

A BIBLICAL MODEL OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

by

Brittany Littrell

Liberty University

A Dissertation Proposal Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

Within the last 25 years, the concept and application of emotional intelligence (EI) has experienced exponential growth within academic, organizational, and practitioner circles. While the benefits of EI development appear universal, EI application remains primarily absent from ministry settings and religious research. Prior to ministry implementation, the scriptural sustenance of key EI factors (EQ-I; self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision making, and stress management; MHS, 2011) was explored from the perspective of pastoral leaders to determine biblical alignment or discord. Implying a qualitative case study, interviews with eleven pastoral subjects revealed majority support for all five EI factors alongside the introduction of a sixth biblical factor. Ultimately, a biblical model of EI was created based on pastoral perceptions of emotional-social concepts within scripture. Implications for these findings suggest that a biblical model of EI could successfully address and improve the complex socio-emotional challenges associated with pastoral leadership.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, EQ-I, pastoral leadership, and ministry leadership.

Dedication

To my husband, Dustin:

This accomplishment would fail to exist without your unwavering support.

You asked me to dream big and told me to go for it.

For that, I am forever grateful.

To our four children, Charlee, Camryn, Cohen, and Callie:

May you all have the courage to follow God's unfathomable plan for your lives.

Acknowledgments

“The wall was completed in fifty-two days, on the twenty-fifth day of the month Elul. When all our enemies heard this, all the surrounding nations were intimidated and lost their confidence, for they realized that this task had been accomplished by our God” (Nehemiah 6:15-16).

My favorite book in the Bible is Nehemiah. It shares the account of how a humble cupbearer accomplished a remarkable task with the assistance of others and the advantage of God on their side. While the completion of this dissertation is nowhere near as significant as rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem (and unfortunately took more than 52 days), it is a noteworthy accomplishment that would not have been possible without the following people.

First, all glory, gratitude, and recognition belong to God. When I think about this accomplishment in its entirety, I am humbled that God’s power is made perfect in my weakness. This dissertation is a testament to God’s unending strength, continual comfort, and profound insight.

I would like to thank my husband, Dustin, for his endless love and selfless support (often in the form of peanut M&M’s and Chai tea latte’s). Good husbands are supportive, great husbands are encouraging, but you, my love, began this journey with me eight years ago and never stopped doubting that this vision would be a reality. For your confidence in me, I cannot thank you enough. I love you.

I want to thank my children for their grace and patience in a mommy who had several hats to wear. You bless me daily and I love you all dearly.

I would like to thank my wonderful parents, Chuck and Jenni Borsellino. Dad, thank you for raising me to believe that anything was possible. Mom, thank you for the

showing up with goodies to help keep me going and watching my children countless times so I could finish this project. You've always been my biggest fan!

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as an important construct in life, predicting many positive outcomes (Brackett et al., 2011; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Kotsou et al., 2019). Once considered irrelevant by researchers and psychological practitioners, the psychological construct of EI is currently considered a crucial life skill (Ackley, 2016; Hendron et al., 2014; Ruiz, 2014). Originating from cognitive and behavioral psychological research, the study of EI emerged nearly forty years ago as a way to conceptualize how emotions influence behavior, aiding leaders as they learn how to enhance occupational output through emotional discernment (Brackett et al., 2011). Research has associated high levels of EI with occupational success and life satisfaction (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008), improved psychological and physical health (Brackett et al., 2011; Durlak et al., 2011; Lowicki & Zajenkowski, 2017), healthy workplace relationships (Clarke, 2010; Côté et al., 2010; Kirk, 2011), and escalated job related outcomes (Extremera et al., 2019; Kotsou et al., 2019; Makkar & Basu, 2019). While researchers and organizations alike continue to expand their understanding and application of EI, there appears to be a salient group of individuals absent from EI literature.

While pastoral leaders are tasked with comparable responsibilities and professional outcomes to secular business leaders, EI application within religious settings continues to be an under-researched field (White & Kimmons, 2019; Hendron et al., 2014). This literature gap is disheartening, especially when considering how substantial EI application has been to medical (Beydler, 2017; Clarke 2006; Dugan et al., 2013; Hutchinson et al., 2018; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021), academic (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2012; Durlak et al., 2011; Hen & Sharabi-Nov, 2014;

Jaeger, 2003; Nelis et al., 2011; Perez-Escoda et al., 2012), athletic (Campo et al., 2016; Doron & Martinent, 2017; Martinent et al., 2018), and organizational fields (Clarke, 2010; Grant, 2007; Hodzic et al., 2015; Kirk, 2011; Kotsou et al., 2019; Kozlowski et al., 2018; Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008). However, prior to EI implementation, a biblical examination of EI factors should be conducted, as pastoral leaders adhere to both secular and sacred principles (Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). Therefore, in response to the benefit pastoral leaders could see from this construct, the biblical foundations of EI will be explored through the perspective of pastoral leaders to better determine if EI holds relevant and scriptural support for ministry application.

Background

Defined as the ability to recognize, manage, and enhance individual behavior through emotional processing and regulation (Kozlowski et al., 2018), EI has been called a foundational life skill (Ruiz, 2014), a resilience tool (Hendron et al., 2014), and one of the most valuable professional tools an individual can demonstrate (Goldman, 1995). Over the past three decades, researchers have explored the influence of EI within various professional domains and have used research in EI to improve selection prospects (Hodzic et al., 2015), leadership development (Clarke, 2009, 2010; Grant, 2007), organizational climate (Kirk, 2011; Perez-Escoda et al., 2012), and increase work outcomes (Extremera et al., 2019; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021; Kotsou et al., 2019; Makkar & Basu, 2019). EI has also been discovered to produce physical and mental health benefits, such as reducing stress and burnout (Adams et al., 2016; Brackett et al., 2011; Kotsou et al., 2019), and increasing life satisfaction (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Lowicki & Zajenkowski, 2017). Despite the substantial benefits, the study of EI within the context of pastoral leaders continues to be an under-researched field,

which is surprising when considering the interaction of social and emotional demands ministry leaders encounter (Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019).

Similar to secular organizational leaders, pastors are charged with administrative growth, supervision of operations, executive development, and maintaining occupational health for themselves, their team, and church congregants (Carter, 2009). While secular and sacred leaders demonstrate several overlapping responsibilities, pastoral leaders have extended responsibilities, often prioritizing the influence of biblical insight, spiritual revelation, and divine guidance while continuing to provide pastoral care and counseling to church members (Kim, 2009). Perhaps the largest differentiator is the submission of individual will and the execution of God's desire for the church (Kim, 2009). While pastoral seminary schools and biblical institutions are designed to equip ministry leaders with a firm exegesis of biblical teaching, researchers have begun questioning the efficacy of these training programs noting their lack of emotional and social preparation required for successful ministry (West, 2016). White and Kimmons (2019) said it well:

It may be a great understatement to state that pastoral leaders need the ability to understand and relate to other people as well as operate with health self-awareness if they desire to be faithful and effective in ministry. Yet, who is responsible for assisting in the development of emotional intelligence within emerging pastoral leaders as they prepare to enter ministry? (p. 370).

EI development could be very helpful for pastoral leaders, both when noting the empirical benefits and the relational requirements of the parsonage, which is why it is alarming that EI application within pastoral literature remains vastly underrepresented (Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). This literature gap is concerning, especially

considering the lack of socio-emotional preparation offered in seminaries, the general EI levels of pastoral leaders, and the high amount of stress ministry leaders encounter. This next section will provide a brief background on why pastors would benefit from EI application.

Biblical Institutions and Seminary Preparation

Upon realizing the foundational benefits of EI, West (2016) examined if adequate preparation of emotional constructs was offered for ministry leaders through seminary curriculum (West, 2016). Pastors were interviewed for EI vocational relevance and various seminary programs were evaluated for EI preparation (West, 2016). All pastoral participants identified the entire five components of EI as relevant to the pastorate (i.e. self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relational management, and self-efficacy), sharing how each factor was crucial for pastoral success (West, 2016). After reviewing course work from theology schools, it became apparent that EI competencies were inconsistently offered at Bible colleges and administrators were well aware of their training opportunities (West, 2016). Additionally, the pastors that received non-pastoral preparation reported a higher competence with EI factors, crediting their business school with classes on effective listening, conflict management, professional development (West, 2016).

While this study was the first of its kind to explicitly examine the relevance of vocational EI for religious leaders and the lack of preparation offered in seminary schools, West et al. (2018) believes there is still an opportunity for ministry leaders to vocationally succeed when provided with EI tools. Furthermore, additional researchers have illuminated the crucial opportunity Christian institutions have to develop well-rounded, emotional intelligent pastoral leaders (Carter, 2009; Hendron et al., 2014; White & Kimmons, 2019). This concern over the

emotional competencies of Christian leaders is warranted, especially when considering the lower than average EI levels of religious leaders.

General EI Levels of Pastoral Leaders

Intrigued by the relationship between religion and well-being, Pizarro and Salovey (2002) argued that religious systems were structured through the development and refinement of emotional skillsets. Additionally, they asserted that religious institutions were, "...inherently emotional intelligent organizations" (Pizarro & Salovey, 2002, p. 221). While this assertion seems logical, as ministry roles prioritize interpersonal relationships and emotional consulting, this statement has been found to be empirically incorrect. Attempting to examine this claim, Hendron et al., (2014) evaluated the EI levels of 226 Irish clergy. The results revealed that clergy EI was lower than expected and lower than other diverse populations assessed through the same EI assessment. Attempting to extend religious EI research, Francis et al. (2018) examined the EI levels of 364 religious leaders in Wales using the same EI assessment tool. Researchers found similar results; clergy reported significantly lower levels of EI when compared to the standardized data published from the EI inventory (Francis et al., 2018). A deeper analysis of the data revealed that one in five clergy appeared to be struggling with the EI requirements for their vocation (Francis et al., 2018), which is alarming especially when noting the absence of EI intervention literature within pastoral leaders.

Clearly, the notion that religious organizations are inherently emotionally intelligent is a vast misrepresentation of pastoral EI levels (Francis et al., 2018; Hendron et al., 2014). Seeing as how pastoral leaders hold lower EI levels than the general population, it would appear that focusing on EI competencies would bolster the social-emotional cognition of ministry leaders, equipping them with skillsets that could mitigate vocational tension.

Ministry-Related Tension

Pastoral leaders face unusual amounts of occupational stress and burnout (Gallagher, 2019; West, 2016). Perpetual stress is inherent within ministry roles, which could be a result of persistent fatigue, high relational demands, limited social support, isolation, unhealthy expectations, and ambiguous job roles (Adams et al., 2016; Malcolm et al., 2019; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011). Family tension is also significant among religious leaders, where pastors and their relatives often experience boundary intrusion, relocation challenges, financial strain, and feelings of loneliness (Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011).

Defined as the prolonged exposure to emotional and interpersonal stressors, vocational burnout is a construct pastoral leaders often experience (Dunbar et al., 2020). Research on clergy burnout has revealed that younger leaders are more prone to burnout than tenured pastors, signifying the importance of stress management and reduction techniques early in their career (Dunbar et al., 2020). Bible college administrators have admitted their oversight in providing consistent EI preparation (West, 2016). During interviews with administrative staff, one academic oversight noted the emotional pressure experienced personally and through ministry graduates:

There are huge benefits in turning out students with high emotional intelligence. This may impact the number of students, myself included, who go into ministries and end up being crushed by the pressure of emotional circumstances and end up pursuing other vocations (West, 2016, p. 235).

This transcript addresses the coping resource EI training could bring to pastors and the potential aid this could bring to pastoral longevity, a growing concern in North America (Adams et al.,

2016; Cafferata, 2017; Elkington, 2013). Statistics show that 1 in 3 North American pastors leave the ministry each day, blaming their departure on a lack of adequate preparation required to successfully manage the stress and adversity of the pastorate (Elkington, 2013). Based on the relationship between ministry leaders and stress, it is unsurprising that empirical research on pastoral stress and burnout has grown considerably within the twenty-first century, with researchers attempting to diagnose and understand the specific factors resulting in premature pastoral departure (Adams, et al., 2016; Malcolm et al., 2019).

Organizational EI research on occupational stress and burnout has demonstrated how EI development has increased stress manageability, augmenting stress tolerance and impulse control (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Francis et al., 2019; West, 2016). EI has been identified as a significant mediator of burnout, stress reduction, and mental health (Brackett et al., 2011; Castillo et al., 2013; Kotsou et al., 2019). Furthermore, when examining one of the few articles examining EI and pastoral leaders, pastors shared how development of the self-aware construct (an EI sub factor) has helped them specifically deal with high stress and burnout, as they are more introspective of key moments and environmental stimuli that can trigger emotional spirals (West, 2016).

Based on the diverse range of social and emotional interactions, it would appear that pastoral leaders are in dire need of EI due to the fact that they are not receiving adequate socio-emotional preparation in seminary school, they possess generally low levels of EI, and their role involves highly stressful and emotional components. Yet, while EI has been established as a beneficial secular skillset, the scriptural foundation of the construct has yet to be examined. As it was previously mentioned, pastors answer to a unique blend of sacred and secular

responsibilities. Therefore, in an attempt to extend EI literature within pastoral leadership, the biblical components of EI should be examined for scriptural relevance.

Does EI Hold Biblical Alignment?

Due to the spiritual responsibilities of religious leaders, pastors are tasked with seeking biblical truth, advancing God's will, and following scriptural direction (Kim, 2019). Composed nearly forty years ago, the widespread notion of EI was originally composed as supplementary concept to cognitive intelligence (Brackett et al., 2011). While this concept has generated years of confirmatory research (Hodzic et al., 2018; Kotsou et al., 2019; O'Connor et al., 2019) and appears to be a construct that could be helpful to pastoral leaders, the biblical origins of EI have yet to be examined. Using the five factors of the EQ-I (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making), this study examined if pastors perceive EI to be biblically sound and how EI could be instrumental in their church leadership role. This study developed a biblical model of EI that pastoral leaders can incorporate to experience the empirical benefits of EI while maintaining their allegiance to biblical instruction.

Problem Statement

Since its conception nearly thirty years ago, EI has been positively associated with improved workplace interactions (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008), career performance (Clarke 2010; Brackett et al., 2011), job satisfaction (Brackett et al., 2011; Miao et al., 2016), and positive management of conflict and stress (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Brackett et al., 2011; Durlak et al., 2011). While the effects of EI development have been observed in classrooms (Clarke 2010; Durlak et al., 2011) sports teams (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2004; Campo et al., 2016), healthcare (Kozlowski et al., 2018) and corporate settings (Farnia & Nafukho, 2016; Thory, 2016; Kozlowski et al., 2018), the application of EI competencies is vastly underrepresented within

Christian institutions (Gliebe, 2012; West, 2016; Dustman, 2018) and pastoral research (Elkington, 2013; White & Simmons, 2019; Wollschleger, 2018).

Due to the complex secular and sacred vocational responsibilities associated with ministry (Flannelly et al., 2003; Tunheim & DuChene, 2016), pastoral leadership has been identified as one of the most demanding positions in the world (Elkington, 2013). The unique challenges associated with ministry leadership often result in high levels of pastoral stress and burnout (Adams et al., 2016; Dunbar et al., 2020; Frederick et al., 2017) and increased personal and family tension (West, 2016; Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018), issues that could be alleviated with EI augmentation. While research has demonstrated the individual and group level development of EI through intentional EI training programs (Campo et al., 2016; Clarke 2010; Dulewicz et al., 2004; Durlak et al., 2011; Farnia et al., 2016; Kozlowski et al., 2018), EI application remains primarily absent from ministry settings and religious research.

Religious leaders appear hesitant to integrate a secular tool into their ministry, which could be attributed to the tension between the church and modern psychology (Johnson, 2010). While EI has been suggested as a vital element of pastoral success (West, 2016), the scriptural support of key EI factors (*i.e.* self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision making, and stress management; MHS, 2011) has not previously been explored from the perspective of pastoral leaders. Therefore, in an effort to bridge the gap between scientific and scriptural influence, EI must be evaluated for biblical support prior to religious EI implementation.

Without exploring the biblical foundation of EI components, pastors may be reluctant to utilize an empirical tool that lacks ministry support. Furthermore, if EI fails to generate significant biblical alignment, the benefits of EI application within ministry development would

be considerably limited, as pastoral leadership includes a substantial amount of sacred methodologies (Flannelly et al., 2003). While there is a current concern to introduce EI competencies within Christian academia (Gliebe, 2012; Dustman, 2018), practitioners may be prematurely leading the charge for EI integration without the foundational comprehension of biblical manifestation.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to evaluate if Christian pastors perceive biblical support for the five factors of the EQ-I model. This study developed a theological description of the EQ-I model based on the interviews of pastoral leaders.

Research Questions

Research Questions

RQ1: According to Christian pastors, in what ways are the five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making) supported by biblical scripture?

RQ 2: According to Christian pastors, in what ways are the five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making) incongruent with biblical scripture?

RQ 3: Do Christian pastoral leaders perceive any additional biblical principles that aid with emotional processing that are not included in the five-factor EQ-I model?

RQ 4: How do Christian pastors describe the usefulness of EI development for pastoral leaders?

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

The key assumptions associated with this study included pastoral participants possessing a solid awareness of EI and the biblical knowledge required to determine if EI support could be generated through scripture. In terms of EI knowledge, the specific factorial composition of EI is not required for study participation, however it is presumed that ministry participants were familiar with EI at large. This familiarity could be obtained through self-directed independent studies, formal training, or acquired through life experiences. Participants received a brief overview of the construct and the five factors prior to interviews, establishing a base level of EI understanding. Similar to possessing EI knowledge, it was also assumed that participants possessed the biblical familiarity required for analysis. While it is expected that pastors held varying degrees of formal seminary education, it was anticipated that participants retained the information required to find biblical support or disagreement for the EI constructs of self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision-making. The fact that this study incorporates Christian pastors' perspectives of biblical scripture and is not limited to a specific biblical testament or to a particular time throughout scripture provided this study with a wide range of biblical interpretation and application, mitigating scriptural limitations.

This section discusses the factors that may influence the research outcome. The significance of this section addresses the internal validity of the study and the generalizability of the study's findings. Assumptions refer to anything that the researcher assumes are true in the collection of data. Only assumptions that are relevant to the outcomes of the study should be included. Limitations refer to factors related to the design or procedure that are unavoidable and may compromise the validity of the results. Examples of assumptions include participants answering honestly or having the knowledge to answer. Examples of limitations include methodological weaknesses, social desirability issues, or other factors.

The study limitations could include the specific measurement of participant understanding, as those more familiar with EI concepts and scripture pertaining to emotional awareness could present a deeper interpretation of alignment or misalignment as a result of their heightened comprehension. Additionally, the inclusion of subjects who have a personal relationship with the researcher could enhance positive response bias, where participants might seek to establish a relationship among constructs to support a biblical model of EI when actuality would suggest no association. Concealing personal perceptions of EI and biblical support during the interview process could diminish this study limitation. Lastly, while qualitative research allows for a greater amount of participant detail due to the flexibility and openness of the study, this type of data collection is inherently subjective (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, participant objectivity will be achieved by recording only the information shared, not referred to, throughout the interview.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The underpinnings of EI can be traced back to over a century ago, where Thorndike (1920) developed the notion of ‘social intelligence’ as a way of explaining indeterminate outcomes produced when examining individual IQ (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Wood, 2020). From here, Wechsler (1943) proposed the concept that non-intelligent skills were crucial for life success. Spring boarding off Thorndike (1920) and Wechsler (1943), Gardner and Hatch (1989) developed the theory of multiple intelligences, leading to the conclusion that individuals possessed many intelligences separate from IQ, solidifying the foundation for EI theory development (Brackett et al., 2011; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Wood, 2020).

The term ‘emotional intelligence’ was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1993) as an ability that monitors, distinguishes, and incorporates self and other’s emotional information as

a guide to personal thoughts and actions (Brackett et al., 2011). While the notion of EI was still at its infancy, Goleman (1995) popularized the concept with his best-selling book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ* (Brackett et al., 2011). The book quickly gained public attention by describing the pro-social workplace behaviors that could be used to solve problems efficiently (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). Goleman (1995) was the first to extend empirical EI research to the public, making the concept understandable and applicable for individuals from all professions (Brackett et al., 2011). Over the past forty years, EI comprehension and application has grown considerably, leading to the development of three distinct EI measurement categories: ability, trait, and mixed (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Hodzic et al., 2018; Kotsou et al., 2019).

Ability EI

The ability approach was initially created through the founding work of Salovey and Mayer (1993) who considered EI as a mental ability (Brackett et al., 2011; Hodzic et al., 2018). Here, the concept of EI is divided into four ability branches: identification of nonverbal emotions, guidance of cognitive processing, comprehension of emotional conveyance and action generation, and emotional regulation (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Salovey & Mayer, 1993). Salovey and Mayer (1993) theorized that individuals who possessed high levels of EI could accurately perceive and regulate certain emotions within themselves and others as a way of driving desirable outcomes (O'Connor et al., 2019). Due to their perception of EI as a cognitive ability, Salovey and Mayer (1993) developed a performance based measurement tool that assesses EI in a similar format to cognitive intelligence, integrating a criterion of correctness reflecting better and worse answer choices (Brackett et al., 2011; Doe et al., 2015). This assessment tool is still publically recognized as the most comprehensive

measurement of ability EI and many researchers and practitioners regularly employ ability-based EI assessments (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; O'Connor et al., 2019).

Trait EI

Unlike the ability method, trait-based EI is used to classify EI tools interested in quantifying self-perception within specific behavioral situations (O'Connor et al., 2019). Typically, trait EI is measured through self-reported assessments, where the researcher is interested in capturing self-assessed situational behavior as opposed to assessing maximum performance (Kotsou et al., 2019; Laborde et al., 2016). Seeing as how these assessments evaluate typical behavior, trait measurements tend to provide decent behavior predictions within a range of social situations (O'Connor et al., 2019; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The predictions are translated into an EI score that reflects a personal evaluation of emotional capacity, which can be illuminating when incorporating this approach into leadership development (Ackley, 2016). When completing self-report inventories, there is always the possibility that individuals can 'fake good' or 'fake bad'. In an effort to eliminate deception, many trait EI assessments include false indicators and the presence of faking alternatively creates additional social-emotional data to incorporate for selection or developmental opportunities (O'Connor et al., 2019).

Mixed EI

Supported by Goleman (1995) and Bar-on (1997), the mixed approach integrates the ability viewpoint, trait skillsets, and personality competencies, such as optimism, self-esteem, and emotional self-efficacy (Brackett et al., 2011). This approach views EI as a collection of emotional affect, drawing on personality rather than intelligence research (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). Mixed assessments also use self-report instruments; they usually include a 360

component, featuring the feedback of peers, leaders, and direct reports alongside participant responses (Brackett et al., 2011). Based on the mixed-approach concept, Bar-On's (1997) EI model features the following five factors: intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general mood (Bar-On, 1997; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). Due to the blend of personality and social skills required to achieve high levels of EI, Bar-On created the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I; Bar-On, 1997), which is considered one of the most widely used mixed EI measurement tools (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017).

While researchers continue to debate over the inclusion or exclusion of personality traits, it was recently discovered that emotional and psychometric intelligence integrates similar cognitive, social, and affective pathways (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020). This discovery highlights the overlap present between emotional and general intelligence, both in their neurological positioning and in demonstrated behavior (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Doe et al., 2015). Independent of the three approaches to EI measurement, EI theory has been empirically accepted as a developmental, non-crystalized trait, supporting its corporate, organizational, and leader benefits (Ackley 2016; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Doe et al., 2015; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). Next, a biblical evaluation of EI theory will be explored below.

EI Theory Through a Biblical Lens

Upon forming the Earth in its entirety, the Bible states how God made mankind in His image (*New International Version Bible*, 2011, Genesis 1:27). God displays portions of His image all throughout the Old Testament by demonstrating a wide range of emotions, from anger (Deuteronomy 9:8; Exodus 32:10-11; Numbers 11:1-2), joy (1 Chronicles 16:27; Nehemiah 8:10), delight (1 Kings 10:9; Psalm 18:19; 2 Samuel 22:20), and grief (Genesis 6:5-7). Similarly,

God's created beings also displayed emotion. Within the third chapter of the first book of the Bible, Adam and Eve share feelings of fear, shame, and blame when their actions failed to align with God's dire instructions, producing grave consequences for themselves and all of mankind (Genesis 3: 10-19). This is the first biblical account of mankind experiencing emotions. Seeing as how God's image includes emotional components that allow Him to experience both positive and negative affective states and the fact that His original design expressed and experienced similar affect, one could deduce that God intentionally created emotional beings.

There are several verses in the Bible that address human emotions, many of which discuss emotional regulation (Ecclesiastes 3:4; Philippians 4:6; Proverbs 15:18; Proverbs 16:32; 2 Timothy 1:7), empathy (John 15:12; Matthew 7:12; Romans 12:15), and the behavioral use of healthy emotions to promote favorable outcomes (Joshua 1:9; Proverbs 3:5-6; Proverbs 29:11; Romans 12:2). Similar to EI, the Bible can be both an assessment tool and a developmental plan, where individuals can assess their thoughts, actions, and behaviors by meditating on the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and renewing their thoughts so they can discern God's "...good, pleasing, and perfect will" (Romans 12:2).

Based on the emotional competencies of God, the reflected abilities in mankind, and the emotional instruction found throughout scripture, it would appear that the theory of EI has biblical support. While the specific factors of human affect are not discussed, it is apparent that the concept and action of love is a huge driving force throughout scripture (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Luke 6:35). Accordingly, 1 John states, "whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love" (1 John 4:8). While this component is not present in mainstream EI research, it would be expected to find some dissimilarity present between sacred and secular

research constructs. Therefore, in an effort to tailor the empirical benefits of EI for ministry leaders, the goal of this dissertation was to create a biblical model of EI.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of definitions of terms that are used in this study.

The Bible and/or Scripture – Composed of an Old and New Testament, the Bible is a foundational religious text for Christian believers (Stump, 2017).

