,
values, and feelings to form one’s worldview (Hiebert, 2008, p. 26). The crisis and economic challenges experienced by millennials could have impacted their sense of security and longevity adversely. These factors blended millennials into a shared culture that could explain their inward nature and focus on self while at the same time seeking outward opportunities.

**Millennials and Transformational or Servant Leadership**

Northouse (2016) endorses Larry C. Spears’s ten characteristics of servant leadership: (a) listening, (b) empathy, (c) healing, (d) awareness, (e) persuasion, (f) conceptualization, (g) foresight, (h) stewardship, (i) commitment, and (j) building community (pp. 228-229).

Millennials may not have the capacity for servant leadership as characteristics described earlier about millennials do not match all the servant leadership characteristics. The most concerning disconnect is empathy which requires listening and being attentive to the needs and desires of others. Millennials demonstrate sympathy, rather than empathy (Dolby, 2014). On the other hand, millennials are committed to people and caring about their communities (Schiffman & Krebs, 2019). Service is important to persons in the millennial generation which is evident by their support of social justice causes. While their participation in service is clear, a review of literature does not provide enough information regarding motive or the abilities of millennials to serve as leaders. How well millennials demonstrate the remaining servant leadership characteristics depends on their ability to manage salient personal identities (Reed, 2016) and narcissistic tendencies (Dolby, 2014; Reed, 2016). How well millennials demonstrate servant leadership may depend on their levels of emotional competence such as emotions management and empathy. It may also depend on their participation in Christian practices.

**Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature**

Success is the desired outcome as persons in the millennial generation lead or emerge
into leadership. A review of literature by the researcher implies a connection between emotional competence and leadership (Bennis, 1989; Carroll, 2017; Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011; Zalenik, 2004). The review suggested that millennials have difficulty with management of emotions (Dolby, 2014; Randstad & Future Workplace, 2016; Reed, 2016). Dolby postulates that millennials are not equipped to take on the challenges of today’s world due to a lack of empathy. In Goleman’s most recent model of emotional intelligence, empathy is a competency for social awareness. A lack of empathy suggests millennials may have an emotional competence deficit which could present leadership challenges for millennials. It is important to study the emotional competence of millennials as America’s present and emerging leaders to determine their capacity for success.

Malik (2017) found a positive correlation between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence using a generationally mixed sample. Since participation in Christian practices are an avenue toward spiritual growth, this researcher contends that participation in Christian practices also may be an avenue toward developing emotional competence. Research was needed to determine the correlation, if any, between the emotional competence and the Christian practices of persons in the millennial generation specifically. Given the trend of millennials choosing to be religiously unaffiliated (Barna Group, 2015), a positive correlation between these variables presents Christian ministries with an opportunity and an obligation to mentor millennials. This research provides foundational knowledge to this cause.

Profile of the Current Study

As millennials occupy and assume leadership roles, do they possess the leadership traits or characteristics necessary to lead America? Do these characteristics include
emotional competence? Literature reviewed by this researcher implies a connection between emotional competence and effective leadership (Bennis, 1989; Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011; Zalenik, 2004). Data in the literature also suggests a relationship, in varying degrees and forms, between Christian practices and emotional competence (Hartman, 2015; Liu, 2010; Malik, 2017). In support of these observations, this researcher provided theological and theoretical information.

This study explored the emotional competence and Christian practices of a sample of millennials who are affiliated with a large Baptist church in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. The objective was to determine the relationship, if any, between the emotional competence and Christian practices of persons in the millennial generation. There were six research questions.

To achieve research objectives, the researcher used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. The population of interest was millennials in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. Already-validated survey instruments were used. Electronic surveys were sent to a convenience sample. Questions: (a) screened participants for the study, (b) collected demographic information, (c) assessed their emotional competence, and (d) described their Christian practices. Data were collected from participant responses and statistically analyzed. Correlational statistics determined a relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices. Inferential statistics determined statistical significance of results and rejected all but one null hypotheses. Chapter three provides details of the research methodology for this study.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation. The aim was to determine if a higher or lower measure of emotional competence goes along with a corresponding higher or lower degree of participation in Christian practices. This chapter provides the research design synopsis, population, sampling procedures, limitations of generalization, ethical considerations, instrumentation, research procedures, data analysis and statistical procedures, and chapter summary.

Research Design Synopsis

The study was non-experimental with a quantitative correlational research design. Correlational designs describe and measure the relationship between variables or sets of scores (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This section provides an overview of the study’s problem, purpose statement, research questions and hypotheses, and the research design and methodology.

The Problem

The study sought to understand the relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices for millennials. As the largest generation in the American workforce (Fry, 2018), millennials’ present and emerging leadership is critical to the success of America. Two elements of effective leadership are empathy and emotions management (Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016). Studies have shown that millennials have difficulties in these areas (Dolby, 2014; Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017). If millennials do not have emotional competence, the quality of America’s and the churches’ leadership may be impacted. More studies were needed to explore the emotional competence of the millennial generation. There is a gap in literature regarding emotional competence and Christianity with a focus on
millennials. Researchers, such as Malik (2017) and Hartman (2015), have connected emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence or religiosity using generationally mixed samples. Similarly, this study assessed the relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices but with a focus on the millennial generation.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this non-experimental quantitative correlational study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

**Research Questions**

**RQ1.** What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials?

**RQ2.** What are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials?

**RQ3.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God?

**RQ4.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others?

**RQ5.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word?

**RQ6.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection?

In addition to research questions, quantitative studies usually include hypotheses that guide the research or that test theories or questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018; Roberts, 2010). Research hypotheses speculate about research findings; and, statistical hypotheses postulate about whether results are significant and not due to chance alone (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Due to the exploratory nature of this study, no research hypotheses were not established (Ahmad,
2016) as no variables were controlled or manipulated. Statistical hypotheses were established for research questions three through six which address the study’s main variables. Inferential statistics were used to understand the significance of data analysis results for these questions. Ahmad states that hypotheses should be established in studies that use inferential statistics. Null hypotheses were established for research questions three through six for the benefit of understanding any significance of data analysis results related to these research questions.

**Statistical Hypotheses - Null**

- **H₀₁**: None established
- **H₀₂**: None established
- **H₀₃**: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God.
- **H₀₄**: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others.
- **H₀₅**: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word.
- **H₀₆**: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection.

**Research Design and Methodology**

The study’s correlational design examined the relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices to determine the relationships, if any, between these variables for study participants. “A correlational study examines the extent to which differences in one characteristic or variable are associated with differences in one or more other characteristics or variables” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 137). In addition to indicating a relationship between variables, correlational statistics show the direction and the degree to which the variables are interrelated. For instance, Drummond (2020) used a non-experimental
quantitative correlational design to “examine whether there was a relationship between pastors’ perceptions of transformational leadership, pastors’ organizational change commitment, and their organization’s readiness for change” (p. 29). The current study used a correlational design to explore if there is a relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices for the population of interest and the magnitude and the direction of those relationships. Understanding the relationships informed the research problem.

**Population**

The study’s population of interest was Christian millennials who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. This region is part of the Richmond Metro Statistical Area (MSA) which is the nation’s 46th largest metro area (Greater Richmond Partnership, n.d.). The region is growing and the number of millennials moving to this area has increased.

The Richmond metro region is comprised of the city of Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico which account for 79 percent of the MSA7 (Greater Richmond Partnership, n.d.). Data presented by the Partnership was based on 2018 data from the American Community Survey. The Partnership states that 54 percent of the MSA population is between 25 and 64 years old. This age range encompasses most of the possible ages for millennials in 2018 (22 to 37 years old) and may be indicative of their growing population.

Persons in the millennial generation were born from 1981 through 1996 (Dimock, 2019). As of 2014, all persons born into the millennial generation are adults (at least 18 years old). U.S.

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7 The MSA also includes the cities of Petersburg, Colonial Heights, and Hopewell as well as the counties of Amelia, Charles City, Dinwiddie, Goochland, King and Queen, King William, New Kent, Powhatan, Prince George, and Sussex (Greater Richmond Partnership, n.d.).
Census data (n.d.) for 2019 estimated over 152,941 millennials\(^8\) were living in the region: (a) 50,970 in Richmond, (b) 48,370 in Henrico, (c) 42,956 in Chesterfield, and (d) 10,645 in Hanover. This researcher did not locate race or ethnicity census data specifically for millennials in this data set. Race and ethnicity data were located for the general population and showed Caucasians as the majority racial segment in the region, nearly doubling the number of African Americans which is the next largest racial segment (Table 2).

**Table 2**

Richmond Metro Region Race and Ethnic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>African American or Black</th>
<th>Caucasian or White</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>American Indian or Alaskan Indian</th>
<th>Native Hawaiian or other Pacific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Richmond</strong></td>
<td>104272</td>
<td>102870</td>
<td>4673</td>
<td>16805</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chesterfield</strong></td>
<td>88455</td>
<td>232602</td>
<td>16332</td>
<td>33383</td>
<td>3649</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hanover</strong></td>
<td>9874</td>
<td>90541</td>
<td>1637</td>
<td>3144</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Henrico</strong></td>
<td>102393</td>
<td>180176</td>
<td>28217</td>
<td>19734</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>304994</strong></td>
<td><strong>606189</strong></td>
<td><strong>50859</strong></td>
<td><strong>73066</strong></td>
<td><strong>4957</strong></td>
<td><strong>617</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*source: U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.) 2019 Population Estimates - Demographic*

Due to size and geographical complexity, all millennials in the region were not included in the study. Even if identified, there was no way of knowing which millennials in the region ascribed to Christian practices. Churches in the Richmond metro region provided access to a population with religious relevance to the study’s variables of emotional competence and especially Christian practices. After vetting several churches in the region, a convenience sample was extracted from ABC church.

ABC church is located in one of two localities in the region described as highly

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\(^8\) Total represents millennials ages 25-34. Other millennials in 2019 were ages 23, 24, and 35 through 38. Census data for these ages were mixed with non-millennials and could not be extracted.
concentrated with millennials. One of the zip codes in the city of Richmond saw a 43.5 percent growth in the number of millennial residents between 2011 and 2016 (Scott’s Addition Boulevard Association, 2020). However, Henrico had the most millennial residents than any other locality in central Virginia at that time (Wilder, 2016). Later, based on 2019 U.S. Census data, the city of Richmond was determined to be the locality in the region with the most millennials. Without surveying all churches in the region, the church with the most affiliated millennials cannot be known. Churches located in the city of Richmond where there is a high concentration of millennial residents provided a better chance of locating millennials who practice Christian disciplines (one of the study’s variables). ABC church is located in the city of Richmond and was convenient to the researcher. Additionally, ABC church responded to the researcher’s vetting. The researcher is not affiliated with ABC church but is familiar with the church. Through informal contacts, the researcher learned that ABC church has a high concentration of millennials. After learning the research purpose, ABC church’s pastor agreed to allow participation in the study.

**Sampling Procedures**

Research participants for the study were identified through a non-probability convenience sample. The study’s general population is Christian millennials who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. This researcher did not have the means to access the general population. ABC church which is located in the region provided a sampling frame – list of millennials to invite to the study.

At the time of this study, ABC church was comprised of 1,289 members including 395 millennials. This meant that millennials comprised 30.64 percent of ABC’s total congregants. An acceptable Margin of Error (ME), used by survey researchers, falls between 4 percent and 8
percent with a Confidence Level (CL) of 95 percent (Pollfish, n.d.). Given the accessible population size of 395 active millennials and the church’s total active membership of 1,289 - to reach a 95 percent CL and 5 percent ME - the researcher hoped for no less than 180 respondents (Calculator.net, n.d.). Assuming a response rate of 50% or less, all 395 millennials\(^9\) were invited by email to participate in the study (Appendix C).

**Limits of Generalization**

The study sought an understanding about the emotional competence of millennials who worshipped in Virginia’s Richmond metro region by sampling millennials at ABC church, a Baptist church. Once the data were ascertained, this researcher explored whether a relationship existed between emotional competence scores and levels of Christian practices. Because study participants were limited to a specific denomination, results do not generalize to millennials from other denominations.

The church’s demographic makeup limited generalizability. The sample was non-probable and not stratified which means true characteristics of the general population, such as education level; male-female ratio; and race or ethnicity proportions, were not represented in the sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Without a stratified sample, generalizability is impacted.

Study participants were millennials, ages 24 to 39. Research results do not generalize to other age groups. Sample participants were affiliated as active members of a church. The generalizability of research results is limited to similarly situated millennials.

The survey’s response rate impacts generalizability. This researcher sought a reliable

\(^9\) Initially, 404 email invitations were sent based on the original roster received. The ABC church roster later was reduced to 395 millennials. Reductions occurred when respondents notified the church or researcher of non-affiliation or when duplications were identified.
sample from the accessible population. The goal was at least 180 responses to reach a 5 percent ME and a 95 percent CL. The study produced 45 complete survey responses which achieved a 13.24 percent ME at the 95 percent CL. This means that there is a 95 percent chance that study results deviate from reality in the general population by plus or minus 13.63 percent.