Christian – An individual who identifies with and trusts the content found within the Bible, preserving traditional norms and beliefs stemming from a biblical worldview (Haugen, 2020).

Church – An organization with administrative systems and a spiritual community grounded in biblical instruction (Kim, 2019).

Decision Making – A concept involving how individuals choose between alternatives; composed of problem solving (finding solutions when emotions are involved), reality testing (remaining objective and seeing things the way they appear), and impulse control (resisting or delaying impulses to act) (MHS, 2011). Decision Making is one of the five emotional intelligent factors that contribute to the EQ-I (MHS, 2011).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) – “...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” (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, p. 433). Simply put, EI is the “...integration of emotions with cognition to impact performance...the intelligent use of emotions” (Ackley, 2016, p. 271).

Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) – A popular EI assessment tool sold and distributed by Multi Health Systems (2011), based on the early work of Bar-On (1997). The EQ-I is a self-reported inventory, composed of the following five factors: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision-making (MHS, 2011).

Interpersonal – A construct involving how individuals interact with others; composed of interpersonal relationships (mutually satisfying relationships), empathy (understanding and appreciating how others feel) and social responsibility (social consciousness and helpfulness) (MHS, 2011). Interpersonal is one of the five emotional intelligent factors that contribute to the EQ-I (MHS, 2011).

Self-Expression – A concept describing how individuals express themselves; composed of emotional expression (constructive expression of emotions), assertiveness (communicating feelings and beliefs through non-offensive communication), and independence (being self directed and free from emotional dependency) (MHS, 2011). Self-Expression is one of the five emotional intelligent factors that contribute to the EQ-I (MHS, 2011).

Self-Perception – An individual perspective involving how individuals view themselves; composed of self-regard (respecting oneself and demonstrating confidence), self-actualization (the pursuit of meaning and self-improvement), and emotional self-awareness (understanding one's own emotions) (MHS, 2011). Self-Perception is one of the five emotional intelligent factors that contribute to the EQ-I (MHS, 2011).

Stress Management – A concept describing how individuals deal with increasing workloads; composed of flexibility (adapting to emotions, thoughts, and behaviors), stress tolerance (coping with stressful situations), and optimism (maintaining a positive attitude and outlook on life) (MHS, 2011). Stress Management is one of the five emotional intelligent factors that contribute to the EQ-I (MHS, 2011).

Pastor/ Pastoral Leadership – A leader in charge of a Christian church responsible for attending to the spiritual and administrative tasks of the church based on God's vision and values (Kim, 2019).

Significance of the Study

Due to the complex secular and sacred vocational responsibilities associated with ministry, pastoral leadership has been identified as one of the most arduous positions in the world (Elkington, 2013). The unique challenges associated with ministry leadership often result in high levels of pastoral stress and burnout (Lee & Iverson-Gilbert, 2003) and increased personal and family tension (Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018), issues that could be alleviated with EI application. While it has been reported that over 1,000 North American pastors depart from Christian ministry annually (West, 2016), their attributed exodus, stemming from a lack of adequate emotional preparation, could be significantly alleviated through the incorporation of EI competencies (Wollschleger, 2018).

West (2016) has suggested that EI is critical for long-term ministry success, explaining how current pastoral EI development was self-directed, learned through experience, or discovered alongside the involvement of a counselor. By creating a biblical model of EI, pastors with less ministry experience could begin incorporating EI benefits earlier in their tenure, alleviating stress and burnout symptoms before they become an issue requiring external guidance. A biblical model could be viewed as a ministry resource, which pastors could employ to manage, overcome, and reduce the frequency in which stressful situations are encountered (Brackett et al., 2011; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). Additionally, it is expected that after all five EI factors have been assessed for biblical congruence, the final result will blend secular and sacred leadership competencies, providing pastoral leaders with the empirical benefits of EI while maintaining scriptural support for their vocational call. Lastly, EI research exploring the perspectives of pastoral leaders will extend the underrepresented literature on pastors and EI, furthering researchers understanding on how EI theory affects this subsection of leaders.

Summary

EI has grown to become a focal point for numerous organizations in their desire to grow leaders with strong emotional competencies and pro-social behaviors (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). While EI research has demonstrated growth within classrooms (Durlak et al., 2011), teams (Campo et al., 2016), and secular leaders (Kozlowski et al., 2018), religious leadership has been vastly underrepresented within the EI literature (Strunk et al., 2017; West, 2016). Prior to evaluating if religious leaders receive similar EI benefits, the foundational factors of the EQ-I, a popular EI assessment tool, should be examined for scriptural alignment, as pastoral leaders hold positions that uniquely combine both biblical and secular principles (Elkington, 2013; Flannelly et al., 2003; Tunheim & DuChene, 2016). By examining the presence or absence of scriptural undertones within the five EQ-I factors and creating a biblical model of EI, ministry leaders could have access to an empirical tool grounded in biblical truth, which could aid with the specific socio-emotional challenges of pastoral leadership.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Emotional intelligence (EI) encompasses an individual's ability to recognize emotional experiences within themselves and others, managing their experiences to enhance mental processing and interpersonal behaviors (Kozlowski et al., 2018). Within the last 25 years, the concept and application of EI has experienced exponential growth within academic, organizational, and practitioner circles (Doe et al., 2015; Laborde et al., 2016; O'Connor et al., 2019; White & Kimmons, 2019). EI has been positively associated with resilience, empathy, job performance, and diminished stress (Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Kotsou et al., 2019). According to the *American Society for Training and Development*, at least 80% of American companies are vigorously attempting to raise the EI of their staff as a means of increasing performance (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). While organizational development programs continue to increase their focus on EI competencies, little to no research has been done exploring the benefits of EI development within religious organizations in an attempt to increase the interpersonal skillset required from pastoral leaders. Furthermore, EI has not been examined biblically.

Similar to secular business leaders, pastors are charged with organizational growth, management of daily operations and establishing a clear vision for their team and congregants (Carter, 2009). Ministry leaders also experience extended responsibilities, such as providing pastoral care and counseling to church members (Kim, 2019). While vocational biblical institutions and seminaries are designed to equip ministry leaders with a firm exegesis of biblical teaching and application, these specific training programs often fall short in preparing pastors for the emotional and social skills required for ministry (West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). Therefore, in response to the complex socio-emotional dynamics of pastoral leadership, this

chapter will provide a thorough review of current EI literature alongside pastoral research in an attempt to highlight the lack of EI developmental research within pastoral leadership literature and the absence of biblically evaluated EI components.

Description of Search Strategy

When conducting the literature review, the following databases were utilized: ASCE Library, EBSCOhost, Emerald Insight, JSTOR, Springer Link, ProQuest, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, SAGE Full-text, ScienceDirect, and Wiley Online Library, Access to the aforementioned databases was provided from Liberty University. Several religious journals were also incorporated, which included, but not limited to: *The Journal of Religion and Health*, *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, *Journal for the scientific Study of Religion*, and *Christian Education Journal Mental Health, Religion & Culture*.

The following keywords and phrases were used: *leadership*, *pastoral/clergy leadership*, *pastoral/clergy spouse support*, *pastoral/clergy hardships*, *clergy/pastoral burnout/stress*, *pastoral/clergy development*, *pastor/clergy emotional intelligence*, *emotionally intelligent*, *EI*, *EQ*, *Bar-On EQ-I*, *MHS EQ-I 2.0*, *EI review*, *EI intervention*, *EI traits*, *self-perception and leadership*, *transformational leadership*, *self-expression and leadership*, *interpersonal relationships and leadership*, *stress management and leadership*, and *decision making and leadership*. Over 90% of the cited works are from peer-reviewed journals and 80% of the document references were published within the last 5 years.

A word study was performed when examining key concepts of EI within a biblical context. The words used for the search were: *self-perception*, *self-regard*, *self-actualization*, *emotional self-awareness*, *self-expression*, *emotional expression*, *assertiveness*, *independence*, *interpersonal relationships*, *empathy*, *social responsibility*, *decision making*, *problem solving*,

reality testing, impulse control, stress management, flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism.

The decision to remain congruent within a single translation of the Bible was purposeful and conducted to ensure scriptural integrity, as different approaches to biblical translation highlight different methods and approaches to translation. All scripture used in this present research study and within this document comes from the *New International Version Bible* (NIV, 2011). The NIV (2011) translation was completed in 1978 and is considered one of the most commonly used meaning-to-meaning translations today (Thomas & O'Connor Valenzuela, 2020).

Review of Literature

Emotional Intelligence: The Origin

Stemming from intellectual and applied psychological research, emotional intelligence (EI) emerged nearly forty years ago as a way to conceptualize how emotions influence the adaptive process of cognitive behavior, aiding individuals as they apply rational processing toward emotional output (Brackett et al., 2011). The concept was novel, as many researchers, organizations, and educational institutions viewed emotional constructs as variables that caused leadership derailment and opposed intellectual advancements (Brackett et al., 2011). Prior to the introduction of EI, emotional regulation techniques such as surface acting, deep acting, and emotional dissonance were used to help individuals mask and/or deny unpleasant emotional experiences. While common, these regulation methods have been uncovered to promote negative occupational and health outcomes such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, psychological strain, and psychosomatic complaints (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011).

Emotional intelligence materialized one year after a provocative public debate highlighted the inheritability of intelligence alongside its positive correlation with class structure (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Doe et al., 2015). While research supported the claim, individuals

were outraged at the discriminatory link between IQ, race, and social structure (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). One year later, Daniel Goleman presented a positive counterpoint with his book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ* (1995). Here, Goleman (1995) discussed the significant achievements obtained by leaders who emphasized kindness, warmth, and strong pro-social skills. Mayer and Salovey (1993) first defined EI as “...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” (p. 433). While that description still holds merit today, the concept and embodiment of EI has grown over the years.

Defining Emotional Intelligence

Since the initial introduction of the construct, three key definitions of EI have developed and continue to dominate the literature (Ackley, 2016). Salovey and Mayer (1993) were the first to use the term ‘emotional intelligence’ (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Salovey & Mayer, 1993). Their theoretical model proposed that individuals differed in four factors of emotional capabilities: (1) individual emotional perception and expression, (2) the use of emotions to facilitate thought, (3) emotional cognition, and (4) emotional regulation (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Hendron et al., 2014; Mayer & Salovey, 1993). Goleman (1995) built upon this conceptualization and popularized the concept (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Hendron et al., 2014), defining EI as the ability to produce: (1) self-motivation, (2) self-regulation, (3) self-awareness, (4) social skills (interpersonal relationship management), and (5) social awareness (empathy) (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). Goldman (1995) believed that EI was a learned emotional competence, contributing toward effective job performance (Ackley, 2016). The third definition was proposed by Bar-On (1997), who believed that EI was an intersection of emotional and social competencies, where individuals use developed skillsets

to effectively manage the following five factors: (1) intrapersonal, (2) interpersonal, (3) stress management, (4) adaptability, and (5) general mood (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). While there has been considerable debate over the specific factorial components, EI has continuously been considered a psychological construct (O'Connor et al., 2019) and a developmental trait (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016) that has demonstrated “staying power” (Ackley, 2016, p. 269).

Methods of Classifying and Measuring Emotional Intelligence

Due to its developmental nature, research on EI has inspired several marketable measurement tools (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Hodzic et al., 2018). The creation of multiple EI scales has produced varying results, leading researchers to conclude that their models were capturing dissimilar underlying constructs (O'Connor et al., 2019). This result led to the development and distinction of ability, trait, and mixed EI measurements (Kotsou et al., 2019).

Ability-based inventories define EI as a standard mental skillset with traditional criteria for evaluation (i.e. performance measurements with a criterion of correctness) and are preferred when researchers are interested in the emotional abilities and competencies of individuals (Brackett et al., 2011; O'Connor et al., 2019). Trait based models evaluate previously demonstrated behavior thorough self-report measures and preferred when practitioners are concerned with the behavioral tendencies and/or emotional self-efficacy (Laborde et al., 2016; O'Connor et al., 2019). Alternatively, the mixed method blends emotional, social, and personality traits, and has been used to improve reason and augment professional performance standards (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020). Depending on the specific application (i.e. professional development, hiring and selection, or promotional evaluations), trait, ability, and mixed based tools have been used to enhance organizational value through construct assessment and

development of desirable EI behaviors (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Francis et al., 2019; O'Connor et al., 2019).

Ability Measurement

The Mayer, Salovey and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), Version 2.0, has been publically recognized as the most comprehensive measures of ability-based EI (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; O'Connor et al., 2019). Similar to a cognitive intelligence assessment, the MSCEIT measures individual performance by assessing correct responses to emotion-laden problems across four sections: awareness, use, comprehension, and management of emotions (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2004). Seeing as how the ability-based model argues that EI exists as a form of general intelligence, it makes sense that the MSCEIT would measure the construct with right and wrong answers (Ackley, 2016). This 141-item inventory presents option choices with ranked desirability, scoring through consensus and expert scoring methods (Brackett et al., 2011). Consensus scoring compared individuals scores to a normative sample of over 5000 respondents and expert scoring relies on the discernment from researchers in the field (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). The MSCEIT yields impressive test-retest reliability, however there have been critiques of the predictive validity of the instrument (Brody, 2004). Here, Brody (2004) has questioned if individuals recognition of how to behave within a specific state mimics their actual situational behavior, assuming they have the capacity to conduct themselves in the way they envision themselves performing (Brody, 2004). While low correlations between IQ, personality factors (i.e. extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, and openness), and the MSCIEIT have been uncovered, this finding has distinctly recognized EI as an independent construct, unrelated from personality and intelligence measurements (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008).

Trait Measurement

The EI trait-based models utilize self-reported techniques to measure representative situational behavior as opposed to assessing maximum anticipated performance (Laborde et al., 2016). Trait models are preferred when a practitioner is interested in measuring behavioral tendencies characterized by ongoing occupational stressors or when typical behavior results in positive organizational results (O'Connor et al., 2019). The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) is preferred amongst researchers interested in isolating this EI component, as it has been cited in over 2,000 academic studies (O'Connor et al., 2019). The TEIQue spans four EI factors (emotionality, self-control, sociability, and well-being) and 15 supporting sub-facets (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Disadvantages of the tool generally stem from the self-reporting nature of the measurement, which can lead to a higher probability of participant faking or produce inconsistent results if participants possess poor discernment of their emotional regulation (O'Connor et al., 2019). While self-reporting inventories have their fair share of criticism, a major accomplishment of the isolated trait EI is its empirical link to job satisfaction, organizational commitment (Miao et al., 2017) as well as emotional expression and regulation (Campo et al., 2019).

Mixed Model Measurement

While a majority of EI tools can be characterized as ability or trait based measurement tools, the third model, mixed EI, is used to describe EI tools that blend traits, social skills, and personality measurements through self-report and/or the inclusion of outside peer groups (i.e. 360 feedback which incorporates scores from direct reports, peers, and leaders alongside participant ratings)(O'Connor et al., 2019). The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I) is the most widely used EI measurement scale within research settings (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). This mixed model approach evaluates a range of non-cognitive

abilities through 133 questions rated on a five-point scale (Clarke, 2009). The EQ-I spans five composite scales, each composed of 12 sub factors, which are graded against a sample consensus to determine an individual's overall score. While the EQ-I also provides strong test-retest reliabilities and high internal consistency, high correlations between this inventory and several personality measures have additionally been uncovered (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). Critiques of the EQ-I stem from the significant overlap and interdependence between pro-social constructs and personality, leading many researchers to conclude this measurement could be comprised of personality constructs (Clarke, 2009). However, because the mixed model attempts to blend EI traits, ability, and social factors, it would be expected to discover overlaps with personality theory within this all-inclusive measurement approach.

Discernment Between Measurements

While the TEIQue, EQ-I, and MSCEIT measure different competencies of EI application, each tool is considered empirically valid and reliable measurements of EI (Brackett et al., 2011; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; O'Connor et al., 2019; Thory, 2016). When determining which measure is most appropriate, it is recommended that organizations consider the context and overall purpose of the measurement tool (O'Connor et al., 2019). While not ideal for selection, the TEIQue is useful in coaching and developmental settings (O'Connor et al., 2019). Additionally it has a long and short version of the inventory, appealing to time sensitive situations. The EQ-I leverages past behaviors and previously exhibited behavior, which is then used to identify developmental areas and predict future behavior (Lin, n.d.). The MSCEIT inventory focuses on uncovering innate discernment and individual capacity for skill development, which is used to identify the amount of effort needed to learn new skills and similarly, provide insight on future behavior (Lin, n.d.). Regardless of the inventory of choice, EI

application has grown considerably due to the positive organizational and individual growth achieved through EI assessment and developmental interventions (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Doe et al., 2015; Kotsou et al., 2019; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016).

Benefits of Emotional Intelligence

The concept of managing internal emotions as a way of driving external behavior has become increasingly popular, which is largely attributed to the positive scientific research supporting EI outcomes in the workplace (Doe et al., 2015; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Laborde et al., 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). Specifically, EI has been associated with improved workplace interactions, positive management of conflict and stress, and increased job performance (Ackley, 2016; Bracket et al., 2011; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Makkar & Basu, 2019). Occupational research has also associated EI with career success, life satisfaction, and overall life success (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016). Based on the positive correlations between EI and performance, it is unsurprising that according to the *American Society for Training and Development*, four out of five companies are actively trying to raise the EI of their staff (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008).

EI Benefiting Effective Leadership

Leadership development has become a foundational area of leader research and organizational practice (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Kotsou et al., 2019; Vogel, et al., 2020). A significant driver of individual and group-level leader development is the study and application of EI, which can be largely accredited to the occupational benefits leaders with high EI demonstrate (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Kotsou et al., 2019; Vogel et al., 2020). A recent meta-analysis of global leadership traits revealed that effective leaders know how to demonstrate

control over their emotions and how to emotionally connect with others (Park et al, 2018). When leaders are able to positively manage their emotions, they are not only behaving appropriately, but also teaching upcoming leaders how to act in a similar manner, enhancing the development of future organizational leaders (Park et al., 2018). EI has also been shown as a predictor of effective leadership styles, such as authentic and transformational leadership (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). Due to the highly malleable nature of EI, it is no surprise why organizations are making EI development a high priority for their leaders (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016).

EI Driving Job Performance and Satisfaction

Similar to leader benefits, EI has been shown to be predictive of performance outcomes and professional success (Extremera et al., 2019; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021; Kotsou et al., 2019; Makkar & Basu, 2019). Dippenaar and Schaap (2017) discovered a positive association between EI and both task and relational performance outcomes. Here, task related outcomes included organizational goal attainment while relational outcomes encompassed employee engagement, motivation, organizational and individual commitment, and job satisfaction (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). A study by Anari (2012) found that fostering EI within school leaders produced greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment. EI has also been shown to enhance the overall job performance and occupational satisfaction of healthcare professionals (Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). EI has also been empirically connected to emotional well-being and life satisfaction, rounding out the concept to positively impact both professional and personal health (Lowicki & Zajenkowski, 2017).

EI's Ability to Diminish Stress and Burnout

An additional benefit of EI has emerged in emotionally intense professions that typically incur higher levels of emotional exhaustion, burnout, and occupational stress (Adams et al., 2016). Defined as a negative response to prolonged job stress, burnout is a global issue plagued with overbearing workloads, lack of organizational support, and low financial rewards (Frederick et al., 2017; Gallagher, 2019). EI has been found to be a significant mediator of burnout and stress reduction (Brackett et al., 2011; Kotsou et al., 2019).

Stress and burnout reduction is often measured after an EI training, which has been utilized as a strategy employees can employ to manage, combat, and diminish the frequency in which stressful situations are encountered (Brackett et al., 2011; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). EI training on stress management focuses on remaining flexible to inevitable change, the ability to tolerate stressful situations, and maintaining an optimistic perspective despite setbacks (MHS, 2011). Seeing as how unattended stress can cause significant health challenges and occupational losses (Stickle & Scott, 2016), assessing individual forbearance and discussing healthy approaches to stress management is beneficial not only for high-tension occupations, but individuals at large.

EI Benefits Equipping Academic Students and Teachers

In addition to fostering occupational and health improvements, EI benefits have also been connected to success inside the classroom. In academia, EI has been identified as an important skill for education, as several job-embedded challenges require the interpersonal and intrapersonal involvement of EI skillsets (Blaik Hourani et al., 2020). Interpersonal, adaptability, and stress management EI traits have been positively associated with academic success, forming a solid predictor of collegiate success for high school graduates (Hogan et al., 2010). Adaptability and stress management have also been found to be significant predictors of student

GPA over and above verbal IQ, social economic status, and gender differences (Hogan et al., 2010). Ability-based EI has demonstrated discriminatory validation between personality and cognitive intelligence within high school students while also remaining predictive of students' final grades after controlling for personality and academic intelligence (Márquez et al., 2006). While the specific relationships between EI and academic achievement is still evolving, social and emotional behavior has been empirically linked to academic success (Hogan et al., 2010; Kotsou et al., 2019; Márquez et al., 2006).

As aforementioned, EI research has uncovered several benefits. EI training and development has been demonstrated to increase peer interactions, reduce occupational tension, and bolster job-related outcomes such as performance and success (Ackley, 2016; Bracket et al., 2011; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Kotsou et al., 2019; Makkar & Basu, 2019). With growing connections between EI and occupational, academic, and health benefits, it is unsurprising that the *World Health Organization* (WHO) considers EI as a foundational life skill supporting adaptable and positive behavior (Ruiz, 2014).

Emotional Intelligence Interventions

Due to the known benefits of EI, EI interventions, or training programs, have been developed to increase individual and group EI. Interventions typically include an EI assessment and coaching session where EI competencies are reviewed, personal reflection is encouraged, and social-emotional strategies are discussed to increase performance and social interactions (Ackley, 2016). EI trainings have been conducted in various settings and have consistently shown academic achievements (Blak Hourani et al., 2020; Hogan et al., 2010; Kotsou et al., 2019; Márquez et al., 2006) and workplace improvements (Doe et al., 2015; Jiménez-Picón et al.,

2021; Laborde et al., 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). Within the following section, specific results from workplace, team, healthcare, and academic EI interventions will be reviewed.

Organizational Interventions

The appeal and influence of organizational EI has led several companies to prioritize the development of this construct (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). In 2009, Clarke focused on learning if EI could improve project managers' EI abilities and enhance relevant management competences. Results from the study found an increase within participants EI ability and EI comprehension as a result of a 2-day training intervention. While retest results 1-month post training did not demonstrate significant differences, growth was observed in participants six months after training was completed. These results are twofold; first, this study suggests that training can impact EI abilities six months after training and second, that additional factors may enhance continual development such as occupational context and practical application. Overall, this study presents findings that support EI development through occupational training.

Similarly, Kozlowski et al. (2018) measured the growth of employee EI after providing individualized EI training and coaching. 60 participants (30 receiving an intervention and the remaining 30 serving as a control group) took the GENOS Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment pre-training (establishing a base line) and again 3 months post-training (with only half the participants receiving a 4-hour workshop and a 30-40 minute individualized coaching session). The training group significantly increased their post-training scores while the control group reported little change between their baseline and 3 month assessment. This study was the first of its kind to demonstrate how statistical EI growth could occur within a three-month period of time of minimal organizational input.

Similar to the findings above, a recent meta-analysis of EI interventions within adult

populations found 73% of their inclusionary studies provided significant support for increases in work-related outcomes after initiating EI training (Kotsou et al., 2019). Results from the intervention studies include improvements in conflict management (Clarke, 2010), patient satisfaction (Dugan et al., 2013), coaching skills (Grant, 2007), employability and reemployment (Hodzic et al., 2015), workplace incivility and positive affect (Kirk, 2011), organizational climate (Perez-Escoda et al., 2012), and job satisfaction (Turner & Lloyd-Walker, 2008). An additional review aimed at examining the efficacy of EI interventions found significant support for EI training and its ability to increase EI, with ability-based trainings producing higher results over trait and mixed EI models (Hodzic et al., 2018). Taken together, these results support the notion that EI training can produce significant EI growth while also providing evidence of positive work-related impact, when compared against control groups (Hodzic et al., 2018; Kotsou et al., 2019; Kozlowski et al., 2018). As a result of the positive outcomes of workplace EI interventions, EI researchers continue to apply intervention application knowledge to additional areas of interest.

Team Interventions

While EI intervention research typically focuses on individual development, there have been attempts to understand if development can occur within a team. Here, Clarke (2010) explored the effects of attending a one-day EI training course followed by group learning on EI abilities. Results uncovered no significant development directly following training however, when team-based learning occurred after training, positive effects were found. While positive development occurred with the combination of training and team learning, significant effects were only observed in the students that were categorized as intensely participating in team learning. Concluding remarks highlighted the additional support that team-based learning can

cerate, which could support and enhance emotional ability if individuals form strong relational bonds with others while demonstrating active participation.

Developing EI within sports teams is also a growing area of research, as emotions have been found to play a crucial role within sports performance (Campo et al., 2019; Doron & Martinent, 2017; Martinent et al., 2018). Attempting to improve EI at the trait level, Campo et al. (2016) examined the results of an EI training intervention within a sample of 67 participating rugby players using the Barr-On EQ-I (1997). The intervention ran over a span of five months, at which time Campo et al. (2016) concluded that the intervention methods successfully increased players EI, demonstrating how trait EI can experience positive growth over a brief timeframe. A systematic review of EI highlighted significant EI growth within sports teams spanning 3 months time (Kotsou et al., 2019). Here, several studies saw improvements not only in EI, but also in relationship quality, emotional regulation, and EI growth without the presence of motivation (Campo et al., 2016; Kotsou et al., 2019). The shortest team EI intervention timeframe to generate results was an EI study employing the MSCEIT, which detected trait EI improvements within rugby players after only one week of training (Campo et al., 2019). While emotional expression and emotional regulation were the only factors to see an increase over the control group, all of the aforementioned group intervention studies highlight the efficient value of team EI training, within limited segments of time (Campo et al., 2016; Campo et al., 2019; Kotsou et al., 2019).