Since the CL influences statistical comparisons, statistical significance was set and applied to study data at the less than five percent level ($p$ value < .05). The outcomes will be discussed in the analysis sections of Chapters Four and Five.

**Ethical Considerations**

Toward ethical research, this researcher completed the CITI’s social-behavioral-educational (SBE) basic course on August 16, 2019 and is certified through August 15, 2022. The certificate is on file with Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) which authorized the researcher to proceed with the study on December 21, 2020 (Appendix D). This researcher complied with all related federal mandates and university procedures.

There are no known ethical concerns regarding the study. This researcher had no known conflicts of interests and sought no financial gain from the research effort. Participants were told the research purpose and were asked to consent to participate (Appendix E). Participants were not blind to any research intent.

The study did not collect identifiable information about participants. This researcher used the Qualtrics survey platform and elected not to collect email addresses along with survey responses. Completed responses will be kept in the Qualtrics system until 2026 or five years after study completion. Computer files, such as spreadsheets, will be password-protected and kept by the researcher for the same retention period. Physical reports and related documents will be kept in a file cabinet only accessed by the researcher and destroyed five years after study completion.
**Instrumentation**

This researcher collected quantitative data via an electronic survey. The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation. Participants were drawn from a church in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. Initial questions were used to screen persons for study participation (Appendix F). The instrument had three subsequent parts to capture pertinent information related to the research questions: (a) Survey, Part 1 - Demographics (Appendix G); (b) Survey, Part 2 - Profile of Emotional Competence - PEC (Appendix H); and (c) Survey, Part 3 - Christian Spiritual Participation Profile - CSPP (Appendix I). A Question-Topic-Statement (QTS) chart provides the connection between research questions, sub-topics embedded in the questions, and survey statements that are connected to each research question (Appendix J). The PEC (Appendix H) was designed by Brasseur et al. (2013). This researcher received permission to use the PEC in the study (Appendix K). The CSPP (Appendix I) was developed by Thayer (2004) who granted permission for this researcher to use the instrument (Appendix L).

**Screening Questions**

Birth year and church affiliation were screening criteria for study participation. Consent to participate in the study, also, was reverified on the screening page. To participate, respondents had to be born between 1981 and 1996, inclusive, and affiliated with ABC church. To capture this information, this researcher developed two closed-ended screening questions followed by a consent statement (Appendix F). Any one of three responses prevented study participation:

1. Are you affiliated with ABC church? “NO”
2. What year were you born? “1980 OR BEFORE” or “1997 OR AFTER”
3. If I meet the criteria to participate, I give consent to do so… “No, I do not consent.”
Respondents not allowed to participate in the study were thanked for their interests through an electronic message which explained the parameters of the study (Appendix M).

All other selected responses to screening questions allowed participants’ entry into the study and allowed participants to complete the three-part survey including: (a) additional demographics, (b) emotional competence, and (c) Christian practices. Participant instructions were provided for each part of the survey (Appendix N). The next three sub-sections describe how the survey parts were designed followed by subsections about the validation and reliability of the survey instruments.

**Part 1 – Demographic Information**

Respondents who provided consent, declared their affiliation with ABC church, and who identified with the millennial generation accessed the survey. Part one collected additional demographic data (Appendix G). These data, while not directly related to the purpose statement and the research questions, revealed other trends relevant to the study of emotional competence or Christian practices.

Part one of the survey instrument included three closed-ended questions designed by this researcher to capture age, gender, and race data. Multiple choice response options were offered. Standard responses for gender (male and female) were allowed plus an option for participants who did not wish to declare a gender. The race or ethnicity responses were based on the predominant categories used by the U.S. Census Bureau. An option also was available for participants who did not wish to declare race or ethnicity or who did not identify with the listed groups. The final question in part one asked each participant to select an age between 24 and 40, inclusive. This provided a specific age in support of the birth year declared during screening and re-affirmed the participant’s status in the millennial generation.
Part 2 – Profile of Emotional Competence (Research Questions 1 and 3 through 6)

Once screened for the study and providing additional demographic information (part one), participants completed the Profile of Emotional Competence or PEC (Appendix H). The PEC instrument was used to compute a Global Emotional Competence (GEC) score, an Interpersonal Emotional Competence (Inter-EC) score, and an Intra-personal Emotional Competence (Intra-EC) score. Scores for dimensions that comprise inter-personal and intra-personal emotional competence also were computed.

Brasseur et al.’s (2013) PEC is comprised of 50 statements which cover five dimensions of emotional competence: (a) identification, (b) understanding, (c) expression, (d) regulation, and (e) use. Theoretical definitions for each dimension are described (Brasseur et al., 2013, p. 2):

(a) Identification is the ability to perceive an emotion when it appears and to identify it.

(b) Expression is the ability to express emotions in a socially accepted manner.

(c) Understanding is the ability to understand the causes and consequences of emotions, and to distinguish triggering factors from causes.

(d) Regulation is the ability to regulate stress or emotions when they are not appropriate to the context.

(e) Use is the ability to use emotions to improve reflection, decisions, and actions.

There are 10 statements or subscales within each dimension: five Inter-EC factor statements and five Intra-EC factor statements. Intra-personal refers to the handling of one’s own emotions and Inter-personal refers to the handling of others’ emotions (Brasseur et al., 2013).

Scores were formulated from participant responses to 50 statements which asked participants to rate how closely each statement resembled the way they deal with their emotions in daily life (Brasseur et al., 2013). Response options were depicted on a Likert scale using a
span of one to five, with one meaning the statement does not apply (“not me”) and five meaning the statement describes likely behavior (“describes me”). The GEC score is the mean of the 50 scores or responses to the PEC statements.\(^{10}\) Half of the statements relate to management of self (intra-personal) and half relate to management of others (inter-personal). Likert scale responses related to inter-personal statements are tabulated to reach an Inter-EC score. Likert scale responses related to intra-personal statements are tabulated to reach an Intra-EC score. Responses may be assessed further by dimension to learn the samples description of behavior related to specific competencies. Thirteen EC scores were generated for each respondent.

**Part 3 – Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (Research Questions 2 through 6)**

Once screened for the study, providing additional demographic information (part one), and completing the PEC (part two), participants completed the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile or CSPP (Appendix I). The CSPP produced scores for participants in each of 10 Christian practices: (a) prayer, (b) repentance, (c) worship, (d) Bible reading or study, (e) meditation, (f) critical reflection, (g) evangelism, (h) fellowship, (i) service, and (j) stewardship. Each practice score is assigned to one of four Spiritual Development Modes (Table 1).

Scores were formulated from participant responses to 50 statements which asked participants to rate how often the statement reflected their spiritual lives. Response options were depicted on a Likert scale that ranged from Very Frequently to Never as follows:

- 5 represented Very Frequently,
- 4 represented Frequently,

\(^{10}\) Some scores are reverse-scored and the instrument identifies which responses or scores to reverse. Reverse-scored means the value assigned to the participant’s response is changed to a value at the opposite end of the Likert scale. For example, on a one to five point scale, a response of four would be changed to two before being tabulated with other numbers.
• 3 represented Occasionally,
• 2 represented Rarely,
• 1 represented Very Rarely, and
• 0 represented Never.

Each statement relates to one of the Christian practices which, when respective responses were averaged, resulted in a score for each of the 10 Christian practices. Each practice is assigned to one of four Spiritual Development Modes (SDMs) based on the learning mode that the practice nurtures (Thayer, 1999). The modes are: (a) Growing through a relationship with God, (b) Growing through the Word, (c) Growing through critical reflection, and (d) Growing through relationships with others. Thirteen Christian practices scores\textsuperscript{11} were generated for each respondent and then averaged to compute thirteen sample scores. Each sample SDM score was compared statistically to the GEC score to determine if any relationship exists between emotional competence and Christian practices.

Validity

Instrumentation is central to research. “Validity depends on careful instrument construction” (Roberts, 2010). This study’s survey instrument contained questions developed by the researcher and statements developed by others. Screening questions and demographic questions were developed by the researcher. They were simple and close-ended. This researcher ensured that each question: (a) was necessary to inform the research questions, (b) had concise wording, (c) was not offensive, and (d) was not biased. Double barrel questions were not included in the screening and demographic questions.

Statements in the remainder of the study (parts two and three) were created by other

\textsuperscript{11} The Critical Reflection SDM score and practice score are the same score.
researchers and measured emotional competence (PEC) or Christian practices (CSPP) using two previously validated instruments. “Validity is the degree to which a study accurately reflects or assesses the specific construct that the researcher is attempting to measure” (Bredfeldt, n.d.-c). Statements regarding validation processes for the PEC and CSPP are in the next two subsections.

Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC)

The PEC was designed to be an efficient and valid tool to measure emotional competence. Designers sought to measure, distinctly, the instrument’s five core emotional competencies: (a) identification, (b) understanding, (c) expression, (d) regulation, and (e) use (Brasseur et al., 2013). Each core competency is measured inter-personally and intra-personally, resulting in Inter-EC and Intra-EC scores. The GEC is the mean of all responses, after values for certain responses were reverse-scored.

To validate the statements leading to the inter-personal, intra-personal, and global scores, instrument designers checked the 50 statements that comprise the PEC using 6 different samples and several statistical procedures. Statements first were checked for understandability and none needed adjustment or deletion (Brasseur et al., 2013). Initially, 20 statements were deleted for poor psychometric quality due to internal inconsistency. This reduced the number of statements from 70 to 50 statements or subscales (Brasseur et al., 2013).

The instrument’s construct or conceptual validity was established using factorial analysis. Construct validity determines if scores measure the concept or theory intended and if the scores serve useful purposes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Brasseur et al. (2013) sought to examine validity of the 10 competency scores, the 5 inter-personal subscales, and the 5 intra-personal subscales. Results “confirm both the link between the intra- and inter-personal dimension of EC, as well as their relative independence” (Brasseur et al., 2013, p. 7).
**Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP)**

The CSPP combines theory and theology to measure spiritual growth (Thayer, 2004). Citing Dittes (1969), the instrument’s designer subscribes to the notion that variables in religious behavior are the same as in any behavior. “Basic spiritual disciplines and Kolb’s experiential learning theory were integrated toward the construction of the CSPP” (Thayer, 2004, p. 195). The instrument includes 50 statements that respondents rated in respect to their lived experiences. Each statement is assigned to one of ten Christian practices. Each Christian practice is grouped into one of four SDMs. Scores for each SDM are tabulated when the ratings of Christian practices for the category are averaged. This process results in each respondent receiving four CSPP scores, one for each SDM. During the study, the four SDM scores were compared to the PEC scores to determine if there were a relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation.

The instrument’s 10 Christian practices or behaviors were established through face validity and professional nomination (Thayer, 2004). The initial list of practices was generated by theologians, religious educators, New Testament writings, or advocated by Jesus using the definition, “an activity of the mind or body purposefully undertaken by Christians to respond to God or to place oneself before God” (Thayer, 2004, p. 197). The ten more frequently mentioned disciplines or practices were selected. “The critical concern was to select basic disciplines that function primarily in one of the four learning modes and to assure that all four learning modes were represented” (Thayer, 2004, p. 197).

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To portray the disciplines or practices, statements were formed through which respondents could rate their behaviors. Initially, 188 items were generated and evaluated by “professional nomination” (Golden et al., 1990; as cited in Thayer, 2004, p. 197). The evaluators included six theologians or religious educators who had written on some aspect of spirituality or who had taught spirituality. The evaluators reduced the items to 131 statements (Thayer, 2004).

A panel of eight educators familiar with Kolb’s (1984) learning theory classified the 10 practices or disciplines into Kolb’s four learning modes. The educators had written articles using Kolb’s (1984) learning theory, had published with him, or had based their dissertations on it. Items were further reduced to 87 through factor analysis using the principal components methods with both varimax and oblimin rotation (Thayer, 2004). Items were retained that correlated highly on one scale but not highly on any other. Additional steps were taken to delete, add, and test items until 50 were identified. The above procedures related to the selection of Christian practices, construction of items or statements, panels for face validity, and selection of final items support the content validity of the CSPP (Thayer, 2004).

Construct validity was established through a comparison between the SDM constructs to the four predicated scales of Kolb’s (1984) learning theory. “When both varimax and oblimin rotations of factor analysis using a four-factor solution were done with the items of CSPP’s final form, all of the obtained factors corresponded to the proposed factors” (Thayer, 2004, p. 201).

Discriminant validity was established through correlational assessments of the four SDM scores. One scale had a “ceiling effect” tendency which the researcher explained may have been due to the location of contact with participants (Thayer, 2004, p. 202).

Scales from five construct-related instruments were used to test for criterion validity. “All of the CSPP scales show little correlation with the Social Desirability Scale....exhibit negative
correlations with the Extrinsic Scale and positive correlations with the Intrinsic Scale, which is expected for a measure of Christian spirituality” (Thayer, 2004, p. 202).

Reliability

Reliability refers to consistency or repeatability of an instrument (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). There are two ways to determine reliability: test-retest and internal consistency. Creswell and Creswell state that internal consistency is the “most important form of reliability for multi-item instruments” (p. 154). Internal consistency compares people’s responses about the same construct. These authors further explain that a scale’s internal consistency is quantified by a Cronbach’s alpha (α) value that ranges between zero and one, with optimal values ranging between seven tenths (.7) and nine tenths (.9). Test-retest focuses on whether “the scale is reasonably stable over time with repeated administrations” (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 154). Statements regarding reliability tests on the PEC and CSPP are in the next two subsections.

Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC)

Involving the same six samples as were used for validity analysis, Brasseur et al. (2013) checked the PEC instrument for reliability. Brasseur et al. used internal consistency to determine reliability and found “good internal consistency of the subscales (α from .60 to .83), a very good consistency of the two [inter-personal and intra-personal] factors (> .84), and of the [Global EC] total score (> .88)” (p. 4).

On page four, Brasseur et al. (2013) describe steps taken to test the reliability of the PEC instrument:

Bilateral Pearson’s correlations were performed on the 10 subscales, the 2 factors scores and the global score. All correlations are significant (p < .001). Results show strong correlations between each subscale and the global score (from .50 to .71). At the intra-
personal level, correlations between subscales are moderate to strong (from .34 to .60). At the inter-personal level, correlations within inter-personal scales are moderate to strong (from .44 to .48), except for the utilization scale which shows lower correlations with other scales (.19 to .41).

**Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP)**

Internal consistency and test-retest were used to evaluate the reliability of the CSPP (Thayer, 2004). “The coefficients of internal consistency (coefficient alphas) for the four scales ranged from .84 to .92” (Thayer, 2004, p. 200). While a test-retest was not performed on the final form of the CSPP, this was performed on the initial form. Using a set of 246 college students for both the test and retest, administered 4 to 7 weeks apart, internal consistency for the four scales ranged from .68 to .87 (Thayer, 2004).

**Research Procedures**

This section provides an overview of steps this researcher took to conduct the study. It includes initial steps, approvals, communications, and data collection. Information about data analysis and statistical procedures will be shared in a subsequent section.

**Initial Steps**

Initial steps focused on preparation, organization, and authorizations. The study’s survey was a combination of questions developed by the researcher and statements from the PEC (Brasseur, 2013) and the CSPP (Thayer, 2004) instruments. Prior to using the statements, the researcher requested and received authorization to use the instruments (Appendices K & L). To reach an accessible population, the researcher explored the targeted geographical area and identified three potential churches. Resources, such as statistical support, were established to complement the researcher’s skills toward project completion.
**Approvals**

The researcher developed the survey instrument in the Qualtrics platform using researcher-developed screening and demographic questions combined with statements from the PEC and CSPP instruments. The electronic survey was approved for distribution by the Program on December 17, 2020. Once the Prospectus was defended and approved, this researcher sought approval from Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) to proceed with the research. Approval was granted on December 21, 2020 (Appendix D). The researcher had identified three churches located in the geographical location of interest (Virginia’s Richmond metro region). After IRB approval, the researcher connected with the church pastors to be sure there was mutual understanding about the study, its purpose, connection points, and the associated timeframes. The pastor at ABC church responded during the initial period and authorized access to the study’s population – millennials at ABC church. Contact information was received in an excel spreadsheet format. With the instrument approved, participants in place, and support needs established, the study moved toward execution.

**Communications**

The study was conducted during a one-month period. On January 7, 2021, the researcher sent email invitations to millennials at ABC church (Appendix C) and requested responses by January 21, 2021. The study aimed for 180 to 202 participants.

The number of initial responses did not meet the desired goal of at least 180 completed surveys. Sixteen responses had been received and one did not meet the screening criteria. The data collection period was extended to February 4, 2021. By the extended due date, eight additional responses were received and three did not meet the screening criteria. This resulted in 20 completed surveys. On February 5 and February 6, the researcher telephoned potential
respondents whose telephone numbers were on the contact list provided by ABC church. The purpose of the calls was to see if the invitation to participate in the study had been received and to answer questions, if any. This researcher carefully emphasized the voluntary nature of participation in the study during the telephone calls. Seventy-three potential respondents were reached including fifty-eight who asked the researcher to resend the survey link (Table 3).

Table 3

Results of Follow-up Telephone Calls to ABC Church Millennials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed Survey Already</th>
<th>Re-send Survey Link</th>
<th>No longer Affiliated with ABC Church</th>
<th>Not a Millennial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL Reached: 73

As a result of telephone follow-up, 28 additional responses were received including 2 who did not consent to participate in the study and 1 who did not respond to all questions. In total, 52 responses were received and 45 were complete.

Data Collection

The survey instrument was designed to collect numerical responses to statements in two primary data sets – emotional competence and Christian practices. Additionally, demographic data (race and gender) were collected in string format and later converted to numeric. The Qualtrics system collected data toward computation of 26 Emotional Competence (EC) and Spiritual Development Mode (SDM) scores:

- **GEC**
- **Inter-EC**
  - Regulation dimension – competency
  - Expression dimension – competency
• Identification dimension – competency
  o Use dimension – competency
  o Understanding dimension – competency

• Intra-EC
  o Regulation dimension – competency
  o Expression dimension – competency
  o Identification dimension – competency
  o Use dimension – competency
  o Understanding dimension – competency

• Relationship with God (SDM-G)
  o Prayer practice
  o Repentance practice
  o Worship practice

• Relationship with the Word (SDM-W)
  o Bible reading or study practice
  o Meditation practice

• Critical Reflection (SDM-CR) and practice

• Relationship with Others (SDM-O)
  o Evangelism practice
  o Fellowship practice
  o Service practice
  o Stewardship practice

Once collected the data were exported to an excel workbook.
Data Analysis and Statistical Procedures

This section describes how the data were analyzed and how research questions were answered. This study was designed to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation. Collected data were transferred from excel to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 26 software) wherein statistical procedures and analysis were performed.

Data Analysis

All collected data were self-declared by the study participants and were mostly in numerical form. Demographic non-numerical data were assigned numerical values prior to analysis. Data collected were continuous and on an interval scale.

The variables of the study are emotional competence and Christian practices. Six research questions were raised including four that explore the relationship between these variables. Study participants responded to statements related to each of the two variables. These statements were taken from the PEC instrument (Appendix H) and the CSPP instrument (Appendix I). The Question-Topic-Statement chart (Appendix J) displays the connections between the statements, the research questions, and the variables studied.

To answer the research questions, three primary emotional competence scores and four primary Christian practices scores were tabulated. Sub-scale scores were tabulated as well. The three primary emotional competence scores are: (a) GEC, (b) Inter-EC, and (c) Intra-EC. These scores answer research question one and help to evaluate research questions three through six. The four primary Christian practices or SDM scores are: (a) SDM-G, (b) SDM-W, (c) SDM-CR, and (d) SDM-O. These scores answer research question two and help to evaluate research questions three through six. The GEC score was compared statistically to the four SDM scores to
evaluate the research questions and statistical hypotheses. The GEC score also was compared to scores for the 10 Christian practices (subscales). Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were employed to report and analyze the data and results.

**Statistical Procedures**

This study used descriptive statistics to explain millennials’ self-reporting of behavior related to emotional competence and participation in Christian practices. The study employed correlational statistics to determine if relationships existed between these variables and the extent of those relationships, if any. To measure variables and their relationships well, the appropriate correlational statistics must be employed (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Selection is based on the nature of data collected. Because data for the primary variables involved continuous data,¹⁴ the Pearson’s product-moment correlation (Pearson’s r) was an appropriate statistic to use (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). It is a widely used statistic for determining correlation and relies on four assumptions. The next four subsections discuss how this study’s data compared to assumptions for use of the Pearson’s product-moment correlation.

**Pearson’s Assumption 1 - Data must be interval or ratio (continuous)**

**Assumption met.** Using a quantitative research design, this study collected continuous and interval data on the main variables of the study.

**Pearson’s Assumption 2 - Data must reflect a linear pattern**

**Assumption partially met.** Scatterplots for the four main comparisons of variables show that the data reflected a linear pattern for three of the four variable combinations (Figures 1-3). SDM-CR data did not produce a linear pattern.

¹⁴ Likert scale values usually are ordinal (qualitative) but can be treated as continuous (quantitative data) which has interval and ratio levels of measurement (Laerd Statistics, n.d.).
Figure 1

*Scatterplot of the Linear Relationship between GEC and SDM-G*

*Note.* Each dot represents an individual participant. The figure illustrates the linear pattern and positive relationship between GEC and SDM-G.

Figure 2

*Scatterplot of the Linear Relationship between GEC and SDM-O*

*Note.* Each dot represents an individual participant. The figure illustrates the linear pattern and positive relationship between GEC and SDM-O.
Figure 3

Scatterplot of the Linear Relationship between GEC and SDM-W

![Scatterplot Image]

*Note.* Each dot represents an individual participant. The figure illustrates the linear pattern and positive relationship between GEC and SDM-W.

**Pearson’s Assumption 3 - Data must not include significant outliers**

*Assumption met.* The GEC to SDM-G comparison was found to have two outliers (scores less than 2.4). The GEC to SDM-CR comparison also was found to have two outliers (scores less than 2.1). With nothing to suggest the data were erroneous, they were not removed.

**Pearson’s Assumption 4 - Data must reflect a normal distribution (bell curve)**

*Assumption partially met.* The Shapiro-Wilk normality test was conducted to determine if the data collected were parametric or the distribution consistent with the bell curve. Two of the four main variable combinations (GEC to SDM-O and GEC to SDM-W) were normally distributed. The GEC to SDM-G and the GEC to SDM-CR variable combinations were skewed as data were not normally distributed. The latter combinations were re-tested using a non-parametric correlational statistic.

**Pearson’s Product-moment and Spearman’s Rank-order Correlations**

Before data collection, the statistical procedures plan was to evaluate the relationships...
between emotional competence and Christian practices using the Pearson’s product-moment correlational test. Research questions pertain to the following four primary variable comparisons: (a) GEC to SDM-G, (b) GEC to SDM-O, (c) GEC to SDM-W, and (d) GEC to SDM-CR. Post data collection, it was observed that data for two variable comparisons met the four Pearson’s assumptions and two partially met the assumptions. Of the two variable comparisons that did not meet all Pearson’s assumptions, one comparison met two of the four assumptions and the other met one assumption. The Pearson’s unmet assumptions related to data outliers and data that were not normally distributed. For that reason, Spearman rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman’s rho or ρ) was used in companion with Pearson’s product-moment correlation to assess the correlation between emotional competence and Christian practices. The Spearman’s rank-order test was applied to the two variable comparisons that did not meet all Pearson’s assumptions. This non-parametric correlation is recommended for assessments when the data are interval and contain outliers (Social Science Statistics, 2021).

**Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics were used in the study with a focus on measures of central tendency and measures of association. Central tendency includes the calculation or use of mean data. The mean is a point at which a variable’s data hover (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016).

In this study, means were computed from collected data and then used to describe or assess associations between variables. Correlational statistics were chosen because the processes reveal whether two or more variables are associated with one another (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The correlational coefficient evaluated the direction of the relationships, if any, between GEC and SDMs (grouped Christian practices) as well as the strength of those relationships.

To determine if there were a relationship between millennials’ emotional competence and
Christian practices, the researcher evaluated correlations between GEC and practices in two schemes: (a) GEC to 4 SDMs and (b) GEC to 10 Practices. Each relationship was described using correlational test results between one (ρ or \( r = 1 \)) and negative one (ρ or \( r = -1 \)) and provides the direction and strength of the relationship (Appendix O).

**Inferential statistics**

The researcher employed inferential statistics to test the null hypotheses. Statistical hypotheses, such as null, postulate that any findings from the study would be the result of chance alone (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The study was approached with a .95 CL which means the significance level (alpha value or \( \alpha \)) was set at less than .05 probability. The calculated probability (\( p \) value) of study results were compared to the alpha value to determine statistical significance. If the calculated probability of study results was less than the alpha (\( p < .05 \)), the null hypothesis was rejected and the result deemed statistically significant or not due to chance.

**Chapter Summary**

This research contributes to the field of leadership by understanding the emotional competence of Christian millennials and by determining if there were a relationship between their emotional competence and their Christian practices. The intended population of interest was millennials in Virginia’s Richmond metro region. ABC church offered an accessible population and a sampling frame. Located in a geographical area with an increasing number of millennial residents, the church’s roster had a high concentration of millennials and was convenient to the researcher.

This study was a non-experimental, quantitative correlational study that used convenience sampling. Invitations were sent to 395 millennials resulting in 45 completed surveys. Descriptive, correlational, and inferential statistics were used to analyze and present the
data and research findings which are shared in Chapter Four. Six research questions were explored. The study’s variables were emotional competence and Christian practices. Emotional competence includes two factors or sub-variables: (a) intra-personal and (b) inter-personal – each with five dimensions or competencies. Ten Christian practices were evaluated and grouped into four SDM or growth modes (Table 1). The study’s main evaluation was of the relationship between the GEC score and each of the four SDM scores. Several additional and related relationships between variables and sub-variables were evaluated.