Interventions in the Medical Field

EI plays a considerable relevant role within healthcare (Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). Here, EI interventions have been linked with clinical decision-making (Hutchinson et al., 2018) work absenteeism, and patient satisfaction (Beydler, 2017). In an effort to increase emotional

intelligence within the hospice community, Clarke (2006) performed an EI intervention examining the transference of emotional abilities. Clarke's (2006) findings emphasized the contextualized nature of emotional abilities, the significance of social structures, and the transfer of emotional knowledge through co-worker interaction and guidance. The study concluded that EI competences and socio-cultural prompts that influence emotional exhibition are likely to be learned within organizational context, further emphasizing a pro-social organizational culture which supports EI development and training.

Similar to Clarke's (2006) findings, an EI healthcare review article recently produced findings that further supported the success of EI training and development within 10 recently published EI intervention articles within the medical field (Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021). Here, EI was found to correlate with mindfulness (Jacobs et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2020) and in some cases, solo mindfulness interventions increased trait EI (Snowden et al., 2018). EI interventions also produce significant impact upon the improvement of social relationships (Côté et al., 2010), with medical intervention articles highlighting the improvement of patient satisfaction after physician residents received EI training (Dugan et al., 2013). Evidently, EI training holds value for medical professionals and their patients at large (Beydler, 2017; Côté et al., 2010; Dugan et al., 2013; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021).

Academic Interventions

Transitioning to the education system, there are several EI interventions that have been tested within academic samples. When observing EI within adolescent populations, EI is often categorized as socio-emotional learning (SEL). A multiyear EI intervention among adolescent students demonstrated how SEL training significantly reduced physical and verbal aggression, anger, distress, and hostility (Castillo et al., 2013). Similarly, Durlak et al. (2011) uncovered how

a school based SEL and emotional learning program contributed toward higher emotional and social skills, attitudes, behavior, and academic performance within students.

Studies examining EI at the collegiate level have found that similar to organizational EI interventions, EI training can enhance individual EI levels when compared against a control group (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2012). When asked to partake in an EI semester long course, students reported EI growth alongside increases in academic performance (Jaeger, 2003). Interestingly, Nelis et al. (2011) discovered a correlation between EI interventions and personality differences among college students, noting differences on the dimensions of extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. When observing EI interventions within teacher participants, Hen and Sharabi-Nov (2014) found increases in empathy, perspective, and personal distress. EI training has also been discovered to decrease teacher stress, which as a result increased institutional climate perception, overall resulting in more emotionally stable place of employment (Perez-Escoda et al., 2012).

While a large majority of EI research and intervention literature examines EI development within organizational, team, academic, and medical contexts, EI effects are rarely examined within religious sectors, specifically within pastoral leaders. This underrepresentation provides a large gap in the EI literature, while simultaneously contributing a disservice to pastors and ministry leaders who may not be receiving the social preparation required for their vocational profession. In an effort to identify the specific needs and challenges faced by ministry leaders, a review on pastoral leadership literature will be conducted below.

Pastoral Leadership

Similar to corporate leaders, pastors are tasked with creating a vision, developing leaders, and managing daily operations however, pastoral leaders also partake in ministry specific

responsibilities such as providing spiritual guidance, care, and correction to church members (Carter, 2009). Due to the complex secular and sacred vocational responsibilities associated with ministry, pastoral leadership has been identified as one of the most challenging positions in the world (Elkington, 2013). The unique challenges associated with ministry leadership often result in high levels of pastoral stress and burnout (Lee & Iverson-Gilbert, 2003; Chandler, 2009; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011) and increased personal and family tension (Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018), which leads to a decrease in pastoral tenure (Elkington, 2013). Statistics show that three North American pastors leave Christian ministry for a different career path every day (Elkington, 2013). This mass exodus has been attributed toward a lack of adequate ministry preparation addressing the stress and adversity present in pastoral leadership positions (West, 2016). Therefore, a review of pastoral stressors and departure reasons will be discussed in an effort to discern if EI concentration would help aid the issues faced by pastoral leaders.

Pastoral Leadership Challenges

In 1993, pastoral longevity was a concern due to the pastoral lateral movement, the tendency for pastors to move between churches after a short tenure (Elkington, 2013). Nearly 30 years later, it appears that pastors are no longer participating in sequential church jumps; pastors are moving out of church ministry indefinitely. Over 1,000 North American pastors depart from Christian ministry annually (Elkington, 2013), which is an alarming discovery for individuals who began their pastoral journey out of a fidelity to the pastoral call (Strunk et al., 2017). While there are several factors that contribute toward pastoral departure, research has identified the following pastoral challenges as the three main reasons pastors leave their vocational call: a lack

of pragmatic seminary preparation, increases in pastoral stress and burnout, and diminished spousal support.

Lack of Adequate Seminary Preparation

One of the leading reasons pastors report leaving their vocational call is a substantial lack of practical preparation and curriculum offered by theological seminary schools (Elkington, 2013; Strunk et al., 2017; West, 2016). Research by Strunk et al. (2017) revealed that most seminary graduates feel ill equipped to address the realities of the pastorate, which is a critical concern not only for current pastors but also for emerging pastors and the future of seminary school at large. In an effort to examine the ministry preparation skills offered in theological institutions, West (2016) evaluated the academic transcripts, catalogs, syllabi, and course descriptions from 10 Bible colleges in North America, alongside interviews with key administrative staff. Here, it was determined that there was a significant lack of EI preparedness, a skillset that was identified as crucial for pastoral success by long-tenured pastors (West, 2016). Without a solid, emotional foundation upon entering full-time ministry, it would appear that pastors are not wholly prepared to deal with commonly faced socio-emotional issues. Thus, without the knowledge required to navigate and endure parsonage challenges, emerging pastors are more susceptible to vocational hardship (Adams et al., 2016).

In addition to the lack of pragmatic preparation, seminary schools also appear to be contributing toward a false narrative of unrealistic expectations pastors formulate upon exiting Bible schools (West, 2016). Elkington (2013) notes that while adversity in the workplace is not a novel concept, the rate at which pastors leave their vocation due to adverse conditions could be indicative of idealistic goals they had upon entering ministry. Here, seminary pastors form

unrealistic expectations of congregational adoration and harmony, leaving them disorientated when faced with parishioner conflict and disagreement (Elkington, 2013).

The problem with modern seminary curriculum appears salient. As administrators recognize the pragmatic opportunities for emotionally cognizant curriculum (West, 2016), the challenge of how to reach ministry graduates currently serving in parsonages remains. Without a way to develop their EI and adopt realistic expectations for ministry outcomes, it is foreseeable that pastoral longevity will continue to decline.

Pastoral Stress and Burnout

While seminary schools appear to be lacking in pastoral preparedness, the stress and sequential burnout experienced by many ministers is also a main contributing factor of pastoral departure. Interviews with over 50 global pastors indicated that “...serious opposition, hardship and difficulty, coupled with loneliness, exhaustion and sadness, form a major part of the pastoral career profile” (Elkington, 2013, p. 7). Additional ministry leaders admitted to fantasizing about simpler careers where issues such as same-sex attraction and irregular financial support would fail to confound their uncomplicated positions (West, 2016). Pastors are clearly under duress, and it would appear that many are vacating their vocation as a way to alleviate their stress.

Proeschold-Bell et al. (2011) studied pastors coping mechanisms when dealing with ministry stress, uncovering that pastoral burnout and dissatisfaction is a rising issue. Research on pastoral health commonly evaluates stress, as a ministers’ position has several demands, serves multiple people, and holds non-traditional work hours (Lee & Iverson-Gilbert, 2003; Proeschold-Bell et al., 2011). Lee and Iverson-Gilbert (2003) conceptualized the precursors of pastoral stress as originating from four key categories: (1) personal criticism, (2) boundary ambiguity, (3) presumptive expectations, and (4) family criticism. While stress appears to be an expectant trial,

researchers have found that the four aforementioned antecedents of stress are the leading cause of low pastoral health and high pastoral burnout (Lee & Iverson-Gilbert, 2003). Thus, pastors without viable stress coping skills are more susceptible to experience burnout.

Defined as energy depletion without proportional renewal, ministers are particularly prone to burnout (Chandler, 2009). Here, pastors constantly provide support to others while maintaining minimal resources for personal attentiveness (West, 2016). According to Chandler (2009), pastoral burnout advances through three avenues: (1) emotional exhaustion, (2) depersonalization, and (3) reduced accomplishment. Here, emotional exhaustion is described as elongated fatigue stemming from occupational stress, work overload, and challenging job demands (Kim et al., 2020). Over time, the depletion of resources results in a tendency to withdraw from others, negatively impacting interpersonal relationships that ironically could aid during times of distress (Chandler, 2009). While withdrawal can take many forms, this inclination to disconnect when experiencing burnout not only results in a declination of pastoral health, but also negatively affects those dependent on care and oversight (Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021).

Diminished Spousal Support

The final challenge faced by many pastors is diminished spousal support, which is primarily researched from a female support role perspective (Chan & Wong, 2018; Luedtke & Sneed, 2018), however as female leaders continue to obtain pastoral roles, research on male support roles is emerging (Tunheim & DuChene, 2016). In an attempt to understand the unique challenges and experiences of spousal support, Chan and Wong (2018) interviewed 15 female pastor wives in China. Researchers learned that the majority of participants felt financial stress, tension from their husband's work, loneliness, and stress from role expectations (Chan & Wong,

2018). Luedtke and Sneed (2018) produced a similar study in the West, uncovering comparable sentiments. Here, interviews revealed that pastor wives similarly experienced unobtainable congregational expectations, lonely lifestyles, significant family sacrifices, and financial insufficiencies (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018).

In an effort to balance the current pastoral spouse literature, Tunheim and DuChene (2016) explored the experiences of American female bishops and their male husbands. While pastor positions vary by congregational size and financial support, the Lutheran bishop position is complex in that it oversees up to 150 churches (and pastors) within a geographical area. In an attempt to explore the journey of female bishops, Tunheim and DuChene (2016) discovered that the majority of participants listed spouse support as crucial for ministry success. Here, many respondents indicated that without the strong support of their spouse, many would not be in the bishop position they currently hold. Thus, if spousal support can influence the acquisition and tenure of female ministry leadership, does diminished support affect pastoral tenure? Pastoral spouse research is still an underrepresented subject within the literature, however the research that has been collected highlights the undeniable hardships experienced by pastoral support roles (Dunbar et al., 2020). With each of these issues originating from unbalanced spousal support, it seems logical that if this tension is not alleviated it could prompt pastors to leave the ministry for a less stressful job.

While the aforementioned concerns have differing origins, they all appear to drive a similar and detrimental outcome. The next section will explore these pastoral challenges through an EI lens. Here, the specific benefits of EI will be applied to the aforementioned categories of pastoral stressors in an effort to reduce the ill effects of pragmatic seminary preparation, pastoral stress and burnout, and diminished spousal support.

The Link Between Emotional Intelligence and Pastoral Leadership

While pastors are typically educated in an assortment of skillsets relating toward scriptural theology, business development, and ministry leadership, these religious leaders may not be receiving the preparation required for the relational and emotional aspects of their vocation (West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). In a recent article discussing clergy education and development within the state of Kentucky, authors White and Kimmons (2019) stated the following:

A good mastery of specific competencies, spiritual formation, and sound theology is still necessary for pastors and is emphasized within most graduate-level theological programs, yet one area of formation continues to be overlooked in the development of pastoral leaders and ministry-related research: emotional intelligence. (p. 370)

Seeing as how EI is a developmental trait (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016) that can be enhanced through training and development programs (Campo et al., 2016; Castillo et al., 2013; Clarke 2006, 2009, 2010; Dulewicz & Higgs, 2004; 2004; Durlak et al., 2011; Farnia et al., 2016; Kozlowski et al., 2018), it appears unusual that EI application has remained underrepresented and under applied within pastoral leadership literature (Hendron et al., 2014; White & Kimmons, 2019). Here, the specific pastoral challenges of inadequate ministry preparation, pastoral stress and burnout, and diminished spousal support will be explored through an EI lens to determine if EI research and application would benefit pastoral leaders by diminishing their vocational stressors.

EI within Pastoral Seminary Schools

Literature has highlighted the need to bolster pastoral training curriculum within Bible schools and seminaries (Chandler, 2009; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). During a

qualitative study examining the presence of EI concepts within North American pastoral preparation institutions, West (2016) uncovered that pastors with high EI usually had secular educational backgrounds, as the EI competencies gained were covered in non-pastoral preparation programs (e.g. social work, business, and educational degrees). West (2016) concluded that current coursework fails to adequately support the development of the majority of EI constructs, and pastors with high EI were fortunate enough to learn the construct through mentorships, previous educational experiences, or they were self-taught.

Interviews with long-tenured pastors acknowledged curriculum gap, noting not only the benefits of high EI, but the impact EI training could have on pastoral longevity (West, 2016). Furthermore, when pastors were interviewed on their incorporation of EI within the workforce, they noted how EI incorporation was crucial for success, as it specifically supported growth in self-confidence, faith, self and relationship management, social awareness and conflict management (West, 2016). This perpetual issue can be solved by adding proper EI training to theology programs in effort to not only pragmatically prepare pastors for the ministry, but to help them develop the emotional/social skills required to keep them there. With pastors confirming the critical incorporation of EI competencies for long-tenured success, supplementing EI coursework would directly impact pastoral longevity.

EI and Pastoral Stress

In the same way that EI development can bolster seminary preparation, this emotional construct can support tension reduction. Pastors face unusual amounts of stress and loneliness due to the multiplicity of competing demands (Chandler, 2009; Hendron et al., 2014; White & Kimmons, 2019). While stress cannot be removed from the ministry, several studies on the pragmatic application of EI have uncovered EI's ability to increase stress management, a

construct that includes stress tolerance and impulse control (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Francis et al., 2019; & West, 2016). Dippenaar and Schaap (2017) examined the impact of coaching leaders on social and emotional intelligence skillsets by conducting participant interviews after respondents completed EI training. Researchers confirmed previous empirical evidence pertaining to the positive impact of EI development by statistically demonstrating that coaching significantly impacted intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management, self-regard, and empathy constructs of EI (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). When evaluating the specific effects of stress management development, participants reported an improved cognition of the required to deal with stress, enhanced control over volatile emotions, and a deeper consciousness of the triggers of impulses (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017).

Several studies have confirmed the benefits of EI within stress management, identifying EI as a moderator between distress and mental health (Brackett et al., 2011; Castillo et al., 2013). Specifically within pastoral literature, research has demonstrated how development of the self-aware construct (an EI sub factor) has helped pastors specifically deal with high stress and burnout, as they are more introspective of key moments and environmental stimuli that can trigger emotional spirals (West, 2016). Based on the confirmatory research corroborating the diminishing effects EI application has on stress, it would benefit pastors to incorporate EI training in an effort to evaluate and strengthen their stress management capacity.

EI and Pastoral Burnout

Similar to stress and tension, pastoral leaders are experiencing increasing amounts of burnout and detrimental relational conflict (Luedtke & Sneed, 2018). Without proportionate renewal, the complex, conflicting, and stressful demands of ministry often create conditions of spiritual, mental, physical, and social depletion (Chandler, 2009). Attempting to uncover the

debilitating effects of pastoral burnout, Chandler (2009) discovered that spiritual dryness was the primary predictor of emotional exhaustion, the stress dimension of burnout. This is the first article to establish an empirical connection between spirituality and burnout, which could help explain why pastors are leaving the ministry at alarmingly high rates. EI research has confirmed an inverse relationship between EI and burnout among clergy, such that higher EI correlated with lower burnout indices (Francis et al., 2019). Additionally, pastors who incorporate EI skillsets report more job satisfaction than those who do not employ the socio-emotional skillsets (West, 2016). Nonetheless, EI literature has confirmed the overwhelmingly positive attributes of EI training, development, and daily incorporation. By leveraging this data with the incorporation of EI self-assessments and ministry development plans, pastoral leaders can gain the competencies required for a successful pastorate and long-tenured ministry.

EI and Pastoral Spousal Support

The tension related to full-time ministry extends beyond the pastor, negatively impacting spouses and pastoral families. Here, financial stress, relocation uncertainties, intrusions on time, and high congregational expectations are some of the ill effects pastoral spouses face daily (Chan & Wong, 2018). As noted earlier, this stress can moderate pastoral tenure as spousal support has been identified as critical by female bishops (Tunheim & DuChene, 2016). In an effort to alleviate the emotional and social stress experienced by ministry partners, Chan and Wong (2018) suggested introducing psychological support services where clergy wives could acquire pragmatic stress-management skills. Stress tolerance is common among most trait-based EI measurements scales, and the development of this construct could help pastoral partners (a) understand their current capacity and (b) develop techniques designed to reduce pastoral stress and conflict. While it was previously suggested that EI should be applied to reduce pastoral

stress and burnout, equipping pastoral spouses with EI training is additionally crucial, as EI can aid in empathy (Blaik et al., 2020; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021) and increased social support (Kotsou et al., 2019; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016).

Lack of EI Training and Development within Religious Sectors

Pastoral leadership is a complex construct, as it is composed of multiple secular (e.g., organization and leader development, staff management, vision casting, etc.) and non-secular (e.g., biblical counseling and guidance, spiritual correction, congregant encouragement, etc.) theoretical approaches (Flannelly et al., 2003). Due to this complex blend of vocational responsibilities, pastoral leadership has been labeled one of the most difficult occupations in the world (Elkington, 2013). While biblical seminaries are designed to equip ministry leaders with a firm and extensive theological foundation of biblical teaching, these training programs often fall short in preparing pastors for the emotional and social skills required for ministry (Wollschleger, 2018). This is unfortunate considering EI skillsets have been identified as crucial components of pastoral resilience by tenured pastors (West, 2016).

A recent study evaluating the EI scores of Anglican clergy in the UK concluded that ministers in this region have not received the training required to be successful within emotional constructs, as indicated by their significantly lower levels of EI when compared with the normative group (Francis et al., 2018). Additionally, West (2016) showed how pastoral training programs were not adequately teaching ministers the emotional intelligence skills required for effective emotional management. These results are disappointing considering the specific ministry related benefits EI skills have been uncovered to bolster, such as pastoral self-efficacy, burnout, and career longevity (West, 2016). Hodge et al. (2020) states how pastors with high EI are more likely to prioritize mental health for themselves, their congregants, and staff members.

Furthermore, pastors who incorporate EI skills in their ministry reported an increase in job satisfaction and contentment (West, 2016).

While EI training and development appears to be a salient solution for pastoral leadership challenges, the biblical foundation of the construct has yet to be evaluated. If EI fails to generate theological support, the empirical benefits may not apply to pastoral leaders as their unique position blends both organizational and Christian principles. Therefore, prior to conducting an EI intervention within a group of pastoral leaders, key EI components should be appraised for scriptural support to better assess if this secular construct would benefit Christian leaders.

Biblical Foundations of the Study

While there are several ways to measure EI, the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (1997; EQ-I) is not only the most widely used EI measurement scale within research settings (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017), but it has also been rated the best overall model of self-perception (the awareness of emotions in self and others)(O'Connor et al., 2019). The EQ-I (Bar-on, 1997) was updated by MHS (2011) and now includes scores on the following five factors: (1) self-perception, (2) self-expression, (3) interpersonal, (4) stress management, and (5) decision making (Ackley 2016). While research has confirmed the strong construct and predictive validity of the EQ-I (Ackley, 2016; O'Connor et al., 2019), these factors have not yet been empirically viewed through a spiritual lens to determine if they hold biblical relevance. Prior to seeking the involvement of pastoral leaders, the five aforementioned EQ-I factors will be explored for through Jesus' ministry to determine if each EI factor holds scriptural support.

Jesus: An Emotionally Intelligent Leader

As previously explored, EI is an outgrowth of general intelligence research (Brackett et al., 2011). Based on early New Testament scripture, we know that Jesus of Nazareth was considered an intelligent individual (Luke 2:41-52). At the age of twelve, Jesus was discovered in the temple courts sharing among the top theologians of his time. Scripture goes on to share that, “Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers” (Luke 2:47). In addition to demonstrating his profound biblical knowledge, Jesus also applied high cognitive reasoning to complex worldly issues like racial prejudice (Luke 10:25-37), slavery and cruel labor laws (Matthew 18:21-35), the entrapment of financial gains (Luke 16:1-14), homosexuality (Mark 10:1-9), and marital separation (Mark 10:5-12). While scripture has captured several examples of Jesus’ cognitive abilities, there has been little to no research examining the emotional constructs of his ministry. We are told that Jesus is an embodiment of scripture (John 1:1-5); therefore, if EI is scripturally supported then the presence of EI should also be evident in Jesus’ ministry, mirroring the parallel relationship between God and the Bible.

Linking the EQ-I Constructs to Scripture: Self-Perception

The concept of self-perception refers to how an individual understands, communicates, and is aware of their emotions (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). Within the EQ-I model, this factor is supported by the constructs of confidence, self-improvement, and emotional self-awareness (MHS, 2011). Individual insight is a large component of EI; in fact, self-awareness has been identified as the cornerstone of emotional intelligence theory (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016). The degree to which a leader can demonstrate mindfulness, determines their efficacy, both personally and when interacting with others (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016). Transformational leadership is considered more effective than other leadership styles because leaders engage in followers emotions, aiming to inspire, motivate, and empathize with their circumstances (Cartwright &

Pappas, 2008). This leadership style has been empirically correlated with high EI (Ackley, 2016; Blaik Hourani et al., 2020; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008), demonstrating that emotionally intelligent leaders have a solid sense of their emotional capabilities.

Biblically, the explicit term of self-awareness is not mentioned in the Bible, however there are several verses that highlight the significance of achieving personal insight. The disciple James shares the importance of understanding emotional outrage and limiting its impact (James 1:19-20), highlighting the prominence of emotional self-awareness. In 1 Timothy 4:16, Paul urges Timothy to, “Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers”. This verse signifies the fundamental value of personal reflection, adding that individual examination will not only preserve Timothy’s personal life, but it will improve the relationship he has with his followers, which also falls in line with transformational leadership theory. In the previous passages, Paul says, “Do not neglect your gift, which was given to you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress” (1 Timothy 4:14-15). Here, Paul is encouraging a young disciple to give thoughtful consideration to his gifting, which directly correlates to the supporting sub-factor of confidence within self-perception. He also touches on self-improvement (the second subfactor) when he encourages Timothy’s diligence by affirming it would result in progress. Here, self-improvement is supported through self-awareness, however there are other mentions of achieving biblical improvement through both the renewal of our minds (Romans 12:2) and by meditating on the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In Psalm 139, David writes about how God searches us and knows our thoughts, the words on our lips, and our premeditated movements. David continues to explain how, “...such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to obtain” (Psalm

139:6). According to scripture, the revealing of our inner attitudes and outward behavior can only be revealed through an omniscient God. Therefore, the pursuance of a personal relationship with an all-knowing God is a crucial component of biblical self-perception, as all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding ultimately comes from Him (Proverbs, 2:6).

Linking EQ-I Constructs to Scripture: Self-Expression

Similar to self-perception, the self-expression factor builds off the personal integration of internal knowledge by examining how feelings and thoughts knowledge is shared with others. The key components of the self-expression factor include effectively expressing emotions by using words and physical expressions to convey messages in a helpful manor (emotional expression), asserting opinions in a respectful demeanor (assertiveness), and demonstrating independent thoughts, feelings, and work production (independence; MHS, 2011). Leadership communication research often encompasses psychological properties that involve examining leader speech within the context of achieving organizational goals (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2017). The communicative tone, independent construction of content, and delivery of the speaker are all important components of self-expression, however this EI factor also evaluates how the message makes the audience feel after the message is received. Within an organization, stakeholder buy-in is critical when sharing a strategic vision (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2017). Shimizu (2017) stresses that this process is dependent on effective leadership communication, emphasizing goal achievement through message comprehension, acceptance, and support of message recipients. Therefore, emotionally savvy leaders leverage self-expression through purposeful communication and the cultivation of effective social interactions with their followers (Miao et al., 2018).

Similar to successful EI leaders, scripture emphasizes Jesus' self-expressive traits of independence and assertion. Jesus' confident message was reflected all throughout his ministry, even during challenging interactions with Roman rulers and religious leaders (John 18:37; Matthew 22:34-46). When Roman guards arrested Jesus and his purpose was questioned before the Roman official, Pontius Pilate, Jesus was firm and direct, declaring how he came into the world to speak truth (John 18:37). Similarly, when the Pharisees, Jewish religious leaders, condemned Jesus for breaking Old Testament religious law (Mark 2:24; Luke 6:2), Jesus' actions were self-dependent from their personal projections, demonstrating independence over irrelevant religious law.

Aside from demonstrating independence and self-assurance, Jesus was also an emotionally expressive communicator. Jesus often spoke in parables, fictitious relatable narratives, which he used to illustrate complex moral issues (Luke 15; Luke 12:16-21; Mark 4:13-34; Matthew 13:1-52). Attempting to justify his internal prejudice, a legal expert asked Jesus to clarify who were considered his neighbors (Luke 10: 29). Jesus used a parable to teach the crowd about racial discrimination through the parable of the Good Samaritan, finding a favorable way to communicate desirable behavior (Luke 10: 30-37). Jesus spoke to and demonstrated a wide-range of emotions, including topics concerning His joy (John 15:11; Luke 10:21; Mark 10:13-16), frustration (Matthew 8:26), anger (John 2:14-17; Matthew 7:15; 23:33), and sadness (John 11:28-37). Jesus was able to express his emotions in a meaningful way, which opened relational channels for communication between Himself and His followers. While on earth, He demonstrated the independent and self-assured expression He wanted us to pursue with Him after His departure, signifying the importance of verbal and physical emotional expression.