The next two chapters share details about the study’s results. Descriptive statistics assessed levels of emotional competence and Christian practices. Correlational statistics identified if relationships existed between variables; and if so, correlational statistics indicated the direction and strengths of those relationships. Inferential statistics provided information about the statistical significance of the research findings. In addition to findings and their significance, implications and generalizability of results will be discussed along with implications for additional research.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this non-experimental quantitative correlational study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation. Interest in this topic was prompted by literature that describes millennials as being emotionally immature. If true, emotional immaturity would impact millennials’ ability to lead - since a review of literature also indicates a positive relationship between effective leadership and emotional competence. Compelled to develop the “next generation” in leadership, as Moses urged the Israelites to do in the transmission of faith (Revised Standard Bible, 1962/1973, Deut. 6), this researcher explored the connection between Christian practices and emotional competence. Chapter Four reiterates research components shared in earlier chapters related to research questions and hypotheses. Then, it describes the study’s compilation protocol and measures as well as the demographics of the study’s sample. Central to this chapter is its discussion of data analysis and findings. The chapter ends with evaluation of the research design.

Research Questions

**RQ1.** What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials?

**RQ2.** What are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials?

**RQ3.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God?

**RQ4.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others?

**RQ5.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word?

**RQ6.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection?
Statistical Hypotheses - Null

$H_01$: None established.

$H_02$: None established.

$H_03$: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God.

$H_04$: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others.

$H_05$: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word.

$H_06$: There is no correlation between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection.

Compilation Protocol and Measures

This section describes the protocol and measures used to manage and analyze the data from this quantitative research. Numbers were assigned, compiled, and manipulated to describe study participants as well as to assess and explain the relationships between variables that were studied. Types of statistics used were determined by the nature of the data collected.

Protocol

Data from respondents were collected through the Qualtrics survey platform and exported to an excel spreadsheet. Once exported, the data were transferred into a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 26 software) for manipulation. String-formatted data (i.e., word responses) were transformed and coded into numeric format. The transformed data were coded into the respective scales and associated subscales consistent with the scoring sheet for each measure. Response data related to emotional competence were tabulated based on instructions from the source instrument, PEC (Brasseur et.al., 2013). Twenty-one responses generated by statements from the PEC required reverse-scoring (Brasseur et al., 2013). This was done prior to score computation. Response data related to Christian practices were tabulated...
based on instructions from the source instrument, CSPP (Thayer, 2004). Tables and charts were generated to inspect data for outliers and normality and to depict statistical outcomes.

**Descriptive Statistical Measures**

Descriptive statistics provide information about central tendency, variability, and association of numbers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) and their associated variables. This study relied on descriptive statistics to compile, summarize, and interpret the data collected. Measures of central tendency, variability, and association transformed the data into information that answered research questions and addressed hypotheses. The pivotal aspect of this research is association or correlation.

**Central Tendency**

Reasonable notions about a population can be made based on knowledge of central tendency such as mode, median, and mean (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). This research used mean or averages to compute scores related to emotional competence and Christian practices. These variables were scored using Likert scales which allow data to be treated as ordinal or interval (Wu & Leung, 2017). Interval data is best described through mean calculations (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). For instance, the GEC score represents a participant’s average response to 50 questions about emotional behavior using a 1 to 5 Likert scale. While mean scores were used to tabulate responses to survey statements, use of the mean for research analysis purposes was not a perfect statistic in this study. Leedy and Ormrod (2016) explain that the mean is most appropriate for data analysis when the data present a normal distribution or at least somewhat symmetrical. This study’s data presented outliers. To account for data characteristics, in this study, correlational analysis was done using parametric and non-parametric tests.
**Variability**

Standard deviations were evaluated to determine the spread of the data. “As specific data points recede farther from the mean, they lose more and more of the quality that makes them ‘average’” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016, p. 226).

**Correlation**

Correlation describes the relationship between variables and does not infer causation. For this research, assessing correlation meant determining if a relationship existed between the emotional competence and the Christian practices of study participant millennials. The Pearson product-moment (parametric) and the Spearman’s rank-order (non-parametric) correlation tests were employed. The Pearson product-moment test (Pearson’s $r$) is the most widely used statistic for determining correlation (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). However, additional testing was necessary to confirm the results because not all data met the Pearson’s assumptions.

**Demographic Sample Data**

This study relied on a non-probable convenience sampling. While randomly selected representative samples are ideal to infer behavior of the population from a research study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016), that was not possible for this study. Millennials who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region was the population of interest. To form a representative sample, at a minimum, the number of millennials in the population of interest must be known. It was not possible to identify the number of millennials in the Richmond metro region. The region includes the city of Richmond and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico. Age data from the U.S. Census and at least one of the counties (Henrico) were not organized to coincide with the current\textsuperscript{15} millennial age range of 24 to 40 years old. For instance, in 2019, millennials

\textsuperscript{15}The researcher uses Serafino’s (2018) generational grouping which identifies millennials as born between 1981 and 1996 inclusive.
were 23 to 38 years old. The U.S. Census (2019) grouped a subset of millennials (23- to 24-year-olds) with other non-millennials to create a group of 20- to 24-year-olds. It would have been cost and time prohibitive to extract millennials from this group.

ABC church, located in Virginia’s Richmond metro region, provided an accessible sample of 45 millennials to study the research questions and test the hypotheses. Initially, the city of Richmond and the county of Henrico were identified in literature as localities with a growing population of millennials. To determine which of the two localities had the larger share of millennials, 2019 U.S. Census Data for the age group of 25- to 34-year-olds were reviewed. While this age group did not represent all millennials, it was the only U.S. Census age grouping comprised completely of millennials; and it contained 10 of the 17 millennial ages. Data showed that of the four localities in Virginia’s Richmond metro region, the city of Richmond had the most millennials (50,970) in this age grouping. Accessing millennials through a Baptist church in the city of Richmond inferred a robust sample of Christian millennials. ABC church reported 395 active millennials, and all were invited to participate in the study. Fifty-two responded to the survey invitation. Seven respondents were excluded from study participation for the following reasons:

- Two respondents did not consent to participate in the study.
- Four respondents consented but did not meet the screening criteria.
- One respondent did not select answers to all required questions.

This resulted in a research sample of 45 participants.

Table 4 shows the frequency in age sub-ranges and other demographic data regarding the sample ($n$). The millennial age spread in January 2021 was 24 to 40 years old. Study participants ranged in age from 24 to 39 years old. All possible ages were represented in the sample except
age 40. Eight respondents were 39 years old while other ages were represented one to four times each. The mean age was approximately 32 years old. The greater share of participation in the study was by millennials ages 32 to 39 (57.8%). Of the total 45 participants, most were female (75.6%), and all were African American (100%).

**Table 4**

*Sample Demographics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Category</th>
<th>n=45</th>
<th>Sample Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age Range:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-27 years old</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-31 years old</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-35 years old</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-39 years old</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Analysis and Findings**

To determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for the population of interest, the researcher first used Pearson’s product-moment correlational statistics. The main study variables were emotional competence and Christian practices. Each participant completed one survey which included statements from two separate instruments\textsuperscript{16} to measure the two variables. This resulted in emotional competence scores and Christian practices scores for each participant. Mean scores for the sample are depicted on Tables 5 and 6. Discussion of findings is organized by research question and related hypothesis.

\textsuperscript{16} Survey statements were as presented in the Profile of Emotional Competence (Brasseur et al., 2013) and the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (Thayer, 2004), already validated and reliable instruments to measure emotional competence and Christian growth, respectively.
Table 5 provides descriptive statistics for ABC church millennials regarding emotional competence. Beyond the GEC, the table provides mean subscale scores (factors) for emotional competence at the intra-personal and inter-personal levels. It also depicts scores within each subscale for dimensions (competencies) of emotional competence. The GEC is the mean of the intra-personal and inter-personal scores which equates to the mean of the ten dimension scores.

Table 5

*Emotional Competence Scores of ABC Church Millennials (n=45)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global EC</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra EC</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.697</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>.772</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.840</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.814</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.564</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter EC</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>.711</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.659</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expression</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>.705</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulation</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>.709</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.858</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question One**

Research question one was prompted by the literature claim that millennials may have low emotional intelligence. A study of the relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices hinges upon this claim. The researcher sought information to determine if the study would support this literature claim for the population of interest.

To answer research question one, what are the emotional competence scores of study
participant millennials, the GEC score for the 45 study participants was computed. This is the mean of the GEC scores of the 45 study participants. Sample data produced a GEC score of 3.71 on a 5-point Likert scale (1 to 5). Based on the score and the Likert scale descriptions, data show that, on average, respondents reported behaving in emotionally competent ways at least sometimes. The GEC score is supported by the sample’s intra-EC score (3.75) and the sample’s inter-EC score (3.66). These scores indicate a balanced perspective of how study participants perceive the handling their own emotions and the emotions of others.

**Research Question Two**

Research question two stems from a Christian worldview that emotions are created by God and that growing spiritually assists with emotions management. Growth comes with participation in Christian practices. Research question two seeks an understanding about the Christian practices of millennials.

To answer research question two, what are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials, respondents rated themselves on 50 statements regarding Christian practices. The responses were averaged to achieve sample mean scores.

The results are displayed on Table 6. Fellowship yielded the lowest mean score of 2.46 using a 6-point Likert scale (0 to 5). This score shows that millennials reported, on average, that they rarely (and less than occasionally) participate in fellowship activities such as: (a) helping sick people or people with problems; (b) meeting others for prayer, Bible study, or ministry; (c) being a peacemaker; (d) associating with others who are unfamiliar; and (e) helping to build up the whole congregation. Other similar scores were for the Christian practices of evangelism (2.63) and service (2.83). The remaining seven Christian practices yielded scores from 3.06 to 4.34 which indicate participation in those practices occasionally or frequently.
Table 6

Christian Practices Scores of ABC Church Millennials (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable - Practice</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repentance</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meditation</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible Reading or Study</td>
<td>3.07</td>
<td>4.29</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thayer (2004) organizes the 10 Christian principles into 4 groups that represent Christian growth modalities. These aspects of spiritual formation include growing through a relationship with God (SDM-G), growing through critical reflection (SDM-CR), growing through the Word (SDM-W), and growing through relationships with others (SDM-O). Table 1 provides additional information such as which Christian practices are included in each SDM. The mean scores on Table 7 provide information about spiritual growth and balance.

Table 7

Spiritual Development Mode (SDM) Scores of ABC Church Millennials (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDM</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>God (SDM-G)</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection (SDM-CR)</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word (SDM-W)</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (SDM-O)</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the four SDMs, SDM-O yielded the lowest score (2.75) while SDM-G yielded a score
of 4.13 (the highest score). The SDM-O score reveals that, on average, millennials at ABC church report that they rarely to occasionally interact with other people or put into practice some of the biblical principles in which they believe (Thayer, 1999). In contrast, study participant millennials report that, on average, they frequently pray; repent; and worship (SDM-G).

Balance between the four SDM scores is key to spiritual growth “because learning modes provide different learning opportunities that God uses to transform us” (Thayer, 1999, Interpreting the CSPP, para. 6). The lack of balance indicated by the study participants’ SDM scores is illustrated on Figure 4.

**Figure 4**

*ABC Millennials’ Spiritual Growth Diamond*17

Note: The scores at each point represent progress in a development mode. The more similar the scores and the higher the numbers, the more balanced spiritual growth.

The SDM-O score (2.75) is dissimilar to the SDM-G (4.13) and this causes the diamond on the diagram to be imbalanced. The sides and angles of the diamond are uneven. Toward

---

17 The diagram is for demonstrative purposes. This assessment may be more relevant for individuals as rates of growth and interpretation of measures vary by person (Thayer, 1999).
spiritual formation, Thayer (1999) contends that depth (high scores) and balance (similar scores) enhance spiritual growth. The diamond is balanced when scores for each growth mode are similar. Creating balance requires the identification of areas needing attention and a focus on improvement by more participation in practices that are associated with the areas of concern.

Research questions three through six seek an understanding of the relationships, if any, between emotional competence and participation in Christian practices. This is determined by comparing the sample’s GEC to each of the SDMs. Further, the GEC is compared to the Christian practices individually. Correlational statistics are used for these comparisons. Initially, the Pearson’s correlational test was conducted to determine relationships, if any, between the GEC and the four SDMs. Table 8 shows those results. The table also shows how the SDMs correlate with one another.

**Table 8**

*Pearson Correlation: Global Emo. Competence (GEC) - Spiritual Dev. Mode (SDM)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GEC</th>
<th>SDM-G</th>
<th>SDM-W</th>
<th>SDM-O</th>
<th>SDM-CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-G</td>
<td>.444*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-W</td>
<td>.325*</td>
<td>.570**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-O</td>
<td>.398**</td>
<td>.578**</td>
<td>.803**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-CR</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>.679**</td>
<td>.589**</td>
<td>.558**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Mean   | 3.71 | 4.13  | 3.19  | 2.75  | 3.96   |
| Std Dev| .52  | .73   | .83   | 1.03  | .75    |

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)*

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)**

It was determined by the Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality that the SDM-G and SDM-CR data were not normally distributed. Since the Pearson’s product-moment test is a parametric test, the Spearman’s rank-order non-parametric correlation test was used with these data. Table 9 depicts the Spearman’s rank-order correlation results for SDM-G and SDM-CR.
Table 9

Spearman Correlation: Global Emo. Competence (GEC) - Spiritual Dev. Mode (SDM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GEC</th>
<th>SDM-G</th>
<th>SDM-CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-G</td>
<td>.318*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDM-CR</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>.619**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Between the two correlational tests employed, three of the SDMs were found to have significant positive associations with GEC: (a) SDM-G, (b) SDM-O, and (c) SDM-W. No statistically significant correlation was found between GEC and SDM-CR. These findings are discussed in the next sections related to the research questions and null hypotheses three through six.

Research Question Three | Null Hypothesis Three

To describe the relationship between emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God, the sample’s GEC score (3.71) was compared to the SDM-G score (4.13). Table 1 reveals that the Christian practices of prayer, repentance, and worship comprise SDM-G. The mean scores for these practices (Table 6) were averaged to gain a sample score for SDM-G (Table 7). The SDM-G score reveals that ABC church millennials reported, on average, engaging in practices that build a relationship with God frequently to very frequently. A Pearson’s product-moment correlation test was conducted to assess the relationship between emotional competence and growing a relationship with God. While the Pearson’s test showed a positive correlation, the data were not normally distributed; and, as a result, the Spearman’s rank-order non-parametric test was conducted to assess the relationship. Results showed a low positive relationship (ρ = .318) with statistical significance (ρ < .05). Based on this result, null hypothesis three is rejected – as it anticipated no relationship between emotional competence and Christian
practices that build a relationship with God. This low positive correlation indicates that there is a connection between emotional competence and Christian practices such as prayer and worship.

**Research Question Four | Null Hypothesis Four**

To describe the relationship between emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others, the sample’s GEC score was compared to the SDM-O score. Table 1 reveals that the Christian practices of evangelism, fellowship, service, and stewardship comprise SDM-O. The scores for these practices were averaged to gain a sample score of 2.75 for SDM-O (Table 7). This score reveals that ABC church millennials, on average, reported that they rarely to occasionally engage in practices that build relationships with others. The score was compared to the mean GEC score of 3.7 (Table 5). A Pearson’s product-moment correlation test was conducted to assess the relationship between emotional competence and growing relationships with others using the GEC and SDM-O scores. Results showed a low positive relationship ($r = .398$) with statistical significance ($p < .01$). With this result, null hypothesis four is rejected – as it anticipated no relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices that build relationships with others.

**Research Question Five | Null Hypothesis Five**

To describe the relationship between emotional competence and practices that relate to growing through the Word, the sample’s GEC score (3.71) was compared to the SDM-W score. Table 1 reveals that the Christian practices of Bible-reading or study and meditation comprise SDM-W. The scores for these practices were averaged to gain a sample score of 3.19 for SDM-W (Table 7). This score reveals that ABC church millennials, on average, reported meditating and reading or studying the Bible occasionally to frequently. A Pearson’s product-moment correlation test was conducted to assess the relationship between emotional competence and
growing through the Word. Results showed a low positive relationship ($r = .325$) that is statistically significant ($p < .05$). With this result, null hypothesis five is rejected – as it anticipated no relationship between emotional competence and growing through the Word.

**Research Question Six | Null Hypothesis Six**

To describe the relationship between emotional competence and the practice of critical reflection, the sample’s GEC score was compared to the SDM-CR score. Table 1 reveals that critical reflection is a single-member category. The practice’s mean score was 3.96 and this also was the SDM-CR score. This score reveals that ABC church millennials reported using biblically-based principles at least occasionally to frequently, on average, to critically reflect on their lives, culture, evil, ethical decisions, and unbearable situations. The SDM-CR score (3.96) was compared to the GEC score of 3.71 (Table 5). A Pearson’s product-moment correlation test was conducted to assess the relationship between emotional competence and critical reflection. While the Pearson’s test revealed a positive correlation, the result was not statistically significant. Additionally, the data were not normally distributed. As a result, the Spearman’s rank-order correlation non-parametric test was conducted to assess the relationship. No significant correlation was found between GEC and SDM-CR using either correlational test. This result fails to reject the null hypothesis. Any association between emotional competence and critical reflection practices in this study was likely due to chance.

In summary, data showed statistically significant positive relationships between emotional competence (GEC) and three of the four groups of Christian practices (SDMs). Specifically, GEC did not correlate with the SDM for critical reflection. Since SDM-CR only includes one practice by the same name, this result also means that emotional competence did not correlate with the practice of critical reflection. When the ten practices were separated from
the SDMs and compared individually to the GEC, data showed three additional practices do not have statistically significant correlations with emotional competence (Table 10). They are: (a) repentance, (b) Bible reading or study, and (c) evangelism.

Table 10

Pearson Correlation: Global Emo. Competence (GEC) - Christian Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
<th>(11)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) GEC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Prayer</td>
<td>.472**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) Repentance</td>
<td>.280</td>
<td>.551**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) Worship</td>
<td>.396**</td>
<td>.632**</td>
<td>.553**</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) Meditation</td>
<td>.427**</td>
<td>.393**</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>.423**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Crit. Reflection</td>
<td>.256</td>
<td>.515**</td>
<td>.643**</td>
<td>.558**</td>
<td>.455**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Bible Reading/Study</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.418**</td>
<td>.278</td>
<td>.531**</td>
<td>.451**</td>
<td>.542**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Evangelism</td>
<td>.287</td>
<td>.373'</td>
<td>.442**</td>
<td>.596**</td>
<td>.618**</td>
<td>.511**</td>
<td>.583**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Fellowship</td>
<td>.347'</td>
<td>.317'</td>
<td>.370'</td>
<td>.496**</td>
<td>.586**</td>
<td>.478**</td>
<td>.591**</td>
<td>.814**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(10) Service</td>
<td>.362'</td>
<td>.390**</td>
<td>.341'</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>.611''</td>
<td>.458**</td>
<td>.587''</td>
<td>.589''</td>
<td>.718''</td>
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<tr>
<td>(11) Stewardship</td>
<td>.416**</td>
<td>.416**</td>
<td>.436**</td>
<td>.472**</td>
<td>.622''</td>
<td>.499''</td>
<td>.601''</td>
<td>.585''</td>
<td>.660''</td>
<td>.680''</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Research results show significant and positive relationships between emotional competence and six of the ten Christian practices included in the study: (a) prayer, (b) worship, (c) meditation, (d) fellowship, (e) service, and (f) stewardship. A positive correlation means that, as reported by millennials at ABC church, when their participation in these six practices increases so does their emotionally competence or vice versa. Further, the statistical significance (p values) indicates that the relationships between these practices and emotional competence are not by chance. The connection between emotional competence and these six practices must not
be interpreted as one causing the other. Additional research or analysis is needed to determine causation as that was not the goal of this study.

Research results did not show statistically significant correlations between emotional competence and four of the Christian practices: (a) repentance, (b) Bible reading or study, (c) critical reflection, and (d) evangelism. However, when these practices are grouped with other correlated practices in their same SDMs, repentance; Bible reading or study; and evangelism correlated with emotional competence (Table 8). Critical reflection, however, does not correlate with emotional intelligence as a practice or as an SDM.

**Evaluation of the Research Design**

The quantitative research design sought to obtain objective information about the relationship between two variables: (a) emotional competence and (b) Christian practices. Because causation was not the goal, survey instrumentation in a non-experimental formation was chosen (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). While the survey statements already were validated and reliable, response data were generated through self-ratings. Respondents, like most of God’s human creation, have a need to be socially desirable which could contribute to inaccurate or inflated evaluations of self. High rates of bias may emerge, even when assessing participation in religious settings and even when administered via an electronic survey (Brenner & DeLamater, 2016). This research design could be improved with the addition of a collateral assessment, such as a minister within the respondents’ congregation who could provide information about respondents’ emotional behavior and participation in Christian practices.

The study’s correlational design allowed for important addition to the field but may not have gone far enough. Correlation alone is insufficient. Data must be analyzed to determine why correlations exist (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). For instance, why was there a significant positive
correlation between emotional competence and practices that help one grow with God but not with practices that allow for critical reflection? What is it about growing with God practices that coincide with emotional competence? Further research is needed to respond to such questions.

Lastly, the sampling design could be improved to expand generalizability. While ABC church provided good data to evaluate the variables, the demographics did not represent the wider population it was intended to reflect. The sample was 100 percent African American and, as a result, may generalize to Baptist African American millennials in the city of Richmond but not to all Baptist millennials in the region. The region itself is more diverse and not majority African American. To improve generalization, sampling from multiple churches to represent the diversity of the population (geographically and demographically) would have improved the research design. Including three or more churches also would have allowed for triangulation of results.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the study with focus on important research conclusions drawn from its data and results. The researcher discusses implications for action and recommendations for further research. The chapter ends with a summary and concluding thoughts.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this non-experimental quantitative correlational study was to determine the relationship, if any, between emotional competence and Christian practices for persons in the millennial generation who worship in central Virginia’s Richmond metro region. Since the study’s convenience sample was biased geographically and demographically, results are not generalizable to the intended population. This study’s results, at best, generalizes to African American millennials who are Baptist and who worship in churches located in the city of Richmond, Virginia.

Research Questions

**RQ1.** What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials?

**RQ2.** What are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials?

**RQ3.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God?

**RQ4.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others?

**RQ5.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word?

**RQ6.** To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection?
Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

This study explored the relationship between millennials’ emotional competence and Christian practices using a sample of 45 millennials from ABC, a large Baptist church in the city of Richmond, Virginia. Survey responses provided data that were scored and statistically manipulated. Mean scores provided descriptions of ABC millennials’ three aspects of emotional competence and their participation in ten Christian disciplines. To answer the research questions regarding association between variables and to determine the statistical significance of results, correlational and inferential statistics were employed. The Christian practices were organized into four SDMs for comparison to the GEC score. The Pearson’s product-moment correlational test was used with data that was normally distributed. The Spearman’s rank-order correlational test was used with data that was not normally distributed. Study results revealed positive correlations between emotional competence and three of the SDMs: (a) Growing with God, (b) Growing with others, and (c) Growing with the Word. These correlations were statistically significant, and the related null hypotheses were rejected. The study did not find a statistically significant correlation between emotional competence and the SDM for critical reflection. That result, when tested, failed to reject the associated null hypothesis. Based on study results, the researcher concluded:

1. Millennials may be more emotionally competent than reported in precedent literature.
2. Millennials are less competent with using others’ emotions to improve reflection, decisions, and actions.
3. Millennials participate less in Christian practices that require interactions with others.
4. When millennials participate in Christian disciplines more with others, their abilities to use others’ emotions toward positive outcomes may improve.
Research Conclusion One

Millennials may be more emotionally competent than reported in precedent literature. This conclusion largely is based on research question one results. The question asks: What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials? The question was prompted by literature descriptions of millennials as having difficulty with emotions management (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017) and not being suited for leadership (Dolby, 2014). Yet, in this study, millennials described themselves as behaving with emotional competence “sometimes” to “often” (between 3 and 4 on the Likert scale). This was reflected in the global, inter-personal and intra-personal emotional competence scores. When the global score (3.71) was subdivided into factors, the intra-EC (3.75) and inter-EC (3.66) scores were similar to the GEC score description. While the scores are not overwhelmingly strong (four to five on the Likert scale), they are above average.

Demographic factors could account for the variance between participants’ emotional competence scores and pre-existing claims in literature. Kotze and Venter (2011) conducted a review of studies related to emotional intelligence and reported that factors such as race, sex and age influence emotional intelligence scores. Age is reported as the most discriminating demographic variable, with the highest scores attained by persons in their late 40s (Kotze & Venter, 2011). Similarly, a majority of the study participant millennials (57.8%) were at the higher end of the millennial age range or at least 32 years old. Fourteen participants were at least 36 years old. The mean age of millennials in this study was approximately 32 years old compared to the millennials described in Dolby (2014) who were likely in their early 20s. Age maturation may account for the difference between Dolby’s claim that millennials are not emotionally suited to leadership and the emotional competence scores of this study. With age
comes maturity as usually is demonstrated in measures of intelligences and behavior (King & DeCicco, 2009). Based on Kotze and Venter, as millennials age, emotional competence improves, and this is reflected when comparing 32-year-olds to 20-year-olds.