Linking EQ-I Constructs to Scripture: Interpersonal

The third factor of the EQ-I model is interpersonal, which entails developing and maintaining mutually satisfying relationships (interpersonal relationships), the ability to recognize, appreciate, and understand with the way others feel (empathy), and demonstrating social conscientiousness by directing one's behavior toward achieving moral outcomes (social responsibility; MHS, 2011). Research on empathy has confirmed that emotional support and understanding influence follower performance (Kock et al., 2019). Authentic leadership literature similarly supports the expression of concern for follower well being (supporting both interpersonal subcomponents of empathy and social responsibility), emphasizing the importance of a solid leader-follower relationship (Bakar & McCann, 2018). Ethics research has also demonstrated value within leadership literature through the development of motivating language theory (Kock et al., 2019). This theory postulates that leaders must account for the vulnerability and dependency of followers, enhancing leader responsibility (Holmes & Parker, 2017; Mayfield & Mayfield, 2016, 2017).

When evaluating the biblical construct of maintaining interpersonal relationships, it would appear that the concept has both external and internal components. The demonstration of external interpersonal EI is displayed in the building and maintaining of relationships, which Jesus was intentional about. Jesus personally invited those around him into his ministry, both through the recruitment of his personal disciples (Luke 5:1-11; Mark 3:16-20; Matthew 4:18-22) and in the calling of all mankind to follow him (John 8:31; Luke 18:22; Luke 9:23). He attended social events (John 2:1-2), and the Bible says he developed friends whom he loved (John 11:1-7). Another example of God's external interpersonal capacity is found in his love of and prioritization of healing infirmaries. At the start of Jesus' ministry, the book of Matthew recalls how Jesus traveled throughout Galilee "...teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good

news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23). The chapter continues to explain how news of Jesus spread throughout the country, and people brought him “...all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them” (Matthew 4:24-25). Jesus healed every single person who was brought to him, highlighting not only his external expression of compassion, but also an internal drive of empathy and social responsibility for all of mankind.

As aforementioned, interpersonal EI includes an internal component, driving the external demonstration of the behavior. When preaching to a crowd, Jesus told a parable of a lost son (Luke 15:11-32). The story follows a father and his two sons; the younger of the two squandered his inheritance on a lavish, unsustainable, lifestyle, ultimately leaving him penniless (Luke 15:13-16). Ashamed of his life choices and sinful behavior, the son decides to return home and ask his father for a position in his household as a hired slave (Luke 15: 17-18). Jesus concluded the story by describing his homecoming, “But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him” (Luke 15:19-20). This parable emphasizes God’s extravagant compassion for our sinful behavior. This empathy is echoed all throughout the Bible, but most predominantly in Romans, when Paul explained how Jesus died for us when we were under deserving of eternal life (Romans 5:8). God also asks us to have empathy for one another, directing us to help (Ecclesiastes 4:10; Isaiah 1:17), and empathize with others (Galatians 6:2; Romans 12:15). It would appear that both the internal and external interpersonal EI components are biblically supported, both as concepts that were modeled by Jesus (Luke 15:11-32) and supported throughout biblical instruction (John 13:34-35; Romans 12:15).

Linking EQ-I Constructs to Scripture: Decision Making

The fourth factor, decision making, is key for capturing the capacity of a decisive emotionally intelligent leader. This factor includes effectively seeking solutions when emotions are involved (problem solving), the ability to objectively visualize and communicate the particular issues at hand (reality testing), and understanding when to act on or delay an action centered on impulse (impulse control; MHS, 2011). Decision-making has been identified as the most significant action within organizational functionality, with organizational success dependent upon on the quality of decisions made (Iqbal et al., 2020; Kumar & Gautam, 2018). In an effort to help leaders discern between crucial and trivial factors, organizational decision-making tools have been designed to help leaders organize, process, and proceed in a successful manor. Perhaps the most widely used technique is the S.W.O.T. analysis, which involves assessing the internal strengths and weaknesses, alongside the external opportunities and threats of a decision (Abdel-Basset et al., 2018). The Vroom-Yetton model highlights circumstances and group collaboration (Iqbal et al., 2020), while the analytic hierarchy process (AHP), uses statistical programming tools to select the superior selection based on particular criteria (Abdel-Basset et al., 2018). There are several models, however the key components of decision-making ultimately include understanding how leaders comprehend complex problems and select a desirable direction (Iqbal et al., 2020).

Similar to the aforementioned organizational tools, Jesus also appeared to use a distinct decision-making process when faced with alternatives or when explaining his actions to others. The first, and most significant, element in this biblical process is evaluating if the presented choice aligns with God's will. In John 4:27-39, Jesus explains why he was talking with a Samaritan woman to his disciples who were surprised by his actions. "My food", said Jesus, "is

to do the will of Him who sent me and finish His work” (John 4:34). Here, Jesus explains that his substance comes from completing the will of God, therefore his discernment stems from accomplishing God’s desires, maintaining perfect balance with God’s word. This concept was observed when Jesus overcame temptation in the desert by quoting scripture that misaligned with worldly enticement (Matthew 4:1-11). Additionally, and undoubtedly his most momentous decision, Jesus’ choice to be tortured and suffer an undeserving death to save and restore mankind’s relationship with God was also a direct result of following God’s will over his own. When praying in the garden of Gethsemane, Matthew 26:38-39 says Jesus, “...fell to his face and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will’”. Here, we see Jesus asking God if there is another way to atone for the sinful nature of mankind. Jesus concludes his prayer by affirming control over his human impulse by stating that he will aligns with God’s will over his personal preference. Jesus’ obedience to God was the key driver behind his thoughts, actions, and behavior; however there were additional practices in place that helped Jesus remain grounded and maintain a clear mind.

Aside from aligning with God’s will, Jesus also practiced withdrawing for spiritual renewal (Luke 5:15-16; Mark, 3:7; Matthew 14:13), petitioning for protection through prayer (Luke 9:18; Luke 11:1; Matthew 26:41), and displaying his ability to purposely choose. This ability was observed in the specific calling of his disciples (Luke 5:1-11; Mark 3:16-20; Matthew 4:18-22), and in the foundational discernment of building his ministry, which including deciding where and how he would travel from city to city (Luke 10:1-17; Matthew 10:5-20; Matthew 14:22; Matthew 26:17-19).

After examining Jesus’ decision-making process, it appears that this EI construct holds significant biblical support. Scripturally, personal objection is to be tested through God’s will,

relying on His wisdom in all circumstances (Proverbs 15:22). Individuals are challenged with allowing God to establish their steps (Proverbs 16:9), while holding tight to the scriptural truth of His care over our wellbeing (1 Peter 5:7).

Linking EQ-I Constructs to Scripture: Stress Management

The final EI construct of stress management focuses on increasing individual capacity for stress and tension within the context of increasing workloads. This concept includes modifying thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in response to change (flexibility), the ability to cope with stressful situations (stress tolerance), and maintaining a positive perspective despite setbacks (optimism; MHS, 2011). Unattended stress can create significant health challenges (such as cardiac complications, ulcers, immune system disorders, and mental illness) and occupational losses (including workplace accidents, absenteeism, turnover, and increased healthcare)(Stickle & Scott, 2016). While occupational and life stress is an unavoidable occurrence, there are several techniques that help reduce tension and increase tolerance. Within adolescent research, stress, anxiety, and depression have been found to decrease when students are placed in groups to help shoulder the load (Levy & Travis, 2020). Occupational stress can be reduced through increased leader support, employee praise and appreciation, and remaining flexible to work-life balance concerns (Stickle & Scott, 2016). There is also a premeditated approach to stress management, which includes identifying horizontal issues and developing preemptive intervention strategies (Stickle & Scott, 2016). These solutions are then evaluated for short and long term sustainability to ensure that when issues arise, leaders have access to effective and efficient resolutions. While it is evident that stress hinders occupational and personal success, employing techniques that promote the healthy management of daily tension is an obtainable goal for EI leaders (MHS, 2011).

Similar to occupational stress literature, Jesus also taught on how to alleviate stress. When teaching in Galilee, Jesus spoke these words to the crowd, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). The technique He is referring to in this passage is simple; cast your cares on Jesus (Psalms 55:22; 1 Peter 5:7). This solution involves a principle and a promise. Here, Jesus speaks to the promise of rest and rejuvenation through the principle of repentance and reliance on Him. If we turn to Him, we are assured we will learn a restorative way to manage tension, regardless of the challenges that come our way.

Prior to His teaching on perpetual rest, Jesus similarly addressed worry when teaching to his disciples (Matthew 6:25-34). Jesus emphasized the tranquil perspective of nature, with birds having no concern over their sustenance and flowers no distress over their clothing, by detailing how God specifically attends to nature’s needs and in that same manor, cares more abundantly for us (Matthew 6:25-28). While worldly burdens are heavy and all consuming, God promises that He will attend to our needs if we come to Him, ultimately providing everlasting rest from unnecessary hardships (Matthew 11:28-30).

Biblical and Empirical EQ-I Support Summary

Based on the scriptural evidence above, it would appear that the Bible provides support for all five factors of the EQ-I. The first factor, self-perception, is empirically critical for followership, as leader awareness and mindfulness of others is a deterrent of organizational efficacy (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016) and key component of transformational leadership (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008). Biblically, Christians are encouraged to examine their thoughts, actions, and behaviors so they can better emulate Jesus (Galatians 6:4, 1 Timothy 4:16, Romans

12:2). The second factor, self-expression, is dependent on a leader's ability to effectively and conscientiously communicate, a necessary component for stakeholder buy-in (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2017; Shimizu, 2017). Similarly, Jesus demonstrated the importance of direct communication when questioned by ill-intent political authorities and religious leaders, signifying confidence in speaking truth (John 18:37; Matthew 22:34-46). The third factor, interpersonal, has been supported through authentic leadership literature, where empathy and relational concern are valuable components of the leader-follower relationship (Bakar & McCann, 2018). Similarly, the development and maintenance of relationships was similarly important to Jesus who called disciples to learn alongside him and fostered relationships with others throughout His ministry (John 11:1-7; Luke 5:1-11). Decision-making, the fourth EQ-I factor, has been identified as the most significant action within organizational functionality (Iqbal et al., 2020; Kumar & Gautam, 2018). Similarly, Jesus also took decision making seriously by demonstrating a distinct process He used when given alternatives or explaining His behavior, including alignment with God's will, daily withdrawal, and an ability to choose (John 4:27-39; Luke 5:15-16; Matthew 10:5-20; Matthew 14:22). The final factor is stress management. This concept has been clearly supported through psychological health literature, where research on unattended stress has been associated with significant health challenges and occupational losses (Stickle & Scott, 2016). The Bible addresses stress by asking individuals to give their concerns to God and experiencing perpetual rest (Matthew 11:28-30).

As observed, each EQ-I factor holds significant leader and organizational implications. Alongside leadership literature, the previous examination of biblical EQ-I constructs proves congruent with empirical research. While these five competencies have been determined as

essential for organizational leaders, biblical support of each construct signifies personal and professional value for religious leaders as well.

Summary

EI has been discovered to provide several organizational (Extremera et al., 2019; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Jimenez-Picon et al., 2021; Kirk, 2011; Kotsou et al., 2019; Makkar & Basu, 2019; Perez-Escoda et al., 2012) and physiological benefits (Adams et al., 2016; Brackett et al., 2011; Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Kotsou et al., 2019; Lowicki & Zajenkowski, 2017), however this support is rarely applied within religious settings, specifically to the development of pastoral leaders (Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019). This under-researched sub-section of leaders would greatly benefit from EI development considering the lack of emotional training provided in biblical seminaries (Carter, 2009; Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019), their lower than average EI scores (Francis et al., 2018; Hendron et al., 2014), and the unusual amount of occupational stress they experience in ministry (Gallagher, 2019; West, 2016). While EI appears to hold several benefits for pastoral leaders, this construct has been solely examined from a secular perspective. Seeing as how pastors hold both secular and sacred job responsibilities, the biblical foundation of EI needs to be evaluated through a pastoral lens to further determine what a biblical model of EI encompasses.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Overview

The objective of this study was to determine if Christian pastors perceive biblical alignment between scripture and the five factors of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011). While EI has been researched within academic (Hogan et al., 2010; Kotsou et al., 2019; Márquez et al., 2006), organizational (Clarke, 2009, 2010; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017; Extremera et al., 2019; Grant, 2007; Kozlowski et al., 2018), and team settings (Campo et al., 2019; Doron & Martinent, 2017; Martinent et al., 2018), it is rarely applied within religious settings and the religious composition of the construct has yet to be examined (White & Kimmons, 2019; Hendron et al., 2014). Without biblical support, EI may not be as beneficial for religious leaders who possess both sacred and secular leadership responsibilities (Hendron et al., 2014; West, 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019).

Employing a qualitative case study, this study attempted to gather, organize, and share the insights of pastoral leaders through multiple cases, within a contemporary setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2014). In this section, the research questions will be restated to ensure the study purpose is adequately addressed. The qualitative case study design will be specified, alongside justification for the selected methodology. Seeing as how this study incorporated insight from Christian pastors, the inclusionary parameters concerning study participants will be defined in an effort to ensure selection processes are sound (Creswell, 2018). Research data collection, storage, and measurement techniques will be described in detail alongside an overview of study validity and reliability. This chapter will conclude with an overview of study assumptions and limitations.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1: According to Christian pastors, in what ways are the five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making) supported by biblical scripture?

RQ 2: According to Christian pastors, in what ways are the five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making) incongruent with biblical scripture?

RQ 3: Do Christian pastoral leaders perceive any additional biblical principles that aid with emotional processing that are not included in the five-factor EQ-I model?

RQ 4: How do Christian pastors describe the usefulness of EI development for pastoral leaders?

Research Design

In an effort to effectively collect and examine pastoral perceptions of EQ-I constructs, this qualitative research study applied a case study methodology. Approaching this topic qualitatively allowed for flexibility and openness of study parameters (Mack et al., 2005). Contrasting with the often dichotomous or concrete response choices present in quantitative research, qualitative methods explore, probe, and dissect participant responses (Mack et al., 2005). Qualitative research has the ability to capture culturally specific information (i.e. social beliefs, behaviors, cultural norms, and values) allowing human dimensionality to be applied to constructs through the exploration of human experiences, relationships, and opinions (Mack et al., 2005). Furthermore, in-depth interviews provide researchers a unique opportunity to probe issues and concerns participants may not feel comfortable diverging through a survey or in a group setting (Mack et al., 2005). Sensitive topics, such as pastoring and constructs essential for ministry leadership, can be directly addressed with subjects with individually probed. For these

reasons, qualitative data is crucial in the application of religious research and within the confines of this specific research study because the construct of interest (pastoral perceptions of biblical presence within EI constructs) is not easily defined or recorded. Therefore, a surplus of detail is required to understand EI through the perspective of pastors, integrating their unique experiences within an open-ended process that allows for participant agreement and disagreement.

Within qualitative research, there are several approaches researchers can use depending on the purpose of their study. Case study research involves the specific examination of a case (or multiple cases) outside of laboratory manipulation, within a real-life context (Yin, 2014). While this study involved the participation of a distinct group of individuals (pastoral leaders), the concept under evaluation (pastoral perception) was considered abstract as it pertained to the cognitive process participants undertook when discerning the presence or absence of biblical influence, which can be addressed through a case evaluation (Yin, 2014). Additionally, case study research allows for the comparison of real-life cases currently in motion, so the data gathered is not negatively impacted by time (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This component is key as this research attempted to create a current day model of biblical EI that was applicable to present pastoral leaders. Lastly, the intent of a case study is to understand a specific inquiry through the identified case or cases, which also aligns with the goals of this present research supporting the creation of a biblical EI model from the viewpoint of pastoral leadership as opposed to being driven by personal hypotheses (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants

This proposed study employed purposeful inclusion sampling and snowball sampling to select eligible study participants. Purposeful selection is used to identify a collection of information-rich individuals who are willing to participate and able to articulate ideas related to

the study variables in an effective and productive way (Palinkas et al., 2015). Snowball sampling assisted in the formation of an adequate participant pool, leveraging relationships between participants who shared similar understandings of pastoral leadership.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

Within this research case study examining the perceptions of Christian pastors, a participant pool was created through three outreach avenues. First, the researcher leveraged her pre-established network by emailing local and global pastoral leaders who met the inclusion criteria and had a pre-existing relationship with the researcher. Second, an email was sent to Liberty University's Psychology department, informing students of this study and seeking participation from pastoral subjects. Lastly, a social media platform (Facebook) was utilized to post opportunities for study involvement, pending eligibility. Here, lists of pastoral Facebook groups were established and the group administrator was contacted to request posting permission. Once approved, a brief study overview with contact information was provided to all group members, soliciting their involvement if eligible and interested. Once a small pool of participants was established, snowball sampling was used to enhance the study size by leveraging in-network connections between local and global pastors interested in participation. In order to participate, subjects had to meet all of the following inclusionary criteria: currently occupying the role of a senior or associate pastor, currently serving/working at a Christian church, and subjects were required to be older than 18 and younger than 65 (in an effort to provide protection to high-risk populations such as minors and elderly). Individuals who do not currently hold pastoral positions were excluded as potential participants, as this study sought to evaluate the perspective of Christian pastors in this present day. Additionally, individuals who were considered pastors of a non-Christian faith were excluded as this study (a) sought to

examine the perspectives of Christian pastors, and (b) involved the examination of secular constructs within a biblical context, requiring biblical knowledge, application, and support for discernment. While professional and personal religious identification was considered a qualifier, typography was not, allowing for the participation of Christian pastors from all types of Christian denominations. Geographical location, specific church denomination, gender, congregational size, leadership tenure were recorded as demographic information and not considered inclusion or exclusion criteria.

Study Size

Seeing as how this study employed a qualitative design, the sample size was not a deterrent of statistical significance or power, as it is in qualitative research (Yin, 2014). Creswell and Poth (2018) share how the goal of qualitative research is to collect extensive detail from specific individuals in an attempt to extrapolate the experiences from the individuals with the most knowledge about the variable under study. Dependent on the approach, experts recommend a minimum of ten participants for theory-based interview studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Francis et al., 2010). Data saturation is considered achieved when three interviews emerge with no new or emerging themes (Francis et al., 2010). Therefore, in alignment with current research, this study incorporated a sample of 10-15 participants and recruitment ceased when saturation of themes was met.

Study Procedures

Recruitment played a crucial role in this study, as this research was completely dependent on the perceptions of pastoral leaders. Participant recruitment was threefold; first, the researcher contacted local pastors by phone and email (see Appendix A and B) to determine if resident pastors expressed interest in this current research. Next, a mass email was sent to Liberty

University's Psychology department seeking eligible pastoral participants. Seeing as how the study sample was met after personal and academic recruitment, the social media outreach was not employed on Facebook. Throughout recruitment, eligible and interested participants had the opportunity to recruit additional subjects through their pastoral network, employing snowball sampling recruitment technique.

Point of Contact

The researcher remained the sole point of contact for all study communication, eligibility screening, and consent collection. Study communication occurred through phone, email, and social media, while participant interviews transpired face-to-face. Participants confirmed their study eligibility and willingness to participate by digitally signing a consent form, which was confirmed by the researcher prior to collecting interview data. There was no additional research assistants or correspondents involved in data collection or analysis. While participants were encouraged to solicit interested individuals from their personal network, study communication and participation approval transpired through the researcher.

Study Protocol

After recruitment messages were sent to potential study participants, individuals interested in participation contacted the researcher (by phone, email, or social media) confirming their eligibility. A consent form was electronically sent to qualified subjects (or if unable to digitally sign, a physical consent form was mailed), which was required for study participation (see Appendix C). Once the researcher received the consent form, participants received an email detailing the interview information (appendix E), and a face-to-face interview was established. Here, participants met one-on-one with the researcher and answered semi-structured research questions pertaining to biblical representation of key EI components. If participants were unable

to meet physically, the interview was conducted through Zoom, a video teleconferencing software program. All interviews lasted approximately 15-30 minutes and were audio-recorded for transcribing purposes (see Consent Form; Appendix C).

Instrumentation and Measurement

The interpretive framework of qualitative pragmatism aims to address current research questions through diverse approaches to research collection (Creswell & Poth, 2018). While the subjectivity present in observable research measurement has been recognized as a known disadvantage, qualitative research methods attempt to minimize partiality by remaining cognizant of personal biases and focused on observable behavior (Mack et al., 2005). In an attempt to remain objective, this research project created a biblical model of EI that reflected both relevant and scripturally supported emotional competencies recognized by religious leaders.

Participant Interviews

Interviews were used to gather unique information, collect multiple perspectives, and uncover information the researcher was unable to observe (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Mack et al. (2005), in-depth interviews are effective for exploring individual experiences, which can be used as single variables or probed as an explanation behind participant actions and behavior. For the purposes of this study, research data was collected through individual interviews with study participants. Here, each participant was asked semi-structured, open-ended interview questions intended to solicit ideas and perceptions concerning the scriptural foundation of EI competencies (Appendix D). Briefly before their interview, participants were prepped with interview information to ensure they had a solid comprehension of the study variables prior to meeting (Appendix E). The first portion of the interview sought to understand how the five EQ-I factors of self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision

making were supported throughout the Bible, while the following section probed for disconnections between both variables. Next, the researcher attempted to uncover if there were any additional biblical principles (not included in the EQ-I) that aid religious leaders with emotional processing. The interview concluded by asking participants if they viewed EI development as beneficial to their leadership role, which attempted to gauge EI interest and applicability from the viewpoint of religious leaders.

The researcher conducted all participant interviews. While subjects could choose the location of their interview (either a physical location of their choosing or an online video conference), all meetings occurred face-to-face in an effort to maintain internal consistency between interviews. Subjects were not permitted to schedule their meeting with a fellow pastor, as the inclusionary input from others could influence individual perception. During the interview, the researcher kept notes on general themes and overarching statements to track ideas and guide the data analysis process. Finally, all interviews were audio-recorded for data analysis purposes. If subjects desired to participate but failed to relinquish audio recording permission, they were not permitted to partake in the study.

Evaluation Criteria

While there are several benefits associated with qualitative research, the evaluation criteria used to measure the credibility and conformability of the study differs considerably from quantitative research. With the integration of open-ended unique human experiences, qualitative research allows for data complexity to be incorporated into general conclusions stemming from researcher determinants (Mack et al., 2005). In an effort to establish data analysis standards across approaches while additionally allowing future researchers the opportunity to incorporate

and apply discoveries within multiple settings, the evaluation criteria of qualitative validation and reliability is crucial.

Validity

Creswell and Poth (2018) consider qualitative validation as an “...attempt to assess the ‘accuracy’ of the findings, as best described by the researcher, the participants, and the readers (or reviews)” (p. 338). This definition acknowledges that research is a representation of naturally occurring phenomenon’s composed by the researcher, signifying the benefit researchers have to incorporate observations and relationships formed with subjects. While there are several validation strategies, Creswell and Poth (2018) advise that researchers incorporate at least two measures within a qualitative study. In an effort to produce sound results, this study corroborated evidence through member checking and seeking peer involvement through debriefing sessions prior to study completion.

Member checking, or seeking participant feedback, is a validation strategy that occurs through a participant lens, inviting subjects to participate in the confirmatory process of qualitative research. Member checking occurs when the researcher solicits subject participation in an effort to guide the credibility of study findings and overall interpretations (Creswell & Poth, 2018). While it is not recommended that participants have access to raw data, reiterating general themes and asking for clarification is a validation technique used to safeguard data accuracy. This specific active listening approach occurred during at the conclusion of each question. Here, field notes helped the researcher track key concepts, which were reiterated back to the participants upon the conclusion of their answer to ensure the researcher had an accurate understanding of the participant’s responses.

In an attempt to include others beyond the key researcher and study participants, an external evaluation conducted by a peer can amplify the validation of qualitative research. Here, the role of a peer review serves to provide the researcher with honest evaluations concerning the presentation, data collection, and analysis process (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This safeguard attempts to assess the study through an outside lens, incorporating a safeguard for readers and future researchers who desire to expand or incorporate study results (Creswell & Poth, 2018). During the dissertation process, this present researcher received significant assistance from two Liberty University faculty members who have both helped audit, question, and challenge current research reviews and methodologies.

Reliability

Within qualitative research, validity represents the soundness and strength of study results, while reliability refers to the consistent and repeatable nature of the study within differing contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2014). Creswell and Poth (2018) state that qualitative reliability can be enhanced through detailed field notes, employing recording devices, and through the transcribing of digital files. While all three of these measures will be utilized, the following two concentrations on data collection credibility and replicable results were additionally incorporated.

Reliability in qualitative research is increased through standardized procedures that ensure data differences to not emerge from data collection or researcher influence (Yin, 2014). In an attempt to maintain consistency, the interview guide (Appendix D) was followed for each participant interview. Here, all interviews were conducted in the same face-to-face format with each participant receiving identical questions. The interview guide presented the researcher with

probing inquiries that were used to solicit additional information in the event that the initial questions failed to generate a complete response.

In addition to ensuring the data collected is free from outsider influence and reliable in nature, credible and repeatable qualitative discoveries can be observed when the data yields similar findings across cases (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This reliability technique can be observed within singular studies when research findings are supported by the majority of subjects as opposed to generalizations formed on outlier inferences. In an attempt to evaluate if this study supported reliable replication, data saturation techniques were incorporated. Data saturation occurs when participants fail to produce new or supplementary ideas related to research questions (Francis et al., 2010). The suggested minimum participants were addressed by seeking no fewer than 10 pastoral participants. Additionally, saturation was considered achieved when three interviews produced similar ideas. Therefore, in an effort to produce reliable results, the credibility of data collection was addressed through the use of a consistent interview guide (Appendix D) and theory generation was confirmed when at least three participants failed to generate new ideas concerning study variables.

Data Analysis

The data analysis strategy of qualitative case study research involves applying common or shared meaning to a deconstructed central idea through the collection of data shared by study participants (Yin, 2014). By examining case descriptions, researchers are presented with the unique perceptions of study participants, which can be used to generate directional data analysis (Yin, 2014). This type of research investigation is relevant in instances where researchers desire to build on the qualitative experiences and perspectives of individuals to either reinforce or define new theories, even if the sample size or number of cases is small (Creswell, 2003). There

are five analytic techniques that can be applied to case study research: (1) pattern matching, (2) explanation building, (3) time-series analysis, (4) building a logic model, and (5) cross-case synthesis (Yin, 2014). This specific research study used the pattern matching technique, which included building explanations from study discoveries to form consistent patterns across study cases (Yin, 2014). Therefore, in an effort to apply subjective evidence from pastoral leaders concerning the support of EI principles within The Bible, the following section will specify the data analysis process.

Transcription

Following the permission of study participants, each subject interview was audio recorded through an electronic recording application. In addition, the researcher kept a field journal, which was used to record ideas and information pertinent to the study. The audio recordings were hand-transcribed by the researcher. Once finished, transcriptions were sent to each interviewee for approval to ensure their answers were accurately reflecting their thoughts prior to data analysis.

Data Coding

Coding is a data analysis process that categorizes or sorts collected data according to patterns and themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Due to the volume and length of subject transcriptions, this study was hand-coded by the present researcher who had exposure to the data through both the interviews and during the transcription process. A line-by-line analysis of each transcription was conducted, where data was organized around the five components of the EQ-I, the building of a biblical model by seeking what was missing from current theory, and a question pertaining to EI usefulness. Themes present throughout the data were established by aggregating the codes and ideas into different categories to establish where ideas generate agreement

amongst study participants. Once study themes were established, each theme was evaluated by the researcher within the context of the case, the recorded participant field notes, and the relation of applicability to the research question. Subcategories were used when singular or supportive ideas were required to add depth and understanding to an overarching theme. Conflicting ideas were grouped similarly and presented in Chapter 4.

Analysis

Within this case study, coding was hand-calculated through a line-by-line analysis of transcriptions. Here, each sentence received an open code pertaining to a single word or brief phrase of words describing the meaning of the sentence. Once open codes were formed, broader phrases were used to group similar codes, resulting in closed coding. Each code was then evaluated for theme and subtheme generation, presenting each question in the interview with an overarching theme and supporting subthemes summarizing pastoral sentiments. At the conclusion of this project, a biblical model of EI was created which encapsulated the analyzed transcriptions from study participants. Biblical ideas that generated scriptural support for each of the five EQ-I competencies (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making) were thematically grouped as well. Thus, the conclusion of the analysis process provided organized categories of pastoral perceptions pertaining to the five aforementioned EI competencies and a biblical model of EI.

Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations

While attempting to explore or explain phenomenon's through empirical research, there are associated suppositions that should be clearly defined in an attempt to create and produce sound research. Delimitations describe the boundaries researchers place around study design and most directly effect the inclusionary and exclusionary decisions used to understand a specific

population or behavior. Assumptions are generally created by the researcher and involve relevant facts accepted as true throughout data collection. The final presumption present within empirical research studies is limitations. Limitations refer to unavoidable factors, which could cause potential issues to the study design or study procedure. These three suppositions will be detailed below.

Delimitations

The scope of this study aimed to investigate the perceptions of active Christian pastors. For that reason, pastors who were not currently serving in an active role were excluded. In an attempt to create a biblical model of EI from pastors with leadership experience, only senior pastors and associate pastors were solicited for participation, as this threshold typically includes peer oversight. Pastors who identified as Christian and served in a Christian church were crucial inclusionary criteria, as this study sought to examine biblical principles supported through Christian religion. Including other religions could provide contradictory beliefs, which would impact the integrity of the biblical model. Lastly, an age range was provided to protect vulnerable populations.

Assumptions

All of the inclusionary criteria requires for study participation were taken at the word of the participants and assumed to be true. Proof of age, religious affiliation, occupational position, and/evidence of current professional status was not required. In addition, the information gathered from participant interviews was assumed to be factual and representative of their population. In an effort to mitigate the assumption that pastors are familiar with EI or EI competencies, the interview guide (appendix D) was used to specifically describe the five

emotional factors of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011). By providing a clear definition, it was assumed that pastoral leaders will have the basic knowledge required to answer the four research questions.

Limitations

While the suggested qualitative standards for validity and reliability have been mindfully attended, this qualitative case study was limited in data collection by the specific verbiage used to describe the experiences of the pastoral participants. Seeing as how the data was transcribed and coded, it was essential that the key themes were consistent and congruent in an attempt to create a comprehensive biblical model of EI representative of Christian leaders. Furthermore, this study focused on pastoral perceptions of associate and senior pastors, limiting the inclusion of the experiences of religious leaders with other titles. While gender and geography were not inclusionary factors, it is the researchers hope that this would diminish cultural and/or gender specific perceptions. Seeing as how this study attempted to gather the thoughts and ideas of pastors, there is little concern over participants faking their response reflecting participant bias, as the goal of the interview is to solicit each pastor's unique perspective. Also, independent interviews eliminated the participants desire to provide socially acceptable answers in agreement with their peers.

Summary

This research study employed a qualitative case study methodology in an effort to understand pastoral perceptions of the EQ-I in relation to biblical scripture. As aforementioned, qualitative research approaches are particularly useful for exploring the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A qualitative case study was employed to determine if Christian pastors perceive the EQ-I (MHS, 2011) as an empirical tool supported by biblical principles. Seeing as how this study attempted to solicit the ideas of a

specific group, the inclusionary parameters were defined as active, senior or associate pastors of Christian churches. In an effort to achieve proper data saturation, a sample size of 10-15 participants was recruited for participation. The study procedures consisted of individual, face-to-face interviews conducted in person or virtually. An interview guide (Appendix D) was used to lead participants through the four sections of the interview, which sought to gather perceptions on biblical principles that support social-emotional competencies. Keeping in agreement with current qualitative evaluation criteria, two validation strategies were used to ensure sound results, while standardized interview procedures and recording devices served to enhance the study reliability. The study data was transcribed, coded, and personally evaluated for thematic relevance. Once key themes were detected, findings were presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine if pastors perceived biblical support for the five factors of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011). After determining biblical relevance, this study developed a theological description of the EQ-I model based on the interviews of ministry leaders. After study recruitment, 11 participants met the inclusionary parameters. The data generated for this section was collected through semi-structured interviews, which were recorded and accompanied by field notes. Once transcribed, interviews received final approval from study participants prior to data analysis, where each transcript was analyzed for themes. The key research questions that provided guidance for data collection included asking pastoral participants if the five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision making, and stress management; MHS, 2011) were supported or conversely incongruent with biblical scripture. Additionally, pastors were asked what they would add to create a biblical model of emotional intelligence, and if they perceived emotional intelligence as useful for pastoral development. This chapter will present a biblical model of EI composed of the five updated EQ-I factors and supplementary themes pastors perceived as significant for ministry work.

Descriptive Results

This study solicited the perceptions of 11 pastoral participants. The following demographic information was recorded: geographical location, church denomination, gender, congregational size, and ministry leadership tenure. The participating group consisted of two female and nine male pastors located throughout North America. One pastor was located on the East Coast, another on the West Coast, and the remaining participants were positioned in the

Southern states (seven from Texas, one from Louisiana, one from Maryland, and one from Virginia). Weekly congregation sizes varied from 150 to 10,000 attendees. There were seven pastors who led non-denominational churches and four leading from a Southern Baptist denomination. In terms of leadership tenure, three pastors had less than five years experience, four pastors had 10-19 years of experience, and the remaining four had 20+ years of ministry leadership experience. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, identifying information was removed from pastoral transcripts prior to data analysis.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Pastoral Participants

Participant	Gender	Location	Denomination	Congregation	Tenure
1	Male	Texas	Southern Baptist	2,000	10-19
2	Female	Texas	Non-Denominational	475	< 5
3	Male	Oregon	Non-Denominational	150	20+
4	Male	Texas	Southern Baptist	2,000	< 5
5	Male	Maryland	Non-Denominational	150	10-19
6	Female	Texas	Non-Denominational	10,000	< 5
7	Male	Louisiana	Non-Denominational	400	20+
8	Male	Texas	Non-Denominational	475	10-19
9	Male	Texas	Non-Denominational	475	10-19
10	Male	Texas	Southern Baptist	2,000	20+
11	Male	Virginia	Southern Baptist	500	20+

Study Findings

This section will detail the thematic discoveries uncovered during data analysis. Prior to analysis, interviews were voice-recorded and field notes were taken to track key concepts. Transcribed interviews were sent back to pastoral subjects for participant corroboration and fact checking. Upon approval, interviews were organized by research question, and a line-by-line analysis was conducted. This analysis included open and closed coding, resulting in subtheme and overarching theme development. Statements from RQ1 and RQ2 pertaining to biblical alignment or biblical discord were combined and re-organized by EQ-I Factor name (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision making, and stress management; MHS, 2011). The five factors have their own distinct section below and will include pastoral perceptions of biblical relevance and any additional themes that emerged from pastoral interviews. RQ3 and RQ4 will follow these sections and provide data concerning a final biblical model and pastor applicability. A graph displaying the percentage of pastoral statements within each subtheme alongside a detailed factor graph will conclude each section. Findings will resume below beginning with the first of the five factors, self-perception.

Self-Perception

Pastoral interviews revealed that the concept of self-perception was supported scripturally, however the majority of pastors proposed significant changes to the overall factor in an effort to make it more inline with biblical concepts. In terms of agreement, many pastors acknowledged the concept of self-regard as knowing one's strengths and accepting one's weaknesses as biblical supported. Here, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 was mentioned frequently as a verse to support the unique composition of gifts and abilities Christ has indwelled in each one of us. Specifically, one participant said, "The Bible talks about how we are a body and a body of

believers with all sorts of gifts and talents and abilities [1 Corinthians 12: 12-31]" and another mentioned how, "...we all have different gifts, we're all wired in different ways and were called to make an impact with the gift that we've been given [1 Corinthians 12]." Additionally, the notion of self-actualization was also supported through specific characters that recognized they were called to greatness despite their flaws. Biblical characters such as Moses, Mary, Paul, and David were mentioned in an effort to highlight individuals who shared personal awareness of specific inadequacies. One participant said, "I see value in self-actualization; I see it biblically, where people in the Bible had it as strength. It didn't stop them but it was their starting place."

In terms of biblical disagreement, the theme of operating out of one's weakness emerged as a biblical notion deviating from cultures current philosophy of self-improvement. While professional development programs encourage bolstering areas of opportunity, pastors noted how God works through our weaknesses, requiring us to be submissive and obedient to the calling on our lives. One participant said, "I think in a corporate world they want you to come in with your strengths but there's a spiritual component, which entails God working through our weaknesses." Also, in terms of self-acceptance, one pastor highlighted the recent societal theme of unquestionable acceptance. Here, they said, "The topic of people accepting themselves exactly as they are doesn't mirror the biblical model of sanctification. In today's culture, there is a growing ideology that states how we need to accept ourselves the way we are." This sentiment was shared with several others who noted how we are "...born with a sinful nature [Romans 8], so I don't think we should accept that." Another pastor phrased it this way, "When it comes to accepting self, I think scripture says more about dying to self [Luke 9:23; Galatians 2:20; Mark 8:35] than it does to accepting our self," introducing the biblical concept of denying personal

attainments in lieu of heavenly achievements. While self-perception was supported overall, the following section will discuss the thematic developments that emerged from data analysis.

Identity in Christ

Pastoral interviews revealed that the concept of self-perception, while mainly biblically supported, appeared heavily concentrated on personal acceptance, awareness, and regard, leaving little to no room for spiritual influence. Data analysis on pastoral comments revealed three subthemes which no longer fit under the umbrella of self-perception, thus the factor was renamed to *Identity in Christ*, which revealed a better fit for pastoral application and a more accurate reflection of the biblical application concerning understanding one's self. The key difference is self-perception embraces personal insight while Identity in Christ hinges on personal awareness through Christ. Based on the transcripts, the following three subthemes emerged under the new factor, Identity in Christ: (1) Created in the Image and Likeness of God, (2) Made For A Purpose, and (3) Possessing Different Gifts And Abilities.

The first subtheme, Created in the Image and Likeness of God, begins by recognizing man's creation stemmed from man's creator. One pastor said, "Self-perception begins with understanding we are unique and created in God's image", and another mentioned, "This is the intriguing reality, that we are utterly unique and created in God's image. This is the foundation; recognizing we were all made in the image of God but that we are also sinners I believe is self-perception." Created in the Image and Likeness of God includes several statements concerning the bases of man's formation; how humans are distinct in the skillsets God has hard-wired us with, but comparable in the sense that all of mankind was created to reflect the image of God.

The second sub-theme, Made for a Purpose, involves mankind's intentional creation. One pastor said, "You can't separate self-perception from meaning", while another said, "I've heard it

said that we were created on purpose for a purpose.” In discussing why purpose was critical to a biblical model, a pastor brought up the following point, “If you look at it this way [through a secular lens], you could start to wonder why we should bother?” He added, “In Christ, we not only have an eternal hope, but we have a purpose”. The Made for a Purpose subtheme includes the broader concept of living a meaningful life and sharing our Christian testimony.

The final subtheme, Possessing Different Gifts and Abilities, includes self-awareness, individual strengths, gifts, and abilities, and operating out of ones weakness. In terms of self-awareness, several biblical characters were provided throughout this section as evidence of individuals who were aware of their shortcomings when called by God (i.e. Mary, Moses, Paul, David, Naomi, and Ester). When discussing walking in weakness, one pastor commented,

I feel that he [Moses] was very aware of his weaknesses; he pretty much disqualified himself from the beginning! I also think of Mary. When she was told she was pregnant with Jesus, she responded she was a humble servant [Luke 1:38], she is very self-aware of who she is. I think of Naomi who knew where she was emotionally, so much so that she self-named herself something that meant bitterness [Ruth 1:2].

These examples combine self-awareness, self-acceptance, and personal submission to the unique calling God placed on each of their lives. Figures of the first theme alongside the frequencies of mention are displayed below.

Figure 1

The Renamed Identity in Christ Factor

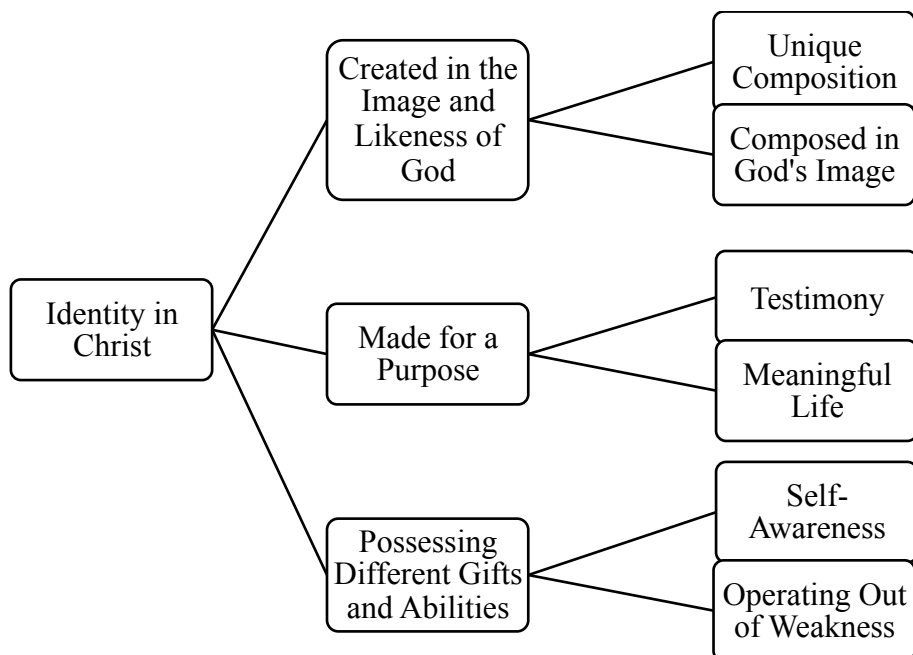
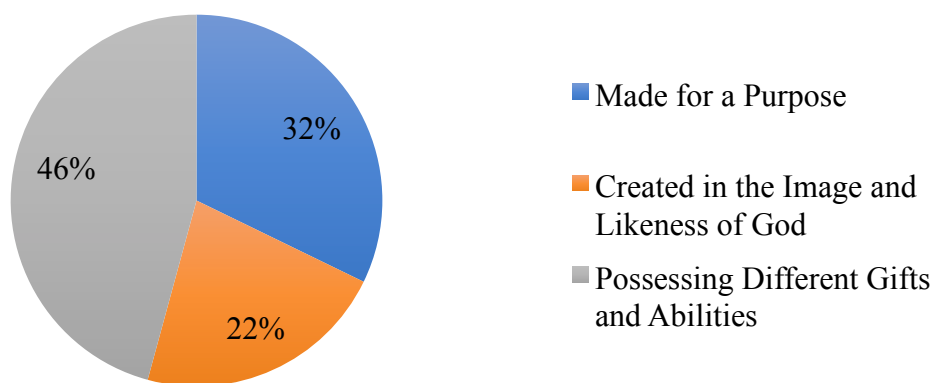


Figure 2

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to the Identity of Christ Factor



Note. Percentages were calculated by totaling the thematic statements made by all pastoral participants.

Self-Expression

Originally composed of Emotional Expression, Assertiveness, and Independence, the secular factor of Self-Expression (MHS, 2011) was largely supported by pastoral participants.

Out of 18 statements of opinion, 15 (83%) of those statements found biblical support for the construct and the remaining 3 (16%) found partial support. When discussing support, one pastor said, “Oh, yea! This is all throughout the Bible, especially emotional expression”, and another commented, “I actually think this is very important to the body of believers.” Several interviewees used biblical characters as examples of emotional expression. Here, David and Jesus were more commonly mentioned alongside Paul, Peter, and Habakkuk who also received brief remarks. When discussing Jesus’ emotional expression, one pastor said, “Obviously, we see in Jesus a level of emotional expression. It was all over the map. You see the whole gamut of emotional expression, assertiveness, and independence”. As mentioned, there was majority support for this factor and the three corresponding sub-factors, however mixed sentiments arose when discussing the notion and inclusion of ‘self’ within the expression factor.

While pastors agreed emotional expression was biblically supported, disagreement arose when discussing the presence and purpose of ‘self’ within the secular factor. One pastor prefaced the issue by stating, “Expression is OK but the problem in the Christian model is self”. Others shared this sentiment by echoing similar opinions; “Considering everything that comes out of a person’s mouth can be dangerous. So, with self-expression, the tricky term is self,” “In the biblical worldview, the problem is with our flesh; self verses the spirit,” and “Everyone wants to share their truth but the problem is when their truth doesn’t align with The Truth [John 14:6]”. So, how can Christian leaders express themselves whilst diminishing their self?

Self-expression can be a little tricky but self-expression through the Holy Spirit, now that’s a great thing, that’s how I would quality it. When the spirit leads you, express yourself. When your tongue is under the control of the Spirit, go ahead and express yourself.

Self-expression was the only component of the secular EQ-I factor that stirred up mixed feelings among participants and its proposed resolution stemmed from embracing spirit over self-led expression. After analyzing the other emergent themes from pastoral interviews, this factor was renamed to reflect a stronger sense of biblical application. The new factor, Emotional Expression, and its supporting sub-factors are detailed below.

Emotional Expression

At a high-level, ‘self’ was removed from the overarching factor. Seeing as how this factor deals with how individuals express themselves, the factor was renamed emotional expression and two subthemes, Emotional Understanding and Emotional Actions, were added. The Emotional Understanding theme encompasses Authentic Expression, Emotional Identity, and Emotional Regulation. Authentic Expression includes thoughts pertaining to genuine and true experiences as opposed to fabricated or dishonest expressions. Here, pastors said, “Self-perception encompasses being aware and self-expression would entail actually being authentic and true to who you are” and, “I think scripture is giving us permission to embrace, to finally be honest with ourselves, and not do what sin wants which is self-protect or hide or put on masks or turn to self-righteousness”. Authentic Expression would advocate for mankind to mourn in times of sorrow and rejoice in times of joy. Emotional Identity addresses understanding the orientation of our emotions. Here, several pastors mentioned how “...we’re created in the image of an emotional God [Genesis 1:27]”, and “...in terms of biblical precedence, I think emotional expression is a huge aspect of who God is and therefore is also a large part of who we are”. Statements addressing the emotional composition of God and mankind’s resemblance to that image were grouped into the Emotional Identity section. The final section, Emotional Regulation, was created from statements referencing how to handle specific emotions, such as anger and

bitterness, and the consequences of unregulated emotions. When discussing emotional boundaries as a regulation technique, one pastor shared, “He [God] teaches throughout the Bible ‘Hey, you can have these emotions, here’s how to walk them out, here’s how to handle them, and here’s how to recognize the boundaries’”. When discussing consequences, one pastor said, “If we’re prone to emotional outbursts, that is obviously not effective in our communication, but it’s also not effective in our witness” and another commented, “...emotion in and of itself is not sinful, but how we express it can be sinful”. These three sub-themes combine to compose the Emotional Understanding sub-factor under Emotional Expression.

The second sub-factor, Emotional Actions, includes Emotional Maturity, Emotional Expression, and Emotional Assertion. Here, Emotional Maturity embodies the actions of thinking before speaking, holding one’s tongue, and speaking after filtering one’s thoughts. One pastor gave the Biblical example of Joseph, and how his filtration process matured and developed throughout this tenure in Egypt [Genesis 37:50]:

I think the story of Joseph is a great example... you see him early on sharing a dream that he got with his brothers, and it did not end well at all. Later in life, he doesn’t reveal himself to his brothers right away, there’s almost a maturation process that occurs that involves how you express yourself over time and the best, most conducive way to do that.

The second sub-theme, Emotional Expression, incorporates how to express emotions. Several pastors pointed to David, and the Palms as examples of crying out to God and the expression of several emotions such as anger, lament, and joyfulness. Emotional Assertion is the final sub-factor within Emotional Actions. Assertion came up both in terms of biblical examples of Peter and Jesus but also in the unique calling of pastoral leaders. When discussing the actions of a pastor, one interviewee said, “If we go to assertiveness, absolutely that’s covered from the

perspective of evaluating the words used to describe the office of pastor, whether it's *episkopos* [Greek for overseer], or even the Greek word for shepherd". Also, Hebrews 4:16 was used as an example for assertiveness, with one pastor sharing, "The New Testament tells us to come boldly before the throne [Hebrews 4:16], which I think is an invitation for us not to hide what we're feeling but to be blunt before the Lord and express it". Altogether, the factor Emotional Actions addresses the emotional performance of Christian leaders through their emotional maturity and rounds out the Emotional Expression factor by disclosing the specific actions Christian leaders take when sharing their thoughts and feelings with others. See Figure 3 for an overview of the new factor, Emotional Expression.

Figure 3

The Renamed Emotional Expression Factor

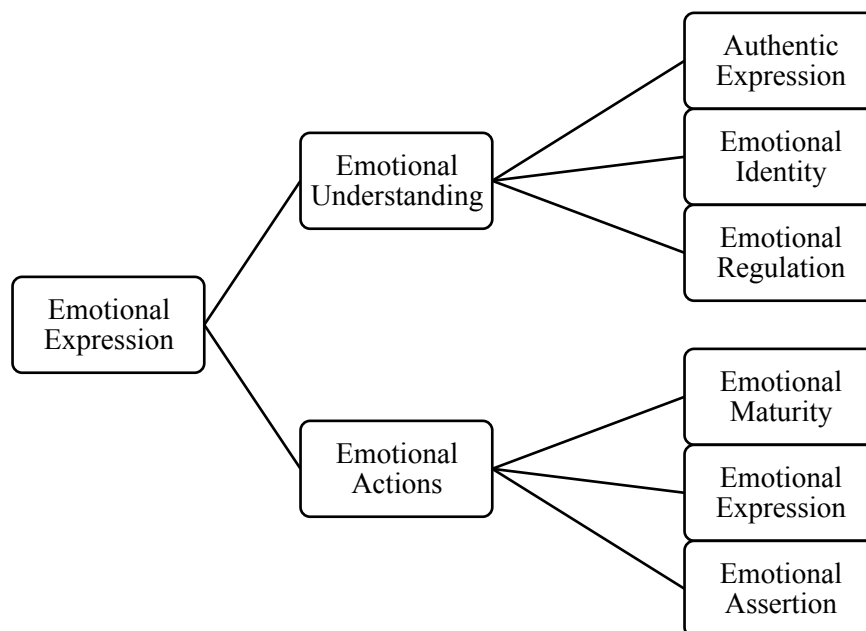
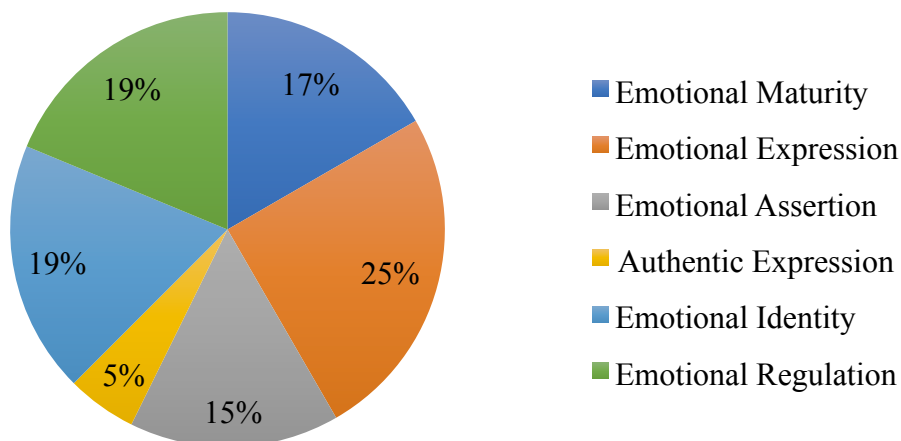


Figure 4

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to the Emotional Expression Factor



Note. Percentages were calculated by totaling the thematic statements made by all pastoral participants.