Today’s millennials may be more emotionally competent overall than those described in literature previously. However, when looking at all the scores that contributed to the GEC, intra-EC, and inter-EC scores, there is one score that is below average. This is a concern and is presented as research conclusion two.

**Research Conclusion Two**

Millennials are less competent with using others’ emotions to improve reflection, decisions, and actions. While the GEC (3.71), intra-EC (3.75), and the inter-EC (3.66) scores indicate emotionally competent behavior sometimes to often, one of the competencies for inter-EC yielded a score of 2.93 (Inter-personal Use). This is the lowest emotional competence score in the study. The next closest EC sample score is 3.54 (Interpersonal Regulation). The other scores range from 3.54 to 4.09 considerably higher than the 2.93 Interpersonal Use score.

Interpersonal Use is the ability to manage the emotions of others “to improve reflection, decisions, and actions” (Brasseur et al., 2013, p. 2). Low scores on this competency reflect an inability to influence others – their actions, emotions, or demeanor. Influence is the fulcrum of leadership (Bass, 1985, as cited in Northouse, 2016; Bredfeldt, n.d.-a; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Schein, 2010; Yukl, 2013). As 1 of 10 dimension or competency scores, the Interpersonal Use score does not adversely affect the GEC; and, as 1 of 5, it does not adversely affect the Inter-EC score. It is, however, an important aspect of leadership that must be overcome if millennials are to be successful at leadership. There are corresponding low scores for millennials regarding Christian practices. These are discussed as research conclusion three.
Research Conclusion Three

Millennials participate less in Christian practices that require interactions with others. This conclusion largely is based on research question two results. The question asks: What are the levels of Christian practices for study participant millennials? The question was answered through mean scores generated by study participants’ responses to statements regarding their participation in ten Christian practices (Table 6). Study participants reported that they, on average, practice 7 of the 10 Christian disciplines at least occasionally. Results for the remaining three Christian practices are concerning.

Table 6 depicts mean scores for the practices of service (2.83), evangelism (2.63), and fellowship (2.46) which indicate that millennials are practicing these Christian disciplines rarely and less than occasionally. Service, evangelism, and fellowship - each requires interaction with others. The seven practices that yielded higher mean scores than these three can be done alone. The commonality between research conclusion two (emotional competence) and research conclusion three (Christian practices) is that the lowest score(s) for each of the two research variables pertain(s) to millennials’ interactions with others.

Research Conclusion Four

When millennials participate more in Christian disciplines with others, their abilities to use others’ emotions toward positive outcomes may improve. This conclusion largely is based on research question four results. The question asks: To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others? The question was answered through a comparison of the GEC score (3.71) and the SDM-O score (2.75) which resulted in a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = .398, p < .01$).
SDM-O is comprised of the following practices: (a) stewardship, (b) service, (c) evangelism, and (d) fellowship. For study participants, results show that higher levels of stewardship, service, evangelism, and fellowship (as a group) were associated with higher levels of emotional competence. When each practice is isolated from the group, there was not a correlation between evangelism and emotional competence (Table 10). As an SDM-O group, however, these practices have a significant positive correlation with emotional competence (GEC). Evangelism aside, this means that as ABC millennials fellowshipped with others more, served others more, and used God’s gifts responsibly, their emotional competence improved or vice versa.

The positive correlation between emotional competence (GEC) and practices that build relationships with others (SDM-O) supports this researcher’s second and third research conclusions. Mean scores of study participants, in areas that require interaction with others, were lower than other mean scores for the same study variable. For instance, regarding emotional competence (research conclusion two), the mean score for Interpersonal Use (2.93) is lower than the other nine competency scores. Regarding Christian practices (research conclusion three), mean scores for evangelism (2.63), service (2.83), fellowship (2.46), and now stewardship (3.06) are lower than mean scores for the other six Christian disciplines. These low mean scores are indicative of improvement needed (Figure 4) and does not affect the significance of the positive relationship between emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others. The statistically significant positive correlation (GEC and SDM-O) establishes a connection between these areas of concern (Intra-EC/Use and evangelism/fellowship/service) that can be used as a platform to grow. Ministry ideas are discussed in the next section.
Practical Implications and Application

The impetus for this research was a concern about the leadership effectiveness of millennials. Since literature inferred that effective leadership relies on strong emotional competence (Collins, 2001; Goleman, 2019; Goleman & Boyatzis, 2017; Northouse, 2016; Rajah et al., 2011; Sampson, 2011) and millennials seemed to have difficulty with emotional competence (Dolby, 2014; Randstad & Future Workplace, 2016), this study explored millennials’ emotional competence using a Christian worldview. The study found a significant positive relationship between emotional competence and certain practices that lead to spiritual growth. Those practices pertain to: (a) growth through a relationship with God, (b) growth through the Word, and (c) growth through relationships with others.

Leadership is a process whereby a person influences a group to achieve a common goal. It is a phenomenon that resides in the context of interactions between leaders and followers and makes leadership available to everyone (Northouse, 2016). Influence is strategic, Christ-like, and Spirit-led toward goals (Bredfeldt, n.d.-a). To be a successful leader, then, the process involves growing through a relationship with God and growing through relationships with others. While study data show that millennials frequently participate in Christian practices that build a relationship with God, their participation in Christian practices that build relationships with others is rare to occasional. Additionally, millennials report seldom being able to use others’ emotions successfully to improve reflection, decisions, and actions (Inter-personal Use). Because GEC and SDM-O have a significant positive correlation, increasing participation in practices that involve others may improve Interpersonal Use. At a minimum, with guidance and support, increased participation provides more opportunities to learn ways to become successful at influencing others’ emotions toward successful outcomes.
These study results propel Christian communities to nurture and support the leadership skills of millennials by using Christian practices to nurture emotional competence, thereby improving leadership effectiveness. For instance, a ministry solution for research conclusion four could involve modeling, coaching, and mentoring to guide millennials through situations that involve the use of others’ emotions to improve situations. These efforts, if successful, would improve millennials’ ability to lead others. Organizations, such as Barna Group (2019), provide information for use by faith communities to connect with millennials. Church associations also are resources for ministry training and development material. “Instead of dismissing them [millennials] for their perceived differences, let’s believe in them and learn from them as together we realize our purpose in the Kingdom of God” (Barna Group, 2019, p. 4).

**Theoretical Implications**

Millennials have been described as disenfranchised and hard to reach (Bland, 2017; Dolby, 2014; Reed, 2016; Schiffman & Krebs, 2019). When considering millennials’ posture with others, this study’s data may support that claim. Additionally, the pandemic-related surge in online activity for work, church, and school reinforces millennials’ desire to lean inward. Because interaction with others is important to spiritual growth, intentionality to change and support millennials in this regard is important. Developing spiritual growth plans as a part of ministry, especially to millennials, may reverse the inward inclination. These could be modeled after education plans and, like Thayer (1999; 2004) may involve learning theory.

**Empirical Implications**

Critical reflection was the only SDM without a significant correlation to emotional competence. Critical reflection pertains to “observing your culture (and your own life) and evaluating it by principles in the Bible – both naming problems and providing hope” (Thayer,
The finding of no relationship between critical reflection and emotional competence may reflect a 2019 study by the Barna Group in which 2,000 U.S. millennials participated. The goal of the Barna study was to help churches understand millennials and to assist with churches’ discipleship to millennials for activation into leadership (Barna Group, 2019). The report describes millennials’ emotional state as including anxiety, fear, hopelessness, and no optimism (Barna Group, 2019). Loss of optimism also was observed by Deloitte (2020). While the Barna Group study likely included millennials with varying levels of church or religious affiliation, the emotional description may be a factor for most millennials as less than half of the study participants (39%) expressed optimism for the future. Providing hope requires internal optimism. More research is needed to understand how to nurture millennials’ critical reflection given the issues raised by researchers about their loss of hope and optimism.

**Research Contribution**

This study contributes to literature through its focus on emotional competence and Christian principles for the millennial population. While precedent studies addressed one of this study’s variables, none was located that studied both variables and for this population. Additionally, study results present opportunities for faith communities to support millennials in targeted ways. This study explored an understanding of associations between emotional competence and Christian practices for millennials. Study results showed statistically significant positive associations between emotional competence and six Christian practices for millennials represented in the sample. This finding serves as a platform for faith communities to target ministry and evangelical efforts toward millennials in areas that matter, such as growth in spiritual practices that require interaction with others.
Research Limitations

This section discusses how confident the researcher is that findings are the result of the study’s assessments of variables and not to some other cause (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Internal threats to validity relate to experimental procedures, treatments, or experiences that threaten the ability to draw correct inferences from data to the population (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). External threats to validity arise when incorrect inferences are made from sample data to other persons, other settings, and past or future situations (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Threats to Internal Validity

Maturation is a type of threat that could have impacted the internal validity of this study. The study’s sample is age-specific and, as time passes, participants mature. Maturity could influence characteristics and behavior of a study’s population and sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2016). It was important to this researcher to complete the study on a schedule to mitigate the elapsing of time. During the study, however, this researcher identified the influences of maturity when descriptions of millennials’ emotional competence found in literature prior to this study were compared to the mean GEC score (3.71) determined in this study. While literature as far back as Dolby (2014) described millennials as not having interpersonal skills, for instance, millennials in this study indicate that they demonstrate inter-personal emotional competence more than sometimes and almost often (3.66 on a 5-point Likert scale). The difference in perspectives between 2014 and 2021 likely is due, at least in part, to the difference in ages between the group described in 2014 versus the one described in 2021 (maturity).

Historical events also could threaten the validity of a study. For instance, Deloitte’s (2020) “pulse” survey indicates that the views of millennials are changing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While the empirical nature of the survey is unclear, Deloitte raises issues that could
impact this study about millennials’ emotional competence and participation in Christian practices. Deloitte’s survey results indicate that the pandemic has made persons in the millennial generation more empathetic. The Deloitte finding is contrary to pre-existing literature which found millennials as lacking empathy. Since empathy is a factor of emotional competence, this researcher speculates about any possible impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on this study’s assessment of millennials’ emotional competence.

**Threats to External Validity**

Study participant demographics impact the external validity of this study. The study’s 45 participants were the same race or ethnicity - African American. Because a single ethnic group is represented in the study, results may not generalize externally to millennials of a different race (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For instance, there may be cultural and historical dispositions or sensibilities more commonly observed among African Americans that yielded the results regarding the relationship between emotional competence and Christian practices. Persons outside of the culture may not interpret the meanings of certain behaviors the same or demonstrate the same characteristics.

While study results showed a statistically significant positive correlation between emotional competence and certain Christian practices, there may be cultural influences that compelled these results. Culturally, there are differences in how African Americans approach faith. Spiritual traditions and practices historically have been a refuge and source of strength for African Americans whose ancestors were held captive by the bondages of slavery. The traditions and practices provided a time wherein African Americans could gather for corporate worship and, in some cases, experience a small measure of freedom. The legacy of those experiences continues to exist. There is a “strong opinion that an association with the Black Church [African
American] provides comfort and agency” (Barna Group, 2021, para. 2). According to Barna Group, 92 percent of all Black churchgoers today at least somewhat agree with this sentiment. A connection between emotional competence and Christian practice, then, may be foundational to African American culture as a coping strategy. This may not be the case in other cultures. The demographics of this study impact study results and pose an external threat to validity as the sample is not as diverse as the study’s intended population (millennials who worship in Virginia’s Richmond metro region). Without sample diversity, it is impossible to eliminate possible cultural and other influences. The researcher has disclosed this in Chapter Three as a limit of generalization for this study.

**Further Research**

1. To improve generalizability, the study should be repeated with a more diverse sample. Efforts should be made to achieve a representative, random sample drawn from the population. There should be demographic and geographic diversity. Drawing the sample from multiple churches would aid diversity.

2. To improve response rates, consider transmission of the participation invitation (survey link) by text message. This was suggested by a millennial who informed the researcher that millennials have multiple email addresses, and do not check them all regularly. Further, the millennial explained that text messages are checked regularly.

3. Additional research is needed to learn more about critical reflection as practiced by millennials. This was the only SDM that was not associated with emotional competence.

**Summary**

The study found a positive relationship between emotional competence and three of four SDMs. Further, a positive relationship was found between emotional competence and 6 of 10
Christian practices that make up the SDMs. This means that higher scores of emotional competence are associated with higher scores of Christian practices. The Christian practices found to be correlated with emotional competence include prayer, worship, meditation, fellowship, service, and stewardship. Modes with significant positive correlations to emotional competence are: (a) growing through a relationship with God (SDM-G), (b) growing through relationships with others (SDM-O), and (c) growing through the Word (SDM-W). Because the results were statistically significant, the associations between emotional competence and these Christian practices and SDMs were not random. There is a 95 percent chance that these results are within 13.24 percent of what would be found in the population (calculator.net).

Table 11 is a repeat presentation of Table 1 but with bold font to represent the Christian practices and SDMs which correlate with emotional competence. Results indicate that as one’s participation in Christian practices increases, one’s emotional competence is likely to improve. These results may apply to African American millennials in the city of Richmond who are Baptist.
Table 11.

Study Results as Part of Comprehensive Structure\(^\text{18}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRASPING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprehend</td>
<td>Concrete Experience</td>
<td>Your own personal experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehend</td>
<td>Abstract Conceptualization</td>
<td>Reading or listening to others’ experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSFORMING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td>Reflective Observation</td>
<td>Critically thinking about your experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension</td>
<td>Active Experimentation</td>
<td>Doing something</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

In this study, active millennials at a Baptist church described their participation in Christian practices. Most practices had positive relationships with their emotional behavior (competence). The reciprocal relationship that exists between emotional competence and participation in Christian practices was evident in the outcomes demonstrated in this study. Further, emotional competence and participation in Christian practices are correlated with additional variables including strong leadership skills, improved interpersonal dynamics, and ongoing faith development. Emotional and spiritual maturation, as evidenced by outward behaviors and internal motivations, likely has a positive impact on not just the study’s millennials themselves but those within their respective social networks.

\(^{18}\) Christian practices and modes with statistically significant positive correlations to emotional competence are in bold font.
The positive correlation between these variables, as shown through this study’s participants, lays the foundation for ministries interested in ministering to Christian millennials in ways that matter not just to them individually, but to the entire Body of Christ. The targeted outcome of spiritual maturation is whole person transformation into the fullness of Christ. Beyond helping millennials with growth and leadership development, this study provides insights into ways in which emotional competencies and Christian practices demonstrate goodness of fit with the maturation process for any believer.
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Samra, J. G. (2008). *Being formed to Christ in community: A study of maturity, maturation and
the local church in the undisputed Pauline Epistles. T&T Clark.


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Emotional Intelligence – The ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively. The theoretical model consists of 4 domains with 12 competencies.

### Emotional Intelligence Domains and Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SELF-AWARENESS</th>
<th>SELF-MANAGEMENT</th>
<th>SOCIAL AWARENESS</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional self-awareness</td>
<td>Emotional self-control</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Coach and mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Achievement orientation</td>
<td>Organizational awareness</td>
<td>Conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive outlook</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teamwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inspirational leadership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: More Than Sound, LLC, 2017*  
## APPENDIX B

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS IN THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION

(1 OF 4 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AUTHOR (see references)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELIGION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Christianity = counterculture</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Moral intuitionists, no reliance on the Bible</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Nones</td>
<td>X (c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SERVICE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Value working for an organization that helps people organization serves or the community</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHARACTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Driven by material concerns (i.e., personal gain, finances)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Value teamwork, trust, and/or transparency</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Loyal to people, not organizations</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Optimistic (builds trust)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B

### CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS IN THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION

(2 OF 4 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AUTHOR (see references)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLITICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Generally supportive of gay rights, greater tolerance for diversity and value tolerance</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Little organizational commitment (job hop)</td>
<td>X (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Want government to regulate on their behalf</td>
<td>X (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Prefer Leisure over hard work</td>
<td>X (c)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X indicates the characteristic is mentioned in the referenced study.
### APPENDIX B

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS IN THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION**
(3 OF 4 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>PERSONA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Tech-savvy</td>
<td>▪ Need structure; require deadlines</td>
<td>▪ Disinterested, not enough engagement to critically evaluate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Prefer online instruction</td>
<td>▪ Thrive on training</td>
<td>▪ Disenfranchise d, hard to reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Autonomous learning style</td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Short attention span</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Multitaskers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Timid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Immature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Independence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
<td><strong>AUTHOR</strong> (see references)</td>
<td><strong>DESCRIPTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Tech-savvy</td>
<td>Bland (2017)</td>
<td>▪ Tech-savvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Prefer online instruction</td>
<td>Deeken et al. (2008)</td>
<td>▪ (a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Autonomous learning style</td>
<td>Dolby (2014)</td>
<td>▪ (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Houlihan &amp; Harvey (2015)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kim (2018)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Livermore (2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Randstad &amp; Future Workplace (2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reed (2016)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schiffman &amp; Krebs (2019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX B

**CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS IN THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION**

(4 OF 4 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>AUTHOR (see references)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-absorbed rule followers</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-centered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack inter-personal skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shy away from face-to-face contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little global or cultural knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclined toward volunteerism (suspicious of their motivation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathetic, not empathetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistant to understand the perspective of others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire instant feedback</td>
<td>X (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs constant stimulation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire frequent feedback from supervisor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal better with chaos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change is the norm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT EMAIL INVITATION

Thu 1/7/2021 10:29 PM

Happy New Year Millennials at [redacted]! Over 400 of you are blind/copied on this email - intended to gain your participation in a survey which is endorsed by Pastor [redacted] and Minister [redacted]. For your combined participation, the Young Adult Ministry may receive up to $[redacted] to be used for missional causes of interest to you (millennials).

About the Survey:

The survey has three parts and will take 30 minutes or less to complete. Part 1 has three questions about your sex, age, and race or ethnicity. This information will be used to establish group trends. Part 2 of the survey has 50 questions about how you respond emotionally in situations. Part 3 also has 50 questions about the kinds of things you do regarding your faith / church.

Your confidentiality will be protected. The researcher, minister, or pastor will not receive any personal information about you from this study. Email addresses and names were shared for invitation to participate purposes only and will not be included with your responses when they are returned to the researcher.

By January 21, 2021, please access and complete the survey using the link below:

***link***

Background:

I am a doctoral candidate at the John W. Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University. My doctoral research focuses on the faith practices and emotional competence of millennials. To complete the study, I need at least 202 volunteers to complete the survey. I hope you will volunteer. The questions are short and easy to answer with the click of the mouse or a touch on the screen. You may stop participating at any point after beginning the survey - if you change your mind.

I am available for questions or additional information.

Let's do this!

Nancy W. Flanagan
Researcher

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
December 21, 2020

Nancy Flanagan
Mary Lowe


Dear Nancy Flanagan and Mary Lowe,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study does not classify as human subjects research. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your IRB application.

Decision: No Human Subjects Research

Explanation: Your study is not considered human subjects research for the following reason:

(2) Your project will consist of quality improvement activities, which are not "designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge" according to 45 CFR 46. 102(l).

Please note that this decision only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued non-human subjects research status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

Also, although you are welcome to use our recruitment and consent templates, you are not required to do so. If you choose to use our documents, please replace the word RESEARCH with the word PROJECT throughout both documents.
If you have any questions about this determination or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your application's status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
ADMINISTRATIVE CHAIR OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
Research Ethics Office
APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT GENERAL CONSENT FORM
(1 OF 2 PAGES)

Title of the Project: Study of Emotional Competence and Christian Practices

Researcher: Nancy Watkins Flanagan, doctoral candidate, Liberty University | Rawlings School of Divinity

You are invited to participate in a research study by completing an electronic survey. In order to participate, you must be: (1) born between 1981 and 1996 inclusive, and (2) affiliated with ABC church. Taking part in this study is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding to participate.

The purpose of the study is to learn if there is a relationship between emotional competence and certain Christian practices. If you agree to complete the survey, set aside 20 minutes to respond to the questions and be thoughtful about your responses.

There are no known risks involved with participation in this study, only benefits. Information learned from the study may be used to develop leadership or ministry programs. CSB COG will receive $10 for each completed survey to be used for the church's Young Adult ministry. While completing the survey, questions may provide opportunity for reflection about emotions and faith practices.

Participation in the study is anonymous and no personal identifiable information will be collected. Email addresses were provided to the researcher for invitations to participate only. Responses will be sent to the researcher electronically without the email addresses or IP locations of participants. The researcher will make no attempt to determine your identity.

Data records of this study will be kept confidential, including the name and exact location of the church. Research records will be stored securely by the researcher and will be retained for five years after study completion and then destroyed by December 31, 2026.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may withdraw at any time by exiting the survey and closing your internet browser. Partial responses will not be included in the study.

If you have questions about the study or this consent form, contact the researcher conducting the study: Nancy Watkins Flanagan | nwflanagan@liberty.edu | 677-6833 or Dr. Mary Lowe | melowe@liberty.edu (the researcher's faculty sponsor).

If you have questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to connect with someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the:

Institutional Review Board | 1971 University Blvd, Green Hall, Ste 2845 | Lynchburg, VA 24515 irb@libery.edu
APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT GENERAL CONSENT FORM
(2 OF 2 PAGES)

YOUR CONSENT

By clicking the "consent" button below, you are agreeing to be in this study and will be linked to the survey. Make sure you understand what the study is about before providing consent. Remember, you can cease participation any time after beginning the survey.

☐ I volunteer and consent to participate in the study  ☐ I do not consent to participate in the study

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT SCREENING QUESTIONS

1. Are you affiliated with [redacted]?
   - No → Rejected from Participation in the Study
   - Yes → Allowed to continue

2. What year were you born?
   - 1980 or earlier → Rejected from Participation in the Study
   - 1997 or later → Rejected from Participation in the Study
   - 1981 → Allowed to continue
   - 1982 → Allowed to continue
   - 1983 → Allowed to continue
   - 1984 → Allowed to continue
   - 1985 → Allowed to continue
   - 1986 → Allowed to continue
   - 1987 → Allowed to continue
   - 1988 → Allowed to continue
   - 1989 → Allowed to continue
   - 1990 → Allowed to continue
   - 1991 → Allowed to continue
   - 1992 → Allowed to continue
   - 1993 → Allowed to continue
   - 1994 → Allowed to continue
   - 1995 → Allowed to continue
   - 1996 → Allowed to continue

3. If I meet the criteria to participate, I give consent to do so and I understand that I may end my participation at any time by exiting the survey and closing my browser.
   - Yes, I consent → Allowed to continue
   - No, I do not consent → Rejected from Participation in the Study

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
APPENDIX G

SURVEY, PART 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your sex?
   - Male
   - Female
   - Prefer not to declare

2. What is your race or ethnicity?
   - African American or Black
   - Asian
   - Caucasian or White
   - Hispanic or Latino
   - Two or more races
   - Other or prefer not to declare

3. What is your age?
   - 24 years old
   - 25 years old
   - 26 years old
   - 27 years old
   - 28 years old
   - 29 years old
   - 30 years old
   - 31 years old
   - 32 years old
   - 33 years old
   - 34 years old
   - 35 years old
   - 36 years old
   - 37 years old
   - 38 years old
   - 39 years old
   - 40 years old
**APPENDIX H**

**THE PROFILE OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE (PEC)**

(1 OF 3 PAGES)

*The questions below are designed to provide a better understanding of how you deal with your emotions in daily life. Please answer each question spontaneously, taking into account the way you would normally respond. There are no right or wrong answers as we are all different on this level.*

*For each question, you will have to give a score on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning that the statement does not describe you at all or you never respond like this, and 5 meaning that the statement describes you very well or that you experience this particular response very often.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. As my emotions arise I don't understand where they come from.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I don't always understand why I respond in the way I do.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. If I wanted, I could easily influence other people's emotions to achieve what I want.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I know what to do to win people over to my cause.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I am often a loss to understand other people's emotional responses.</td>
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<td>6. When I feel good, I can easily tell whether it is due to being proud of myself, happy or relaxed.</td>
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<td>7. I can tell whether a person is angry, sad or happy even if they don't talk to me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I am good at describing my feelings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I never base my personal life choices on my emotions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. When I am feeling low, I easily make a link between my feelings and a situation that affected me.</td>
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<td>11. I can easily get what I want from others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. I easily manage to calm myself down after a difficult experience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I can easily explain the emotional responses of the people around me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Most of the time I understand why people feel the way they do</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Instructions and scale descriptions were modified (Appendix N) with consent from the instrument’s designer (Appendix R)*
### APPENDIX H
THE PROFILE OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE (PEC)
(2 OF 3 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>When I am sad, I find it easy to cheer myself up.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>When I am touched by something, I immediately know what I feel.</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>If I dislike something, I manage to say so in a calm manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I do not understand why the people around me respond the way they do.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>When I see someone who is stressed or anxious, I can easily calm them down.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>During an argument I do not know whether I am angry or sad.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>I use my feelings to improve my choices in life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I try to learn from difficult situations or emotions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Other people tend to confide in me about personal issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>My emotions inform me about changes I should make in my life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I find it difficult to explain my feelings to others even if I want to.</td>
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<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>I don't always understand why I am stressed.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>If someone came to me in tears, I would not know what to do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I find it difficult to listen to people who are complaining.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>I often take the wrong attitude to people because I was not aware of their emotional state.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I am good at sensing what others are feeling.</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>I feel uncomfortable if people tell me about their problems, so I try to avoid it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>I know what to do to motivate people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>I am good at lifting other people's spirits.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX H
THE PROFILE OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE (PEC)  
(3 OF 3 PAGES)