Interpersonal Relationships

Out of all five EQ-I factors (self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, decision making, and stress management; MHS, 2011), there was unequivocal agreement on the biblical support for interpersonal relationships. Every pastor interviewed was able to highlight several scriptures pertaining to interpersonal relationships and interpersonal trainings. Starting with the creation of mankind, one pastor said, “Adam and Eve are great examples. When God says it wasn’t good for him to be alone because it could’ve just been him and a bunch of animals, but it wasn’t [Genesis 2:18]”. There was also all-encompassing support for the three EQ-I sub-factors of Relationships, Empathy, and Social Responsibility (MHS, 2011). Jesus and the disciples, Ruth and Naomi, and Peter and Barnabas were all mentioned as examples of relationships throughout the Bible. Concerning relationships, one pastor said, “Relationships with God, relationships with others, even our relationship to the world. It’s at the core of the great commandment”. When discussing societal obligation, five pastors mentioned the Good

Samaritan as a key example of social responsibility. Empathy was similarly supported, with one pastor tying empathy into our Christian worldview by stating, “I think that empathy aspect is close to God’s heart”. Seeing as there was no disagreement for any of the concepts of interpersonal, this factor retained its name. The next section will highlight the emerging themes that developed from pastoral participants when discussing the emotional concept of relationships.

Interpersonal Relationships

The following three sub-themes materialized after analyzing the data on interpersonal relationships: Biblical Responsibility of Social Support, Respecting Convictions, and Created as Relational Beings. The first and most heavily supported sub-theme, Biblical Responsibility of Social Support, was confirmed through 59% of pastoral statements. This theme was broken down into the following sub-categories: Compassion, Empathy, and Relating to and Serving Others. When discussing Compassion, one pastor said, “Jesus saw people hurting all the time and the Bible said He was moved with compassion [Matthew 9:26]. If compassion was enough to move Jesus, it should be enough to move us”. Specifically, when it comes to acting on compassion, several pastors mentioned Matthew 25, when Jesus taught on loving the poor, the needy, and the incarcerated. “We are called to take care of the least of these [Matthew 25:40]. So, as far as our concern is as a church and as a pastor, we can’t see people hurting and not step in”. Conversations on compassion naturally led to acting with empathy, where participants shared how Christian empathy should be evident. One pastor said, “I think it’s also a hugely important evangelistic tool right now, is empathy”, and another, “Christians claim to stand on the truth and in doing so, we come across harsh and not empathetic to where people are. We should be the most gracious people on the planet. We should be known for empathy”. The final sub-theme, Relating to and Serving Others, concentrated on a pastoral call to equip the congregation

and the community. When discussing Jesus and His ministry on Earth, one interview said, “Often times it seemed like His [Jesus] power was meant to help and support others rather than to protect a position or privilege”. The key takeaway from this section was if Christians are to emulate Jesus, then we are to embrace a life of serving over stature.

The second theme under Interpersonal Relationships was Respecting Convictions. This theme was composed of 23% of comments, where participants discussed cultural topics of division within the church, such as drinking wine and immunizations. Pastors who spoke to this theme discussed the differences between tenets and convictions, highlighting Paul’s words in Romans 14. One pastor explained:

A tenet is a non-negotiable aspect of scripture; the death [Matthew 27:45-56], burial [John 19:38-42] and resurrection [Luke 24], there is one true God [John 17:3], Christ is the way, the truth and the life [John 14:6], salvation comes through Christ [Romans 1:16], we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God [Romans 3:23]. These are tenets of the faith”. Paul makes it very clear that believers can have different convictions and you should uphold to your convictions [Romans 14] but that is different from a tenet. So, with issues of disagreement within the church, this section in the biblical model would seek to measure if individuals are demonstrating respect and reverence to cultural issues that deviate from Christian tenets. This section also included resolving issues that cause division among others. Here, another interviewee said, “Don’t be at odds with your brothers and sisters in Christ”, and another said, “Don’t become divisive in the body of Christ”.

The final theme, Created as Relational Beings, was composed of 18% pastoral statements. This theme highlights how mankind was created in God’s image and how God is a relational God. One pastor said, “...we’re made in the image of God, and God is Trinitarian”.

Aside from being created in His image, relationships with God and others was emphasized as the core of our Christian foundation. “The Great Commandment is singular; it’s both your relationship with God and your relationship with others, so those two go together” said an interviewee who was discussing how our relationships with God flows naturally into our relationship with others. When discussing others, the topic of community presented frequently. Here, one pastor shared, “In Mark where Jesus is realizing He’s going to the cross. He’s Jesus, and He’s perfect, and He still takes three buddies (not great buddies, they all fall asleep). He doesn’t go to the garden alone [Matthew 26:36-37]”. They continued to explain how, “Even He [Jesus] knew He needed safe people to go with him”. Other pastors provided the following passages to similarly underscore the importance of community: “A chord of three strands is not easily broken [Ecclesiastes 4:12]”, “Iron sharpens iron [Proverbs 27:17]” and, “Let us not forsake the assembling together [Hebrews 10:25]”.

According to Christian pastors, the concept of Interpersonal Relationships is widely supported scripturally. While the secular model didn’t generate biblical misalignment with the Bible, interviews revealed additional biblical concepts that when added, generated different sub-themes. The new biblical model of interpersonal relationships is below (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

The New Interpersonal Relationships Factor

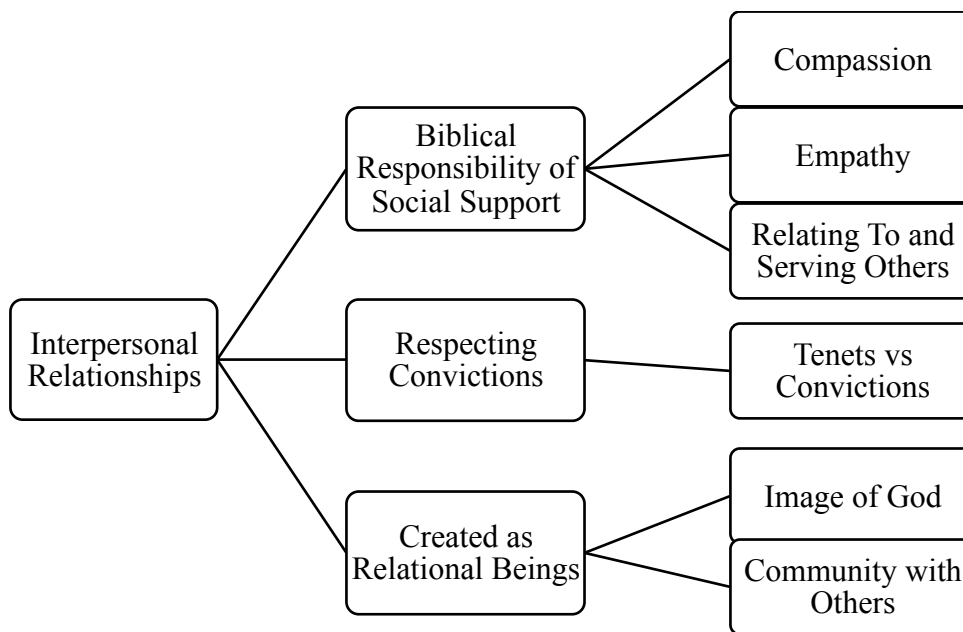
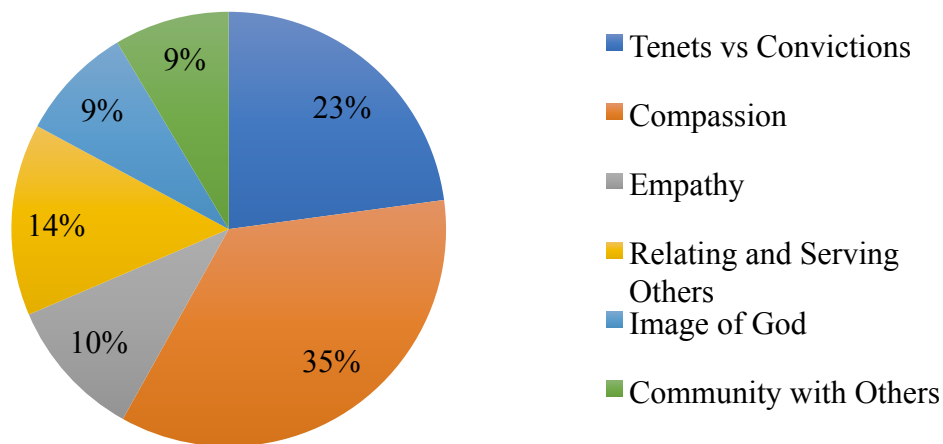


Figure 6

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to the Interpersonal Relationships Factor



Note. Percentages were calculated by totaling the thematic statements made by all pastoral participants.

Decision Making

When discussing the secular factor Decision Making, which is composed of Impulse Control, Problem Solving, and Reality Testing, ten pastors shared opinions of biblical support while the remaining pastoral participant shared an opinion of mixed support. Those who found support for this construct said, “From a Christian worldview, absolutely”, “The Bible touches on this all over the place” and, “...across the spectrum there is different biblical advice for different things”. When discussing problem solving and reality testing, several pastors discussed the challenge surrounding choosing between alternatives, highlighting man’s depravity and the impact of selection. In terms of understanding man’s sinful nature, one pastor said:

I think the Bible would push us to not trust our own perception. The heart is wicked and deceitful [Jeremiah 17:9]! I think there’s brokenness in the depravity of man. That would be caution for me... when it comes to decisions... I should control my impulses because although they may be real, they could not be right.

This perspective emphasizes the necessary inclusion of God’s divine wisdom in a biblical model. Another pastor had this to say concerning the influence of choices, “I believe in the solidarity of humanity; so my choices, whatever they are, even if they are private choices, are always impacting others”. This statement highlights the weight of decisions; here it is emphasized that decisions not only impact the decision maker, but they can also extend to those in close proximity.

In terms of mixed support, the pastor holding this viewpoint shared the following, “I do think that decision-making is supported in the Bible, but I don’t see a 1-2-3 way of making them or something that says, ‘Every decision needs to go through this process or funnel’”. However, later throughout their interview, this pastor shared how God’s relational and loving identity relinquishes Him from providing us with a ridged process to follow. “He’s [God] tried to create,

in the same way I would with my own children, a loving atmosphere, where you can learn to make decisions, but where you know your parameters and boundaries”. So, while the process of making decisions may not be explicitly laid out scripturally, the concept of decision-making does appear to be supported by all pastoral participants. Seeing as how this factor received majority support, the factor name was retained. Next, a thematic breakdown of pastoral perceptions will be presented below.

Decision Making

As aforementioned, this factor retained its original name from the MHS (2011), as this concept in its entirety was deemed scripturally supported by pastoral participants. After analyzing the significant themes, it became apparent that this section had two sub-factors: Seeking God’s Will and Consulting Others. The first sub-factor, Seeking God’s Will, was composed of elements of prayer, seeking Godly wisdom, remaining spirit-led, and remaining faithful and obedient. When discussing this idea that Christians should seek Heavenly input, one pastor said, “This idea of living the Christian life where we don’t solely use our own intellect to make decisions, we go to the Lord who speaks to us and can help us with decisions. We seek Him first”. Solomon was used several times throughout this section as a biblical example of implementing wisdom when faced with decisions. When discussing the importance of wisdom, one pastor said, “I try to make every decision under the filter of, ‘What’s the wisest thing to do? What would wisdom have me do?’” In terms of being Spirit-led, one pastor shared, “Another example I think of, through more of a unique lens, is Paul on his missionary journeys. He had a plan to set out but was very responsive to the Holy Spirit”, accentuating the hierarchy of remaining led by the Spirit in lieu of our individuals preferences. Similar to being Spirit-led, the

final component of this sub-theme, faithfulness and obedience, appears truly unique to Christian leaders. Here, one pastor had the following to say:

I was struggling with this one [decision making] only because so many decisions in the Bible are faith based. Noah decides to build a boat before it started to rain. Ruth made the decision to go with Naomi [Ruth 1:16-17]. Who does that? Who makes the decision to go with the women who just lost everything?

Another pastor shared a similar sentiment:

In Genesis, with Abraham and Isaac and the sacrificing of his son... Nobody in his or her right mind would do that, but biblically you look at it through a different lens. Yes, we need to plan and be intelligent about our path, but we also need to be obedient. At the end of the day, there's an aspect of obedience that goes above what I think is best.

This unique perspective integrating both faith and obedience is absent in the MHS (2011) secular model and essential within the creation of a biblical model.

Consulting Others, the second sub-theme, presented as a large and common sub-theme among participants. Several pastors noted the importance of seeking wise counsel, integrating mentors, and incorporating individuals with differing spiritual gifting's within this construct. When noting the critical nature of counsel, one pastor provided biblical examples of individuals who followed wise and poor counsel.

I just preached on Josiah who finds the Book of the Lost and takes it to a prophetess seeking advice on what to do with it. There is great counsel in that interaction. A bad example of decision-making was Solomon's son, Rehoboem. Well, he consulted some younger guys and they told him to not ease up on the taxes. So he comes [to the people]

and says, ‘My dad punished you with whips, I’m going to punish you with scorpions’ [1 Kings 12:11]. This ultimately led to 10 tribes splitting.

This statement provides biblical support for both poor and wise counsel. It should be noted here that seeking wise counsel is one of the supporting themes of this sub-factor as imprudent advice can cause consequential derailment. Mentorship was also mentioned as a key component of decision-making. When asked about biblical principals that helped with the decision-making process, pastors had the following to say, “Mentorship and mentoring, understanding how others respond to things”, “Mentorship... I would go to Titus and 1 and 2 Timothy where it talks about mentoring and gives the example of Paul and Timothy”, and “Peter [talks] about younger men submitting to the older [1 Peter 5:1-6], which highlights mentorship”. Multiple biblical examples of mentorship help complete the Consulting Others sub-factor, highlighting the importance of including others when faced with competing alternatives. The final Decision Making factor is represented visually below alongside a graph presenting the frequency of pastoral statements (Figure 7 and 8).

Figure 7

The New Decision Making Factor

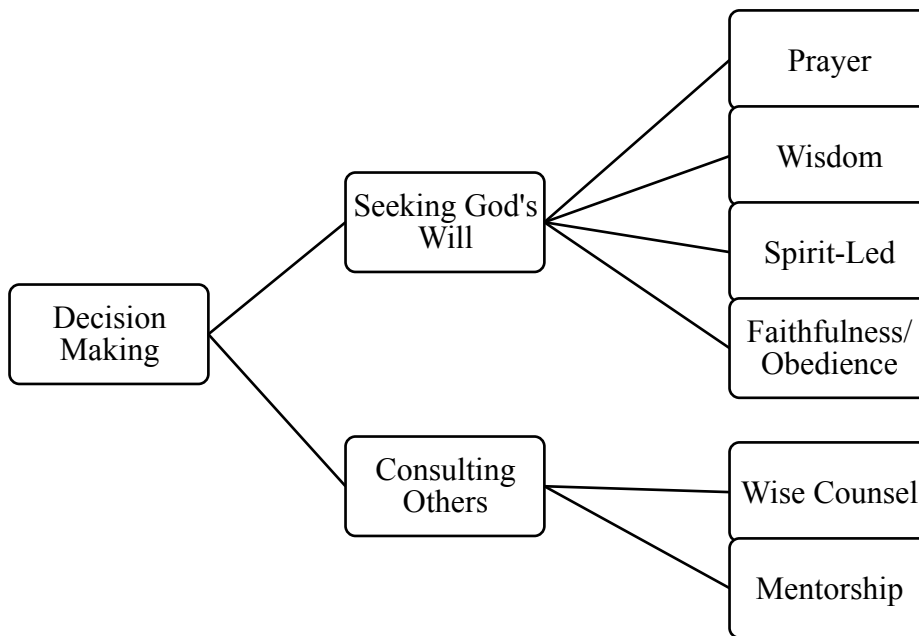
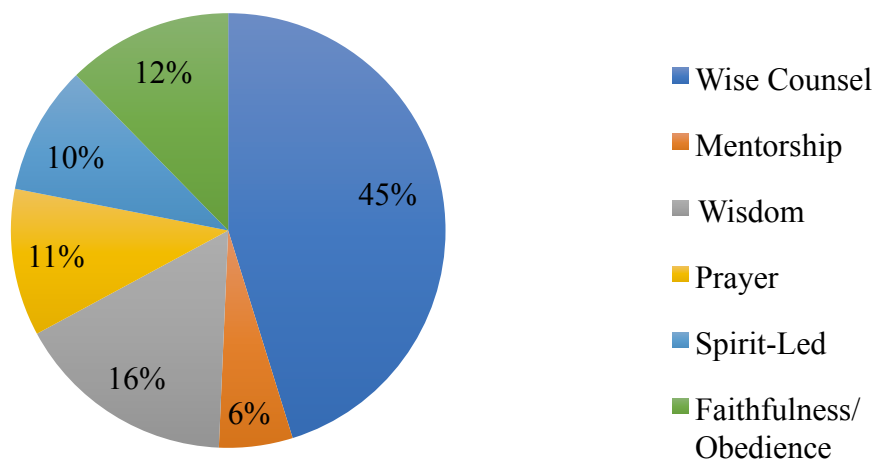


Figure 8

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to the Decision Making Factor



Note. Percentages were calculated by totaling the thematic statements made by all pastoral participants.

Stress Management

The final factor in the secular model, Stress Management, includes flexibility, optimism, and stress tolerance (MHS, 2011). After discussing this EQ-I factor with pastoral participants, there was agreed support for the notion of stress within a biblical context, followed by differing biblical techniques used to address, manage, and reduce stress. When asked if the Bible provides biblical support for stress, pastors shared the following: “Absolutely, it does”, “The Bible is full of this”, and “Like any good story, the Bible has stories that include tension and stress”. There was one statement of mixed support, which doubted the tangible presence of the explicit term ‘stress’ in the Bible however, they agreed that the concept of stress, worry, and anxiety were biblically supported even if not unambiguously mentioned.

Prior to reviewing the emergent biblical themes concerning stress management, some participants provided biblical support for non-religious coping mechanisms such as physical exercise, pharmaceutical support and alcohol. Concerning exercise, one pastor mentioned, “Paul talks about how physical exercise has some benefit. He basically says spiritual is more important but physical has some benefit as well, and we know our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit”. This statement not only highlights our physical responsibility, but also shared how the process of taking care of our physical bodies can aid in stress reduction. In terms of supplementation, one participant shared how pharmaceuticals have helped reduce anxiety and stress.

Just as any organ in your body can run into problems, I think your brain and the synapses of the brain can run into trouble and you might need medicine for that. The Bible says, ‘Every good and perfect gift comes from above’ [James 1:17], and I think modern medicine is part of that.

Additionally, drinking alcohol in moderation was similarly considered useful for stress reduction. When discussing stress-reducing tips, one pastor said, “I’ll tell you another one –

alcohol! God gives wine to gladden the heart [Psalm 104:15]”. While exercise, medical supplementation, and drinking alcohol appear to be supported scripturally, these three concepts were not included in the factor of stress management due to the limited support these topics received from the majority of pastoral participants.

Overall, the majority of pastoral participants found biblical support for the concept of stress, thus the factor name was retained. While the factor name remained, the supporting sub-factors currently present in the MHS (2011) failed to capture the themes relevant to pastoral leaders. This next section will detail the updated stress management factor and the four emergent themes used to describe the composite.

Stress Management

When discussing stress, many pastors began by discussing the purpose of stress. Here, the conversation revolved around God’s design for our bodies to receive rest, the importance of viewing stress through a Christian mindset, and leaning on God and others throughout the process. These statements formed the basis for the following four sub-themes concerning stress management: Adopt a Christian Mindset, Rest, Encounter God, and Involve Others.

Seen as a precursor to stress, Adopting a Christian Mindset includes altering how Christians encounter stressful situations. Adopting a Christian Mindset composed 17% of all pastoral statements and included concepts of optimism and seeing stress as an opportunity to grow. When discussing optimism, one pastor shared, “I think if we’re going to see the best, I’m reminded of 1 Corinthians that says ‘love always hopes’ (1 Corinthians 13:7)”, and another said, “God gives me a hope that will help me endure and walk through life’s difficulties without fear, anxiety, and stress”. Seeing stress as growth was composed of biblical statements referring to the process and purpose of stress. Here, pastors had the following to share, “But when God talks

about stress, He talks about growing and the pruning season and the stress required even when making wine”, “In some ways, He [God] talks about how stress leads us to certain things and how stress could even be apart of the process”, and “...sometimes what we define as stress is really not meant to ever be stress as it is to be growth, but because we’ve taken it outside of the context of how God has wired us, we experience stress”. Many pastors noted the difference between cultural and biblical observations of stress, sharing the purposeful process and fruitful resolution behind the biblical version of tension.

Participating in Sabbath rest and moments of tranquility encompasses the second sub-factor of Rest. When discussing Rest, 75% of pastoral comments mentioned taking a true Sabbath. These statements included: “If we’re going to talk about stress management, I have to mention the Sabbath”, “Pastors of longevity have recognized how to take a Sabbath, and it may not be an entire day but they have periods of time when they cease from normal activity”, “The whole rhythm of rest in the Old Testament between Sabbath day, Sabbath month, Sabbath year, Jubilee year”, and “Jesus says, “Sabbath was created for man, not man for the Sabbath” [Mark 2:27]”. These statements refer to the origin and original intent of rest. The other half of this sub-factor includes statements of stillness and silence. One pastor said, “It’s important to be still and know He is God [Psalm 46:10], and I think this is one of the reasons why we can struggle with a prayer life, because we don’t know how to be still”, and another said, “To me, silence is a huge stress manager”. While the concept of rest is not covered in the secular model, adding this sub-factor appears not only biblically supported, but also similarly relevant to pastoral leaders.

The third sub-factor of Stress Management is Encounter God. Encounter God was composed from 21% of pastoral statements and was shaped from the themes of prayer and requiring God’s intervention in our lives. In terms of prayer, several pastors mentioned

Philippians 4:6-8 as a biblical example of how to overcome anxiety. Specifically, one pastor said:

I would go to prayer for stress management. In Philippians is Bible tells us, ‘Be anxious about nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be known to God, and the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding, will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus’ [Philippians 4:6-7].

Another pastor shared how the biblical story of Daniel highlights how he overcame his stressful condition. “For some reason I keep going to Daniel – what a stressful situation! He was taken from his nation, expected to eat meat and worship idols. He prayed everyday... he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord”. These examples provide biblical context for turning to prayer and scripture in times of high stress. Encountering God was also composed of statements concerning needing God’s help. Here, pastoral comments included, “There are times when we see biblical characters overcome issues with the help of the Lord”, “I think we put more on our shoulders than what was intended”, and “I think all of that was meant to remind us that we were not designed as humans to shoulder the load”. These statements emphasized the importance of relying on God to not only sustain us, but ultimately to shoulder the load of earthly burdens.

The final sub-factor, Involve Others, was represented by 22% of the statements concerning Stress Management, tying with the sub-factor Rest, as the two largest sub-themes. Involve Others includes statements relating to community and delegation. Community was discussed as a large component of Involving Others. One pastor shared Mary as a biblical example of community:

Every version of the Bible has a similar word but the NTL says, ‘Mary hurried to see Elizabeth’ [Luke 1:39], and I feel like that is because of stress management. I think she

managed her stress by finding someone who was a little bit ahead of her, going through the same thing.

When sharing details surrounding walking through a personal hardship, one pastor said:

We went through a hell of a stress; what was happening with my daughter in the hospital, no one could change that stress, but what they could do, and what they did do, was lessen the stress of everything else around us. You need people to step up and handle the little things so you can give more of yourself to the things that only you can handle.

Both of these examples speak to the significance of community. In terms of delegation, one pastor shared, “There is one passage in particular I use, ‘Keep your head in all situations, endure hardships, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all your duties’ [2 Timothy 4:5]”, and several others shared the exchange between Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro, as a biblical example of delegation. “He [Moses] had a lot of maturity to realize what Jethro was saying was great and even though it wasn’t his idea, it’s a good idea to help his stress”. One pastor put it this way, “There are things at work that you’re called to do that you might not necessary love, but if you’re talking about building up leadership, our heart is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, not for one person just to do it all”. Taking all themes under consideration, it appears that pastors view stress as an opportunity for growth, a reason to rest, and a concept requiring God and others assistance. See Figure 9 below for the updated Stress Management factor.

Figure 9

The New Stress Management Factor

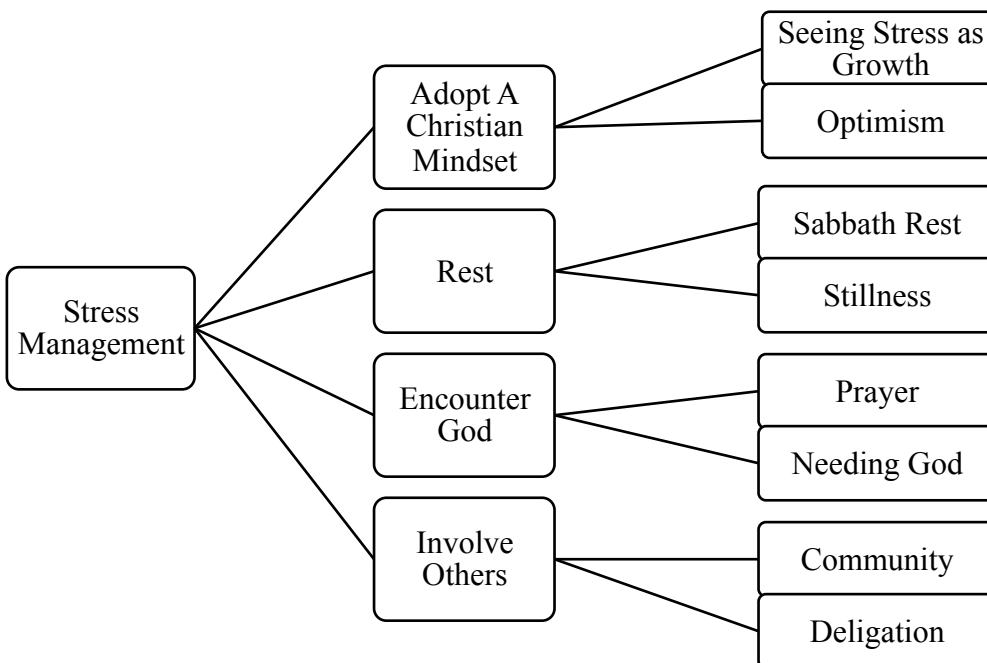
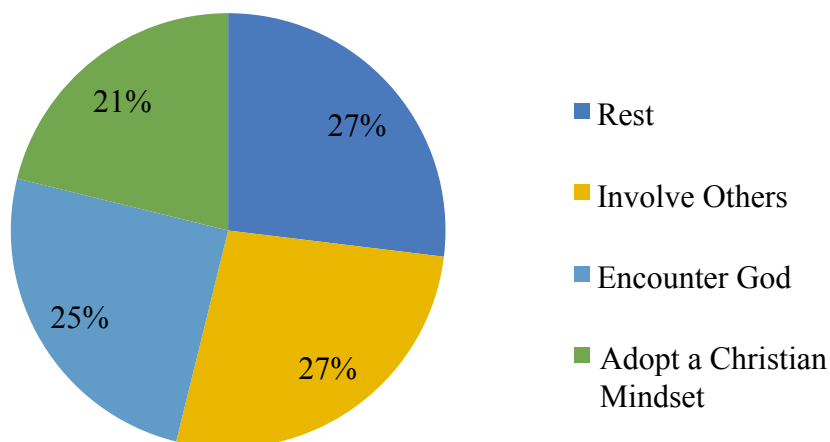


Figure 10

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to Stress Management



Biblical Model

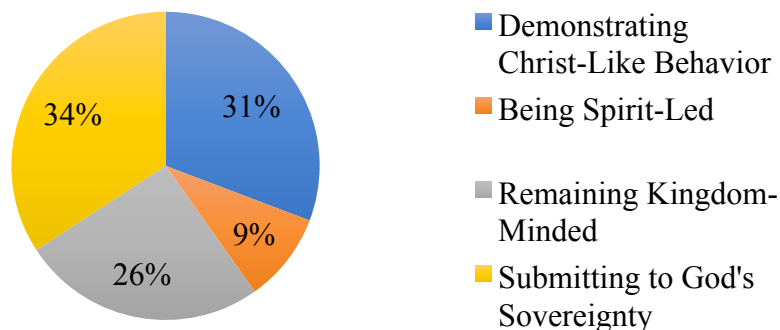
After assessing all five components of the EQ-I for biblical support or discord, RQ 3 asked participants what, if anything, was missing from the current EQ-I model in order to make it more applicable for pastoral leaders. Seeing as how this process was naturally occurring during

the initial questioning about biblical support or disconnect, the themes pastors mentioned in those sections were immediately added to the creation of the new biblical model. This section will summarize the statements shared by pastors when asked what they would add and conclude with adding relevant themes.

Several pastors noted the lack of spiritual influence within the current version of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011). “When you look at the secular model, there is no aspect of interaction between our relationship with God and how that impacts how we handle ourselves”, obviously that interaction is a key component of ministry and pastoral leadership. Another pastor shared the following when asked what was missing from the current model, “I would say the fact that [pastor’s carry] a spiritual weight, a spiritual burden... that has to be addressed. I think EI that points toward caring for the pastor soul, mentally, emotionally, physically, addresses what pastors truly need”. This statement speaks to the demanding role of pastoral ministry and the dire necessity for developmental tools to emulate biblical philosophies. Overall, pastoral statements could be grouped into the following four themes: Demonstrating Christ-Like Behavior, Being Spirit-Led, Remaining Kingdom-Minded, and Submitting to God’s Sovereignty. See Figure 11 for a percentage breakdown of statements representative of each four themes.

Figure 11

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to Four Biblical Model Themes



Demonstrating Christ-Like Behavior

The incorporation of Christian conduct presented itself in the theme, Demonstrating Christ-Like Behavior. This factor contained elements of self-control, self-awareness, balancing grace and truth, and emulating God’s character. Self-control was mentioned several times in the form of active listening. Here, pastors said, “One more thing I would add if I were giving advice to a young buck – bite your tongue!” and “Just because you think it, doesn’t mean you should say it”. Both statements address control of the tongue, a difficult concept for sacred and secular leaders to master. Similar to self-control, many participants shared how awareness of self and others should be added to a biblical model. Pastors who spoke to this theme mentioned the importance of reading the room and forming relationships with others. When discussing self-awareness, one pastor shared, “Probably the biggest one with pastoral is you need to be aware of the people”, emphasizing the importance of self and other cognizance. The next sub-theme, balancing grace and truth, was a uniquely Christian concept concerning leading with compassion while maintaining a strong stance of reality. Pastors had the following to say in regards to grace and truth: “I’ve been faced with some difficult situations lately and I’ve had to present truth but also care for the soul of the sinner” and “We love grace, but there is still an ideal in scripture that

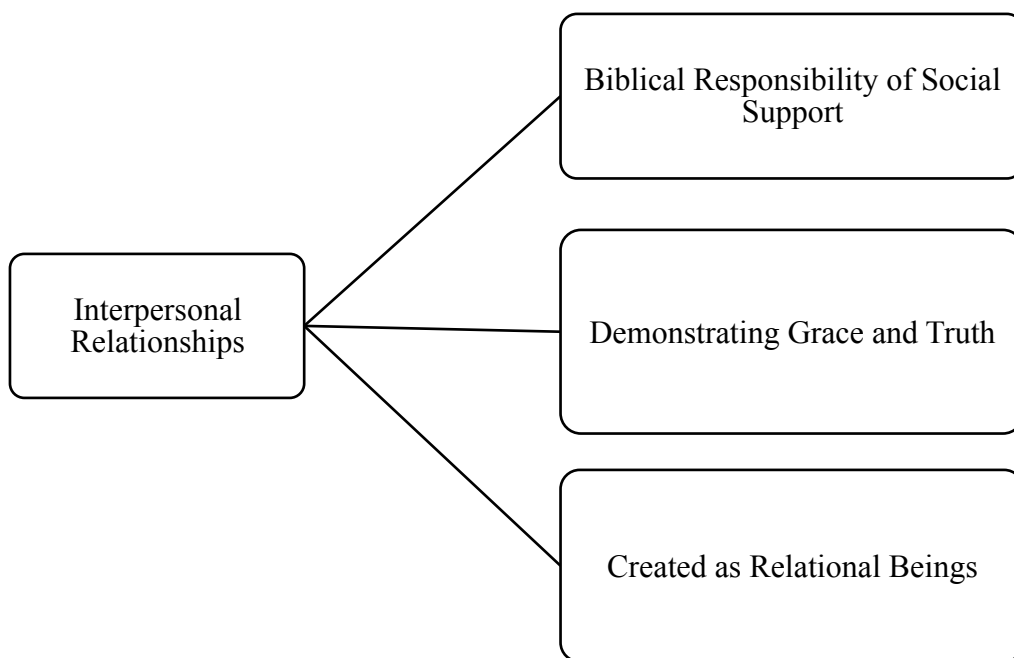
needs to be upheld and taken as authority alongside the New Testament concept of grace”. This pastor continued to share, “Within EQ-I, this would be the one piece we could teach that would strengthen a biblical emotional model”. The final sub-factor is emulating God’s character. Here, one pastor said, “In a biblical model, there would be a standard where you were not just making decisions but making choices in line with a standard based on Gods character”. These sub-themes were combined to create the Demonstrating Christ-Like Behavior theme, as Christ exhibited all four of these elements throughout the New Testament.

Prior to adding all four elements from the Demonstrating Christ-Like Behavior theme, generated subthemes were compared against the updated model to evaluate for duplicity. Upon comparison, the concepts of self-control, self-awareness, and emulating God’s character are currently incorporated, however demonstrating grace and truth is nonexistent. Self-control can be found within the Emotional Expression factor, under the sub-factor Emotional Actions, which addresses maintaining control of self through maturation. Self-Awareness is currently in the Identity in Christ factor under the subtheme Differing Gifts and Abilities. Emulating God’s character is mentioned in both Seeking God’s Will (in the Decision Making factor) and Adopting a Christian Mindset (in the Stress Management factor). The final component, grace and truth is not reflected on the current model, therefore the addition of this construct is required to build a biblical model based on pastoral perception. After analyzing the majority of statements relating to this theme, grace and truth had similar elements to Respecting Convictions under the Interpersonal Relationships factor. Seeing as how maintaining a regard for convictions while upholding biblical tenets is considered an element of grace and truth, the sub-factor was renamed to Demonstrating Grace and Truth and Respecting Convictions will be subservient sub-point.

The addition of Demonstrating Grace and Truth under the updated Interpersonal Relationships factor is reflected in Figure 12.

Figure 12

The Updated Interpersonal Relationships Factor



Being Spirit-Led

Allowing oneself to be Spirit-Led was the second emergent theme. This theme included statements pertaining to being flexible and obedient to the Holy Spirit. The notion of adjustment manifested out of conversations concerning pastoring during a pandemic. Here, pastors noted how the global COVID-19 pandemic has negatively affected the church, requiring them to be flexible leaders now more than ever. “Pastoring during the pandemic means you are Spirit-led, you’re flexible. We are in uncharted territory and if you’re going to serve God, you need to be open to that”. While this concept is true for today’s current climate, it particularly applies to pastors who like Moses, “...followed a cloud and that’s what many of us are doing now”.

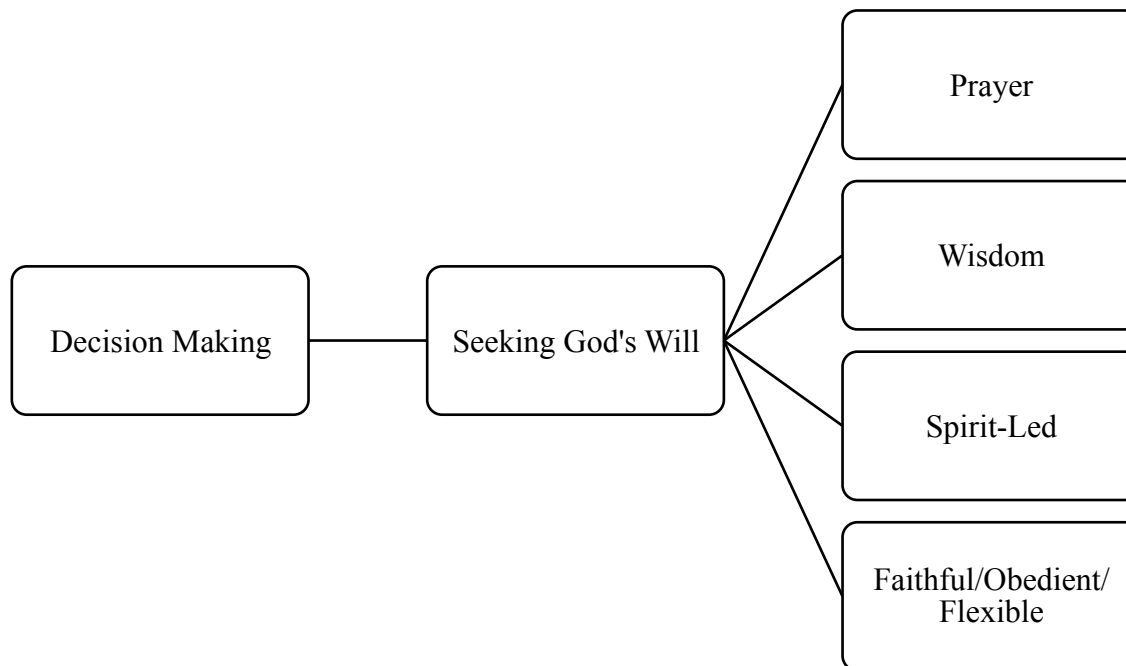
Obedience was mentioned when discussing how to bolster the Decision Making factor. One

pastor said, “Obedience and discerning the Lords voice in our lives, at the end of the day, is going to be the guiding force [for Christians]”.

When contemplating which subthemes should be added to the updated model, the notion of being Spirit-Led previously manifested within the Decision Making factor. Here, pastors noted the criticality of the Holy Spirit when faced with difficult decisions. Similar to being Spirit-Led, Obedience to the Holy Spirit was also listed within the Decision-Making factor under Seeking God’s Will. While both Spirit-Led and Obedience to the Spirit are currently reflected in the updated model, remaining flexible is absent and thus, should be added to the overall model to reflect a pastors’ call to remain fluid. In an effort to keep the collected elements of this theme cohesive, and seeing as how remaining flexible to the Holy Spirit is an notion of being Spirit-Led, Flexibility will be added to the Faithful/Obedience subtheme under the Decision-Making factor.

Figure 13

The Updated Decision Making Factor



Remaining Kingdom-Minded

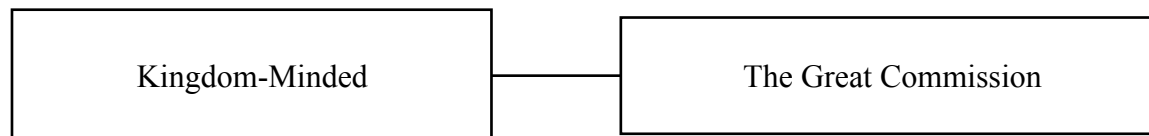
When discussing what was missing from the current EI model, several pastors mentioned the concept of keeping the kingdom of God at the forefront of their actions, thoughts, and behavior. The Kingdom-Minded theme was composed of statements pertaining to the Great Commission and sharing one’s Christian testimony. When discussing a Christian’s call to, “Go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:16), one pastor said, “Living out the Great Commission in our own lives, and making an impact in that capacity is very important” and another added, “You should ask, am I being assertive in light of the mission of God?” In terms of statements pertaining to testimony, pastors shared the following: “The big term I would use here would be testimony... do these thoughts and actions enhance my testimony?” and “We exist to bring glory to God and advance His kingdom. So, my testimony is a big piece of that. How do I advance the kingdom without a testimony?” Several others mentioned the phrase kingdom when discussing what was missing from the secular EI model. The term kingdom, Great Commission,

and testimony all fit together to encompass a pastor's call to share Christ with those around them.

While the Kingdom-Minded theme contained several biblical concepts, each element was evaluated for replication to ensure it was not currently represented within the updated model. Under the Identity in Christ factor, within the Made for a Purpose sub-theme, the concept of living a meaningful life and sharing our Christian testimony was previously added from pastoral comments on self-perception. However, living out the Great Commission and maintaining a kingdom perspective are not currently represented on the updated model. In an effort to add relevant themes pertinent to pastoral leadership, the theme Kingdom-Minded was added to the final model as a new factor, including the subtheme of The Great Commission.

Figure 14

The New Factor, Kingdom-Minded



Submission to God's Sovereignty

The final theme to emerge when asking pastors what was missing from the secular EQ-I model (MHS, 2011) included statements pertaining to succumbing to God's will whilst acknowledging the challenging journey pastors are called to. More specifically, this theme includes subthemes of operating out of weakness, experiencing discomfort, and surrendering to God's authority. One pastor had the following to share concerning the first subtheme, operating out of one's weakness,

I have an accounting degree and that's where I'm comfortable. You're weakness puts you in an uncomfortable space and God loves that. It's great to recognize, because if you can recognize your weaknesses, and if you're excelling in you're weaknesses, that's the Lord!

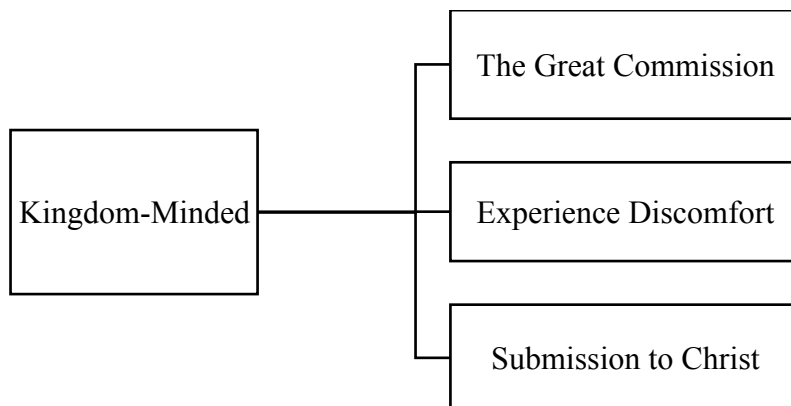
Other pastors continued to share how present-day occupational assessments focus on identifying and leveraging internal strengths. Here, one pastor shared, "I think when you dive into some of the personality things, it can put you in a box and be limiting in a world with an omnipotent God". While assessments are helpful at highlighting areas of strengths and opportunity, a biblical model should speak to natural gifting's, while also allowing room for God to move in their deficiencies. The second sub-factor, experiencing discomfort, is another unique Christian phrase that encompasses the pain and hardship Christians are promised to endure (John 16:33). Here, pastors shared, "The reality is, that in this life there will be trouble [John 16:33]. Healthy, biblical, emotional intelligence isn't trying to completely eliminate hardships and reach a happy life", and "Sometimes a model can try to workout all the pain, like how can we make you successful in all areas so there's no pain...I'm not totally sure that's where a believer should be. I think there's a level of suffering and pain, not that God wants that for us but it is part of a broken world and part of spiritual growth". Comments similar to these shared how Christians should refrain from achieving happiness, rather they should acknowledge the challenges ahead and lean on God during hardships. The final subtheme is surrendering to God. Pastors who spoke to this theme had the following to share, "When Christ tells us we need to die to self, it means we need to pick up our cross and die daily [Luke 9:23]. When we miss that, within the conversation of emotional intelligence, we end up with an over prioritization of self-focus", and "We should focus on how much we allow emotions to speak into things, verses how much we submit those things to the Lord". Additional statements recognized how submission would be key within a

biblical model, sharing both notions of following Gods will over our own. All three of these themes combine to create the Submission to God's Sovereignty theme.

In terms of what to add to the updated model, the first subtheme, operating out of weakness, was previously added to the Identity in Christ factor under Differing Gifts and Abilities. Experiencing discomfort and submission to Christ were not added during the earlier portion of the interview, and thus should be added to reflect pastoral perceptions concerning an accurate biblical EI model. Seeing as how both of these subthemes incorporate elements of a Christian's eternal perspective, placing them under the Kingdom-Minded factor appeared to be the best fit. The updated Kingdom-Minded factor is below.

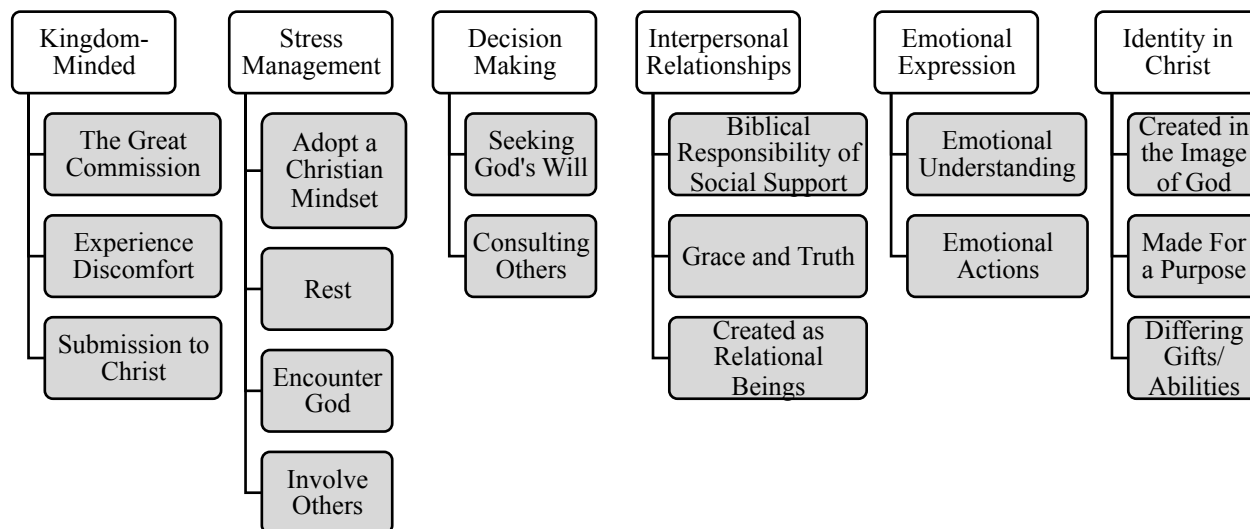
Figure 15

The Updated Kingdom-Minded Factor



Final Biblical Model

The final biblical model includes the five updated EQ-I factors alongside the newly created factor, Kingdom-Minded. Based on the unique perspectives of Christian pastors, the final model includes the following six factors: Identity in Christ, Emotional Expression, Interpersonal Relationships, Decision Making, Stress Management, and Kingdom-Minded. There are 17 supporting sub-factors. The figure for this final model is below.

Figure 16*The Biblical Model of Emotional Intelligence***Opinion of Applicability For Pastor Leadership**

The final question asked during pastor interviews was whether or not they perceived emotional intelligence development or training helpful for their role in ministry. Here, all pastors unanimously agreed on EI's applicability for pastoral leadership. When analyzing this section, comments fell under the following four themes: personal agreement, missing in ministry, why EI is helpful, and what EI is helpful for (see Figure 17).

The first category of statements was personal agreement. This is what some pastors had to say concerning their support of EI development: "Extremely useful", "I would love to see this in ministry. They're using this stuff to make pizza, why are we not using it to help churches who have the greatest mission in the world?", "I highly recommend it [Emotional Intelligence Assessments]; it was huge for our team", "I think emotional intelligence is absolutely vital",

“This is massive, it’s huge”, and “The healthier I get, the healthier I’m going to lead, the healthier I’m going to preach, and the healthier my family is going to be. To me, this has generational effects”. While three pastors currently integrate EI training for interns and staff leaders, the remaining pastors commented upon the noticeable lack of EI focus within seminary and current congregations.

The second theme, missing in ministry, grouped comments together that addressed EI’s absence from church related development. Here, pastors had the following to say: “Unfortunately in most theology centers, Bible schools, and seminaries, you don’t get taught this until you get thrown into leadership. Then, that school is very painful”, “There are graduating scholars who don’t know how to relate to people in the workplace”, and “This is missing. I don’t know of many other professions where people wear masks and mask their emotions”. Interestingly, pastors with statements relating to EI’s absenteeism from ministry not only spoke to the lack of EI training in church, but also to its overlooked presence within theological schooling. Additional comments in this section addressed how the church operates as an organization and likewise, should employ healthy people-practices. Here, one pastor shared, “The church is a business. It has ministry, but it also has a huge business side to it. There’s relationships, there’s culture, there’s HR, budgeting, people pressure... responsibility and stewardship come alongside all of it”. Overall, this theme accounted for 17% of pastoral comments (Figure 17).

When discussing EI’s absence from ministry, several pastors began conversing about the impact EI could have (for those who don’t currently use the assessment) and did have (for those who currently employ EI assessments and development) for themselves and ministry staff members. Discussing why emotional intelligence is helpful was the third generated theme. Pastoral comments in this section addressed how EI can strengthen personal leadership,

organizational culture, and managerial teams. Specifically, pastors said the following: “It’s something that was helpful for me as a pastor, personally, and for me as a lead team member to see multiple team members go through and watch their growth happen”, “Every person I have talked to has shared how it has helped them better understand how they work within the workplace”, “I have seen a huge growth in our staff and interns from just being aware of areas of growth. There wasn’t anything before that made them aware of how they handled decision-making, or interpersonal relationships in the office” and, “It’s invaluable for pastors to be able to have a tool, like this, to help them and their team out”. Other statements in this category that addressed why EI was beneficial included, “If you don’t have strong interpersonal skills, if you don’t have good self-awareness, if you don’t have emotional intelligence, your not going to be very successful and your not going to love people well”, “It’s hard to do ministry when you need ministry yourself, and this tool can certainly help with that”, and “If you don’t have it, its tough to pastor well”. This theme is composed of 25% of pastoral statements, the second largest theme in this section.

The final theme addressed EI’s purpose. Here, pastors spoke to what EI was helpful for. One pastor addressed how EI was beneficial for church growth by saying, “Churches, are relational and then transactional. If we don’t have the emotional awareness of how we come across to people or how we’re perceived, we can loose the relationships and never make it to the transactional”. Relating EI development to healthy leadership, another pastor said, “Without EI you get these weird totalitarian leaders with all kinds of problems”. Other pastors commented on how EI was beneficial for staff members,

“Our job is to deal with broken people and I expected that. But I didn’t expect that same level of brokenness to exist on a church staff and the devastation that could cause. Almost 100% of that stemmed from emotional intelligence”.

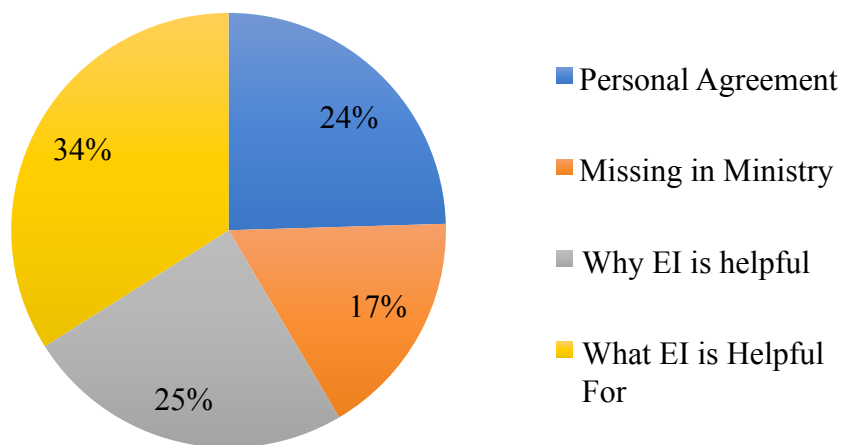
One of the most impactful statements came from a pastor who recognized how unhealthy Christian leaders can deter others from Christ. A pastor with that realization said,

We need to apply it to the church because when this goes wrong, people get hurt, and they give up on God... and that’s scary to me. They are wrong to give up on God and all that, but when leaders don’t lead well, they hurt people and people use that as a crutch to walk out on their faith.