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34. I find it difficult to establish a link between a person's response and their personal circumstances.</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. I am usually able to influence the way other people feel.</td>
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<td>36. If I wanted, I could easily make someone feel uneasy.</td>
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<td>37. I find it difficult to handle my emotions.</td>
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<td>38. The people around me tell me I don't express my feelings openly.</td>
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<td>39. When I am angry, I find it easy to calm myself down.</td>
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<tr>
<td>40. I am often surprised by people's responses because I was not aware they were in a bad mood.</td>
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<td>41. My feelings help me to focus on what is important to me.</td>
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<td>42. Others don't accept the way I express my emotions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>43. When I am sad, I often don't know why.</td>
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<tr>
<td>44. Quite often I am not aware of people's emotional state.</td>
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<td>45. Other people tell me I make a good confidant.</td>
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<td>46. I feel uneasy when other people tell me about something that is difficult for them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>47. When I am confronted with an angry person, I can easily calm them down.</td>
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<td>48. I am aware of my emotions as soon as they arise.</td>
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<td>49. When I am feeling low, I find it difficult to know exactly what kind of emotion it is I am feeling.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50. In a stressful situation I usually think in a way that helps me stay calm.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

APPENDIX I

SURVEY, PART 3: CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL PARTICIPATION PROFILE (CSPP)

Source:
### SCREENING QUESTIONS

**Population - Sample Parameter**
- **Church affiliation**
  - Are you affiliated with ABC church?
    - Yes
    - No
- **Generation (Millennials)**
  - What year were you born?
    - 1980 or earlier
    - 1997 or later
    - 1981 to 1996
- **Consent (confirmation)**
  - If I met the criteria to participate, I give consent to do so and understand that I may end my participation at any time by exiting the survey and closing my browser:
    - Yes
    - No

### DEMOGRAPHICS PART I

**Sample Description**
- **Sex**
  - What is your sex?
    - Male
    - Female
    - Prefer not to disclose
- **Race**
  - What is your race or ethnicity?
    - African American or Black
    - Asian
    - Caucasian or White
    - Hispanic or Latino
    - Two or more races
    - Other or prefer not to declare
- **Age**
  - What is your age?
    - 24
    - 25
    - 26
    - 27
    - 28
    - 29
    - 30
    - 31
    - 32
    - 33
    - 34
    - 35
    - 36
    - 37
    - 38
    - 39
    - 40

### EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE (PART 2)

**RQ1**
What are the emotional competence scores of study participant millennials?
- **Emotional Competence**
  - The Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC) (Brasseur et al, 2013)
  - Assessment questions 1-50 (Appendix H) will generate a Global Emotional Competence Score.

### CHRISTIAN PRACTICES (PART 3)

**RQ2**
What are the levels of Christian practice of study participant millennials?
- **Christian Practices**
  - The Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (CSPP) (Thayer, 2004)
  - Assessment questions 1-50 (Appendix I) will generate four scores in the following areas:
    - Growing through Relationship with God
    - Growing through Relationship with Others
    - Growing through the Word
    - Growing through Critical Reflection

### ANALYSIS

**RQ3**
To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and practices that build a relationship with God?
- **Correlation**
  - PEC Statements: 1-50
  - CSPP Statements:
    - 1-6 (prayer)
    - 7-10 (repentance)
    - 11-14 (worship)
## APPENDIX J

**QUESTIONNAIRE – TOPIC – STATEMENT – (QTS) CHART**  
(2 OF 2 PAGES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Sub-topics</th>
<th>Survey Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **RQ4**  
To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials' emotional competence and practices that build relationships with others? | Correlation |  
- PEC statements: 1-50  
- CSPP, Statements: 34-37 (evangelism)  
38-42 (fellowship)  
43-46 (service)  
47-50 (stewardship) |
| **RQ5**  
To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and the Word? | Correlation |  
- PEC Statements: 1-50  
- CSPP, Statements: 15-18 (meditation) and 27-33 (Bible study) |
| **RQ6**  
To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between study participant millennials’ emotional competence and critical reflection? | Correlation |  
- PEC Statements: 1-50  
- CSPP Statements: 19-26 (examen of conscience / prophetic critiquing) |
APPENDIX K

PERMISSION TO USE THE PEC

Moira Mikolajczak <moira.mikolajczak@uclouvain.be>
Tue 3/23/2021 3:35 AM
To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins

Yes, as long as you cite the source, you can of course reproduce the items!
--

Moïra Mikolajczak
Professeur
Faculté de psychologie et des sciences de l’éducation
Institut de recherche en sciences psychologiques
Place du Cardinal Mercier, 10 bte L3.05.01 B-1348-Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique
Tél. [redacted]
moira.mikolajczak@uclouvain.be

On Tue, Mar 23, 2021 at 2:43 AM Flanagan, Nancy Watkins <nwflanagan@liberty.edu> wrote:

Dr. Mikolajczak,

As a follow-up to your November 21, 2020, authorization to use the Profile of Emotional Competence (PEC) instrument in my study, the university also requires your permission for its inclusion in the publication of my dissertation. By reply email, please confirm your permission to use and permission to publish the item. A copy of this email and your response will be included in the Appendix of the published dissertation.

With Much Appreciation,

Nancy Watkins Flanagan
Doctoral Candidate
Liberty University | John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
APPENDIX L

PERMISSION TO USE THE CSPP

[External] Re: One Final Request - Permission to Publish
Jane Thayer <thayerja@andrews.edu>
Tue 3/23/2021 11:30 AM
To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins <nwflanagan@liberty.edu>

Nancy,

I am confirming my permission for you to use the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (copyright 1999) in your dissertation research and additionally giving you permission to include a copy of it in your published dissertation. I am assuming that you will give proper attribution for the document.

Cordially,
Jane Thayer
Associate Professor of Religious Education, Emerita
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI

---

From: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins <nwflanagan@liberty.edu>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 9:35 PM
To: Jane Thayer <thayerja@andrews.edu>
Subject: One Final Request - Permission to Publish

Dr. Thayer,

As a follow-up to your November 15, 2020, authorization to use the Christian Spiritual Participation Profile (copyright 1999) in my study, the university also requires your permission for its inclusion in the publication of my dissertation. By reply email, please confirm your permission to use and permission to publish the item. A copy of this email and your response will be included in the Appendix of the published dissertation.

With Much Appreciation,
Nancy Watkins Flanagan
Doctoral Candidate
Liberty University | John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
APPENDIX M

SCREENED-OUT REPLY

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study. To participate, you must be 24-40 years old and affiliated with [redacted] church. You also must consent to participate. At least one of your responses on the previous screen indicates that you did not meet all of the criteria. If you have questions about this study or the criteria for participation, contact the researcher, Nancy Flanagan at [redacted]. May God bless you!

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
APPENDIX N

PARTICIPANT INSTRUCTIONS

EMOTIONS – Part 2*

The questions below are designed to provide a better understanding of how you deal with your emotions in daily life. Please answer each question spontaneously, taking into account the way you would normally respond. There are no right or wrong answers as we are all different.

For each statement, choose a score from 1 to 5 indicating how closely the statement resembles your emotional behavior, belief, or understanding (1 = Not me; 2 = Seldom me; 3 = Me sometimes; 4 = Me often; 5 = Describes me).

Once a score is selected, the survey will advance to the next statement automatically. After responding to statement #50, click the arrow at the bottom right of the screen to advance to the Christian Practices questions...

CHRISTIAN PRACTICES – Part 3

The questions below are designed to provide an understanding of how you engage with Christian faith practices. Please answer each question spontaneously, taking into account what you do and how you think about your faith.

For each statement, choose a score from 0 to 5 representing how often you practice the discipline described (0 = Never; 1 = Very rarely; 2= Rarely; 3 = Occasionally; 4 = Frequently, 5 = Very frequently). Once a response is selected, the survey will advance automatically to the next statement. You will have completed the survey after responding to statement #50 and clicking the arrow on the bottom right of the screen.

*Instructions and scale descriptions were modified with consent from the instrument’s designer (Appendix R)
APPENDIX O

Correlation Coefficient Interpretation Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlational Coefficient</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Related Variable and/or Scatterplot Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Perfect Positive Correlation</td>
<td>Both variables increase together forming a straight line</td>
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<tr>
<td>.99 to .61</td>
<td>Strong Positive Correlation</td>
<td>Dots lie close to an ascending straight line</td>
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<tr>
<td>.60 to .41</td>
<td>Moderate Positive Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.40 to .01</td>
<td>Low Positive Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>No Correlation</td>
<td>Dots follow no order</td>
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<tr>
<td>-.01 to -.40</td>
<td>Low Negative Correlation</td>
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<tr>
<td>-.41 to -.60</td>
<td>Moderate Negative Correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-.61 to -.99</td>
<td>Strong Negative Correlation</td>
<td>Dots lie close to a descending straight line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1</td>
<td>Perfect Negative Correlation</td>
<td>When one variable increases, the other decreases; all dots are below zero and land on a descending straight line.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Bennett et. al., 2009*
APPENDIX P
PERMISSION TO REFERENCE BARNA RESEARCH

Barna Group <barnagroup@barna.org>

Thu 3/11/2021 5:59 PM

To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins

Nancy,

Thanks for sending that my way. I have reviewed your request and it looks like fair use so you are permitted to use our content as detailed in your email sent on March 8th 2021. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Blessings,

Jeni

Barna Group <barnagroup@barna.org>
Thu 11/19/2020 6:02 PM
To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins

Hello Nancy,

Thank you for reaching out!

Yes please, once you are further along in the process please send me a copy of your dissertation to review. Until then you are okay to use or content for academic/personal use. If you have any concerns or uncertain about permissions feel free to consult our permissions guidelines.

Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Blessings,

Jeni
APPENDIX Q

PERMISSION TO USE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TABLE
(1 OF 2 PAGES)

Tim Cannon (Harvard Business Publishing-Permissions Team) <permissions@hbsp.harvard.edu>

Tue 3/23/2021 11:14 AM

To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins

Conversation CCs (if any):

Your request (1307549) has been updated. To add additional comments, reply to this email.

Tim Cannon (Harvard Business Publishing)
Mar 23, 2021, 11:14 AM EDT

Nancy Watkins Flanagan,

Thank you for your reply. Yes, please note that as long as the requested Harvard Business Review material is only being used to fulfill the Liberty University's John W. Rawlings School of Divinity class assignment in the pursuit of your degree, HBP permission would be approved at no charge (which would also include Liberty University permission to publish the HBR item within your upcoming Rawlings School of Divinity dissertation. "A Study of Emotional Competence and Christian Practices among Millennials") as long as the Harvard Business Publishing material is fully cited (see following).

Reprinted with permission from "Emotional Intelligence Has 12 Elements. Which Do You Need to Work On?" by Richard Boyatzis and Daniel Goleman. February 6, 2017, hbr.org

Regards,
Tim Cannon
Permissions Coordinator
HARVARD BUSINESS PUBLISHING
20 Guest St, Suite 700 | Brighton, MA 02135

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
Mr. Cannon,

Thank you for the recent responses, permission, instructions, and clarification regarding use of information from the Harvard Business Review.

As a follow-up to your March 14-15, 2021, authorization to include the "Emotional Intelligence Domains and Competencies" table in my dissertation with noted citations, the university also requires your permission for its inclusion in the publication of my dissertation. By reply email, please confirm your permission to include and permission to publish the item in the dissertation. A copy of today’s email and your response will be included in the Appendix of the published dissertation.

With Much Appreciation,

Nancy Watkins Flanagan

*Doctoral Candidate*

Liberty University | John W. Rawlings School of Divinity

***information redacted for confidentiality purposes***
Moira Mikolajczak <moira.mikolajczak@uclouvain.be>

Fri 12/11/2020 5:28 AM

To: Flanagan, Nancy Watkins

[ EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Thank you so much for improving the instructions, these are perfect!

On Fri, Dec 11, 2020 at 3:57 AM Flanagan, Nancy Watkins <nwflanagan@liberty.edu> wrote:

Moira,

Last month, you granted me permission to use the PEC during doctoral research. Again, thank you.

As I am loading the survey into my university’s Qualtrics platform, I am writing to be sure you agree with the following changes:

1) May I add descriptions to the 5 point likert scale as follows:

   1 = Not me, 2 = Seldom me, 3 = Me sometimes, 4 = Me often, 5 = Describes me

2) May I slightly modify the instructions as follows:

   The questions below are designed to provide a better understanding of how you deal with your emotions in daily life. Please answer each question spontaneously, taking into account the way you would normally respond. There are no right or wrong answers as we are all different. (deleted "on this level")

   For each question, choose (replaced “you will have to give”) a score from 1 to 5:

   1 = STATEMENT DOES NOT DESCRIBE YOU OR YOU NEVER RESPOND LIKE THAT  
   5 = STATEMENT DESCRIBES YOU VERY WELL OR YOU EXPERIENCE THIS RESPON
   OFTEN

The changes are intended to make the language easier for millennials to grasp quickly. If you disagree or feel these affect results, I will revert back to the original language and format as presented in the instrument you sent me.

Please Advise,

Nancy Watkins Flanagan
Liberty University | Rawlings School of Divinity