Overall, while there was unanimous support for EI application, this section that attempted to explain why EI should be implemented, produced the most comments at 34%.

Figure 17

Frequency of Pastoral Statements Relating to EI’s Pastoral Applicability



Note. Percentages were calculated by totaling the thematic statements made by all pastoral participants.

Summary

Chapter Four reviewed the data collected from all pastoral participants. The participant demographics were shared alongside a brief overview of the data analysis process. After interviewing pastors on the scriptural applicability of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011), a biblical model of emotional intelligence was created. A thematic analysis revealed several components of scriptural agreement however, there were also concepts present in the secular model that were not conducive for pastoral ministry. Overall, the remaining themes supported renaming two of the five EQ-I factors (MHS, 2011) to create model reflective of pastoral perceptions. In addition to updating the current secular model with scriptural concepts, a sixth factor was added addressing specific pastoral competencies. The six factor names of the biblical model were: Identity in Christ, Emotional Expression, Interpersonal Relationships, Decision Making, Stress Management, and Kingdom Minded.

CHAPTER 5: DISSCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this case study was to uncover a biblical model of emotional intelligence. Interviews with pastoral participants revealed a theological description of the EQ-I model, incorporating relevant themes for Christian leaders. While a biblical model was established, the implications of this new model have yet to be explored. Chapter Five presents a brief summary of the biblical model and discuss the effects this model could have on church staff members, Christian leaders, and teams within ministry settings. This Chapter concludes by highlighting the study limitations and recommended areas of future research.

Summary of Findings

After interviewing pastoral participants, several of the EQ-I factors required supplementation in order to create biblical support for emotional intelligence. The first factor, Self-Perception, was defined in the secular model as a how individuals perceive themselves (Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017). This factor was heavily focused on personal acceptance, leaving little room for spiritual influence. This factor was renamed to Identity in Christ, which incorporated personal awareness through the lens of Christ. Pastoral statements revealed the following three subthemes, Created in the Image and Likeness of God (accounting for 22% of pastoral statements), Made for a Purpose (accounting for 32% of pastoral statements), and Possessing Different Gifts and Abilities (accounting the largest amount of pastoral statements at 46%). Created in the Image and Likeness of God was dually composed of man's unique, individual composition yet collective reflection of God's image. Made for a Purpose included an individuals testimony and desire to live a meaningful life. The last subtheme, Possessing

Different Gifts and Abilities included elements of self-awareness, and the Christian call to operate out of personal areas of weakness.

The second EQ-I factor, Self-Expression, was defined in the secular model as the personal expression of thoughts and feelings. Here, pastors found similar challenges pertaining to the over-prioritization of self-led expression over Christ-led expression and renamed the factor to Emotional Expression. Emotional Expression was composed of two subthemes, Emotional Understanding (accounting for 43% of pastoral comments) and Emotional Actions (accounting for the remaining 57% of statements). Emotional Understanding encompassed the genuine expression of emotions, the recognition of our emotional origin, and our ability to regulate emotions during times of high stress and tension. Emotional Actions included demonstrating emotional maturity, and both the appropriate and emphatic expression of emotions.

Interpersonal Relationships was the third EQ-I factor. Within the secular model, Interpersonal Relationships entailed developing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships, understanding how others felt, and demonstrating social conscientiousness toward others. This factor retained its name due to the unanimous perception of biblical support. There were three subthemes that developed from pastoral interviews: Biblical Responsibility of Social Support (59% of statements), Demonstrating Grace and Truth (23% of statements), and Created as Relational Beings (32% of statements). The largest subtheme, Biblical Responsibility of Social Support encompassed demonstrating compassion, empathy, and serving others. Demonstrating Grace and Truth covered how individuals demonstrate respect to cultural issues that deviate from Christian tenets. The final subtheme, Created as Relational Beings, highlighted how individuals were created in the image of a relational God.

Decision Making was the fourth EQ-I factor. Decision Making included an individual's ability to effectively seek solutions when emotions were involved, remain objective, and control personal impulses. This factor retained its name from the secular model. There were two subthemes within Decision Making, Seeking God's Will (accounting for 49% of pastoral comments) and Consulting Others (accounting for 51% of pastoral comments). Seeking God's Will included the concepts of prayer, wisdom, being Spirit-led, and demonstrating faithfulness, obedience, and flexibility. Consulting Others encompassed mentorship and seeking wise counsel.

The fifth factor, Stress Management, also retained its name. Originally defined as the ability to modify behaviors in response to change, coping with stressful situations, and maintaining a positive perspective despite setbacks, pastoral interviews revealed support for this factor alongside biblical supplication. Pastors uncovered four subthemes within Stress Management: Adopt a Christian Mindset, Rest, Encounter God, and Involve Others. Adopt a Christian Mindset (21% of statements) involved viewing stress as an opportunity for growth and remaining optimistic. Rest (27% of statements) included taking a true Sabbath and remaining still in the presence of God. Encounter God (25% of statements) was comprised of prayer and needing God. Involve Others, the final subtheme, accounted for 27% of statements. Involve Others included concepts of community and leadership delegation.

The final factor was created from concepts pastors identified as absent from the secular model. Therefore, this factor is unique in its entirety to the biblical model. The sixth factor was named Kingdom Minded, and it had three subthemes: the Great Commission, Experience Discomfort, and Submission to Christ. The Great Commission incorporated maintaining a kingdom perspective. Experience Discomfort addressed the pain and hardship Christians are promised to endure. The last subtheme, Submission to Christ, concentrated on following God's

will over personal endeavors. The following section will discuss the significance of these discoveries and their relevance for practical application.

Discussion of Findings

At a high level, this study sought to understand the thoughts and attitudes of pastoral leaders regarding the representation of emotional concepts in the Bible. During the data analysis phase, pastoral comments were thematically grouped, resulting in the creation of an emotional model reflective of biblical concepts. Upon comparison, the secular and biblical models addressed similar themes, however significant deviation was observed in the following two categories: the promotion of self-driven attributes over God-inspired values and acting out of a kingdom mindset. A discussion of these findings alongside their relation to current EI theory and biblical relevance will be presented below.

Removal of ‘Self’

Interviews with pastoral participants revealed majority support for the underpinnings of the secular EI model (MHS, 2011); however, in an effort to make the model more relevant to Christian leaders, several factors and subthemes were supplemented and/or renamed to more accurately reflect biblical principals. Perhaps the most predominant change was the removal of ‘self’, both in phrase and concept. In the secular model, ‘self’ is used as a key component to the first two factors, self-perception and self-expression. Similarly, it is found in three supportive subthemes: self-regard, self-actualization, and self-awareness. When creating the biblical model, pastors renamed both factor names to Identity in Christ and Emotional Expression (note that these two factors were the only themes to be renamed throughout the model) and they changed all three of the ‘self’ subthemes (created in the image of God, made for a purpose, and differing gifts and abilities). Other subthemes, such as independence and assertion, were similarly retitled

in an effort to remove the self-governing theme throughout the secular EQ-I model (MHS, 2011). While the concept of knowing and understanding one's self is not unbiblical, pastors emphasized the importance of denying personal attainments in an attempt to reflect and emulate Christ, remain obedient to the Holy Spirit, and recognize how identity is grounded in God's image. Therefore, in an effort to pragmatically utilize this biblical model of emotional intelligence, administrators should note the vast differences of self-government present within the EQ-I 2.0 (MHS, 2011) and the promotion of spirit-led thoughts, actions, and behaviors supported throughout the biblical model.

Examining the Removal of 'Self' Within Current EI Theory

As stated in Chapter 2, the EQ-I 2.0 (MHS, 2011) is not only the most widely used EI measurement tool within empirical research (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Dippenaar & Schaap, 2017), but it has also been esteemed as the best overall model of self-perception (O'Connor et al., 2019). Insight is a large component of EI; in fact, self-awareness has been identified as the cornerstone of emotional intelligence theory (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016). Taking into account the intentional removal of self-related concepts from the biblical model, critiques could claim that the updated model fails to generate classification as an emotional intelligent model. Thus, this leads one to consider if a model without self-driven attributes constitutes as an emotional intelligent model or if it is simply a summarization of Christian living. EI pairs emotions with cognition, promoting the intentional use of emotions. The biblical model continues to achieve this goal, as emotional processing, expression, and subsequent behavior cannot occur without an internal examination; however, the previous model prioritized self-led discoveries while the biblical model promotes Spirit-led revelations. The biblical model of EI would fail to exist without self-perception (especially considering that typical EI assessments are self-report). Self-

awareness wasn't eliminated; it was augmented to include Spirit-led cognizance and Christ-like behavior. This amplification could be considered a desirable differentiator for Christian leaders who adhere to blended sacred and secular principals.

Examining the Biblical Foundation of 'Self'

As discussed in Chapter 1 and 2, it was expected that EQ-I constructs would generate biblical support based on the emotional competencies of God, the reflected social-emotional abilities in mankind, and the expressive emotional concepts displayed throughout Jesus' ministry. Albeit unforeseen, pastoral participants collectively edited factors and subthemes pertaining to the concept of 'self'. These factors and subthemes were supplemented to reflect a prioritization of Spirit-led emotional cognition. As stated above, individualized perception was not removed from the model, as doing so would fail to generate a model of emotional processing; however, it was revised to include a sacred filter through which Christians aim to use when evaluating their thoughts, actions, and behavior. Scripturally, the Bible urges Christians to examine themselves through the lens of faith (Lamentations 3:40; 1 Corinthians 11:28-32; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Psalm 26:2; Psalm 139:23-240), which is what the biblical model attempts to do throughout every factor. Ultimately, the goal of creating a biblical model mirrors the charge Paul spoke in Romans 12, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is-his good, pleasing and perfect will" (Romans 12:2). The secular model emphasizes self-examination for the purpose of achieving higher levels of leadership and responsibility while the biblical model supports self-examination through a filter of faith, believing that God can do all things through those who are willing (2 Corinthians 12:9; Philippians 4:13).

Kingdom-Minded

The second salient difference between the sacred and secular model of EI is the added sixth factor, Kingdom-Minded, and the supporting subthemes that combine to emphasize the criticality of adopting an eternal perspective. The Kingdom-Minded factor includes the following three subthemes: the great commission, experience discomfort, and submission to Christ. Each subtheme addresses how Christians are called to share, experience, and comply with a calling greater than their own. Referring to the global charge Jesus gave His disciples, the great commission addresses how Christian leaders are charged with advancing the kingdom of God (Matthew 28:16). Experiencing discomfort is a uniquely Christian phrase that encompasses the pain and hardship Christians are promised to endure (John 16:33). The final subtheme, submission to Christ, similarly addresses how Christians are asked to follow God's will over their personal endeavors.

Examining Kingdom Minded Within Current EI Theory

When assessing the addition of kingdom-minded alongside current EI theory and research, it is apparent that the EQ-I 2.0 (MHS, 2011) places a large emphasis on leader growth and development as opposed to societal or global impact. As discussed in the previous section, the secular model is undoubtedly self-driven, which is apparent in the factor and sub-factor themes. It is also highly comparative; as individual EI results are compared to a leader norm group with high EI aptitude (Lin, n.d.). The goal of traditional EI development is to identify individual areas of strength and deficiencies when comparing scores against leader norms. The concept of altering one's actions and behaviors in an attempt to achieve something greater than oneself is characteristically Christian, deviating significantly from mainstream mentality. Empirical research focuses on how EI can enhance individual and/or collective performance (Doe et al., 2015; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Laborde et al., 2016; White & Kimmons, 2019),

with joint studies venturing into the exploration of EI and personal wellbeing (happiness) and life success (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021; Shapira-Lishchinsky & Levy-Gazenfrantz, 2016). While traditional EI models evaluate leader and organizational impact, the biblical model extends emotional capacity by evaluating how leaders are impacting their neighborhood, community, and society at large.

Examining the Biblical Foundation of Being Kingdom Minded

In terms of biblical foundation, there were several scriptures incorporated by pastors to create the groundwork for this factor. Matthew 28:16 was mentioned as a verse that spoke to the criticality of spreading the good news of Jesus and His ministry while also raising global disciples. Other participants used Luke 9:23 as a verse that mentioned how Jesus directs followers to put their personal desires and selfish ambitions to rest, pursuing only Christ and Godly attributes. John 16 was used as biblical footing to understand how Christians are not promised an easy or carefree life (John 16:33). One pastor shared James 4:14, which states how our lives here on earth are temporary, and throughout this brief existence our goal is to emulate Christ. Seeing as how pastors were asked to provide biblical relevance when discussing what they would add to a pastoral model, this kingdom-minded factor undoubtedly has a solid biblical foundation.

Overall, it is to be expected that the secular and biblical model possess similar underpinnings. After all, the biblical model was created based on the preexisting research of the EQ-I (MHS, 2011). While there are similarities, the removal of self-governing attributes from the secular model and the addition of an adherence to a higher calling (alongside scriptural supplementation) are the two largest findings separating the secular EQ-I model from the biblical EI model.

Implications

While the biblical model was created based on the unique perspective and interpretations of eleven pastoral participants, it is expected that an assessment built on the premise of the biblical model would be an accurate portrayal of emotional intelligence capacity. In order for this model to replicate an empirical measurement tool, an EI examination would need to be created and tested for validation and reliability. It would be implied that pastors with high levels of EI would score high on both the EQ-I and the biblical EI assessment. Seeing as how not all secular leaders adhere to Christian principals, the inverse response (secular leaders scoring high on both assessments) is not expected.

Secondly, based on the unique challenges pastoral leaders face and the salient benefits of EI development, it is assumed that an assessment based on the biblical model of EI would enhance pastoral leadership. Here, it is hypothesized that EI implementation of the biblical model would provide similar results as found within secular leaders, bolstering physical and mental health benefits (Adams et al., 2016; Brackett et al., 2011; Kotsou et al., 2019) and increasing life satisfaction (Cartwright & Pappas, 2008; Lowicki & Zajenkowski, 2017). Hopefully, through the integration of EI development, pastoral stress and burnout would diminish, interpersonal relationships among staff members and congregants would be strengthened, emotional processing and regulation would become consistently intentional, and pastoral tenure would be increased alongside church longevity.

Finally, it is implied that pastors with low levels of biblical EI would produce detrimental results within the parsonage. Business leaders with low EI have been associated with high levels of perceived stress (Ruiz, 2014), low levels of conscientiousness and agreeability (Dawda & Hart, 2000), and below average levels of life satisfaction and happiness (Ruiz, 2014). While it is

expected that pastoral leaders would experience similar effects, the consequences for ministry leaders with poorly regulated emotions could produce damaging eternal implications. When discussing why EI should be employed in the church, several pastors mentioned how pastoral leaders with unregulated emotions can offend and cause hurt among congregants and staff members. One pastor specifically noted how individuals who were upset by a pastoral leader were likely to close themselves off to the church, rationalizing decisions to walk away from religion completely.

In conclusion, the literature gap concerning the effects of EI on pastoral leaders leads to several implications concerning the interaction between both variables. It is expected that a biblical EI assessment built on the biblical model would provide positive benefits for ministry leaders. Similarly, it is expected that pastoral leaders would experience similar benefits as secular leaders when exposed to EI interventions. Lastly, if left unattended, the negative outcomes of poor biblical EI are expected to generate severe eternal consequences for individuals who experience hurt from ministry leaders.

Limitations

This study is limited by participant cognition, as familiarity with EI and scripture pertaining to emotional concepts could impact the depth of information shared during interviews. While this study sought to include nation-wide pastoral participants, some participants had a preexisting relationship with the researcher, which could have enhanced positive response bias. Concealing personal perceptions of EI and biblical support during pastoral interviews and soliciting pastoral perspectives independently mitigated this limitation, however participants responding out of perceived favorability was still a possibility. In terms of data collection, qualitative data analysis is considered more subjective than quantitative research methods

(Creswell & Poth, 2018). In an effort to limit objectivity, the only data included in the study included explicit information shared, not referred to, throughout the interview. In terms of inclusionary criteria, this study was limited to the opinions of associate and senior pastors, limiting the inclusion of experiences of religious leaders with other titles. A majority of participants are pastors in the south, which could limit the national and international breadth of the biblical model.

Recommendations for Future Research

This present study connected an emerging area of research, emotional intelligence, with a highly specified population group, pastoral leaders. Research concerning these two topics is vastly limited, which is concerning due to the benefits EI development has shown in the corporate world. Looking forward, there are a number of differing research recommendations that would continue to build on the relationships of these two constructs.

This author recommends that Bible colleges and seminaries include EI-focused curriculum within pastoral degree programs in an attempt to better prepare leaders for the socio-emotional challenges of pastoral leadership. Within these programs, it is recommended that ministry students receive tutelage on emotional constructs. It would also be ideal for pastors to receive ongoing instruction from EI counselors throughout their tenure to bolster their personal health while extending to their families, staff members, and congregations at large.

Secondly, it is recommended that a biblical assessment of EI is created based on the biblical model. This assessment should be self-report, similar to the secular version, and representative of empirically evaluated EI constructs alongside biblical attributes. Once created, this assessment should be provided to several groups of pastoral participants to gage validity and reliability testing. Unlike the secular version, it is recommended that this assessment would do

without comparative norms, as the biblical EI model seeks to evaluate individual behavior alongside biblical standards. Once validated, study replication could attempt to discover if biblical EI interventions affect pastoral leaders in similar manor to secular leaders. Additionally, pastoral and staff wellness, congregant health, staff culture, retention, selection, pastoral longevity, congregant tenure, and ministry burnout could all be evaluated through the biblical EI model EI in an attempt to drive positive results for leaders, staff members, and church members at large.

Finally, future research should advance the conversation concerning pastoral leaders and emotional intelligence, as empirical research on this topic is vastly underrepresented. Due to the relational requirements of the parsonage and the socio-emotional challenges of pastoral leadership, the literature gap between EI and Christian ministry is concerning. Future research could focus on replicating EI interventions within ministry settings to assess if pastoral leaders achieve similar results as secular leaders. EI organizational effects could also be assessed, with an emphasis on understanding church climate, pastoral tenure, and congregant attendance. Ultimately, it is the hope of this present researcher that this study is used as a springboard to support pastoral development through EI development.

Summary

Chapter 5 began with a brief overview of the biblical model of emotional intelligence. The newly created model has 6 overarching themes and 17 subthemes, which was based on pastoral statements of emotional concepts present in scripture. Next, a discussion of the study findings occurred. Here, there were two large deviations between the biblical model and the EQ-I, the removal of self-driven attributes and the adherence to a greater Christian calling. The study implications followed suit, discussing how it was implied that pastors would benefit from EI

development, that the biblical model would be an accurate portrayal of EI capacity, and that pastors with low EI would produce detrimental results within the church body. The study was limited by participant familiarity of emotional concepts, potentially impacted by preexisting participant relationships, and the model may lack the depth of global generalization. Future research should continue exploring the relationship between EI and pastoral leaders, as this particular subgroup of leaders would benefit from intentional emotional development. It was also recommended that Bible schools make EI development a priority during seminary training and that a biblical EI assessment is created based on the biblical EI model.

Overall, creating the biblical model of EI was a preliminary step to addressing the emotional challenges pastors face. Hopefully, an assessment based on biblical principles will not only measure current emotional capacity, but challenge pastoral leaders within scriptural competencies as well. The overarching goal of this dissertation is to stimulate health and wellbeing within pastoral leaders, positively effecting pastoral, ministry staff, and congregant longevity.

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APPENDIX A: EMAIL RECRUITMENT LETTER

Hello [Name],

As a graduate student in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, my dissertation involves research on a biblical model of emotional intelligence, as this construct has never been evaluated through a scriptural lens. The purpose of my research is to evaluate if Christian pastors perceive biblical support for the following five EI competencies: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal relationships, stress management, and decision-making. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study in hopes that a biblical model of emotional intelligence can be achieved through this research.

If interested, I am seeking participants who currently occupying the role of a senior or associate pastor at a Christian church. In addition, participants must be older than 18 and younger than 65 years of age. If the inclusion parameters fit and you are willing to participate, a 15-30 minute interview will be scheduled, where you will be asked five questions concerning your perceptions of scriptural alignment of emotional intelligence competencies. While the interviews will be audio recorded for data analysis, participation in this study will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected, recorded, or reported.

If you would like to participate in this study or if you have questions regarding this research, please contact me directly by phone or email.

Thank you for considering your participation in my study. I am excited to explore emotional intelligence through a pastoral lens with your assistance.

Sincerely,

Brittany Littrell
PhD Candidate in Industrial/Organizational Psychology
Liberty University

APPENDIX B: PHONE RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Hello [Name],

I am a graduate student in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, conducting research on a biblical model of emotional intelligence. The purpose of my research is to evaluate if Christian pastors perceive biblical support or scriptural discord for key emotional intelligence competencies. I am calling to see if you are interested in participating in my study, in hopes that this research can generate a biblical model of emotional intelligence.

If interested, I am seeking participants who currently occupying the role of a senior or associate pastor at a Christian church. In addition, participants must be older than 18 and younger than 65 years of age. If the inclusion parameters fit and you are willing to participate, a 15-30 minute interview will be scheduled, where you will be asked five questions concerning your perceptions of scriptural alignment of emotional intelligence competencies. While the interviews will be audio recorded for data analysis, participation in this study will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected, recorded, or reported.

Please let me know if you would like to participate or if you have any questions I can address. I can be reached by phone or by email.

Thank you for considering your participation in my study. I am excited to explore emotional intelligence through a pastoral lens with your assistance.

Best Regards,
--Brittany Littrell

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Participant Consent Form

Title of the Project: A Biblical Model of Emotional Intelligence

Principal Investigator: Brittany Littrell, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must currently hold a senior or associate leadership position within a Christian church. In addition, participants must be older than 18, and younger than 65. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The objective of this study is to determine if Christian pastors perceive biblical alignment between scripture and key components of Emotional Intelligence (EI). While EI has been determined as essential for secular leaders, the biblical composition of the construct has yet to be examined. Seeing as how pastoral leaders possess both sacred and secular leadership responsibilities, if the EI fails to provide biblical support, this tool may be insufficient for ministry leaders. Therefore, the aim of this study is to (a) evaluate if Christian pastors perceive biblical alignment for key EI competencies, and (b) if misalignment occurs, create a biblical model of EI that addresses the unique socio-emotional challenges of ministry.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

1. Participate in a 15-20 minute interview where you will be asked four questions pertaining to scriptural alignment or misalignment with key EI competencies. Specifically, you will be asked if you perceive the Bible as supportive or incongruent with the five EI factors of: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal, stress management, and decision making. Additionally, you will be asked if there are any additional biblical principles that help with emotional processing and how useful you would determine EI development for your role as a pastor.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

The direct benefits participants can expect to receive from taking part in this study are an increased awareness of their biblical grounding of emotional processing and driven behavior. Furthermore, subjects will be participating in ground-breaking research that could create a novel model of EI applicable for Christian leaders.

While the application of EI is vastly underrepresented within Christian institutions and pastoral research, this study will contribute to an under-studied field requiring the attention and dedication of present researchers. On a grand scale, the employment of a biblical EI model for pastoral leaders could significantly reduce the emotional factors contributing toward pastoral departure, increasing pastoral tenure, and positively impacting global Christian church growth.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life. Emotional risks could pose a minimal concern for participants who perceive significant disagreement between emotional constructs and scripture or if participants experience distress while recalling the emotional challenges associated with their current position.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify subjects. All data or information that could identify you will be removed prior to data storage, as the data collected may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. Here is what you can expect concerning subject anonymity:

- Participant responses will be kept anonymous through the use of assigned numerical codes. All personal and identifying information will be removed from the database, making personal detection highly unlikely. Interviews will be conducted on a secure video-conferencing platform or in a private location of your choosing, where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer within the researchers home. The data collected may be used in future studies and presentations. If participants choose to withdrawal from the study, their data will be removed from the hard-drive and deleted permanently. All data will be permanently deleted after five years.
- Interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for five years and then permanently deleted. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings. Transcripts may be used in future studies and presentations, however all personal identifiers will be removed.
- Privacy is a large component of this study, as pastors hold uniquely visible leadership positions. There is a minimal risk of stolen data, however under the current security measures, this outcome is highly unlikely. Furthermore, seeing as how all data will not include personal identifiers, it is unlikely that an outside individual will be able to deduce the origination of interview responses

What are the costs to you to be part of the study?

To participate in the research, you will need to meet the inclusionary criteria previously mentioned, be willing to participate in an in-person meeting or have a working computer with video-teleconferencing ability (the platform that will be used is Zoom). Time to complete the interview will range from 15-30 minutes.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the researcher or Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

How to Withdraw from the Study:

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please inform the researcher that you wish to discontinue your participation, and do not submit your consent form.

If you choose to withdraw from the study after you have completed and submitted the assessment materials, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

Brittany Littrell is conducting this research study. If you have any questions, please contact her. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Rachel Piferi.

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

During the interview, the researcher has my permission to audio-record our session as part of my participation in this study (required to participate).

Printed Subject Name

Date of Signature

APPENDIX D: THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

The interview questions found within this interview guide mirror the four research questions. Each question is semi-structured and open-ended, allowing participants the opportunity to elaborate on their comprehension of the topics addressed. If sufficient data is not received after the initial question is asked, the probing questions allow the researcher the opportunity to consistently probe participants and solicit a more detailed response. Each interview should last approximately 15-30 minutes.

Interview Questions:

1. *As you are aware, this study is attempting to understand if emotional intelligence is supported scripturally. We're going to begin by discussing five common EI factors and examining their presence in scripture:*
 - a. *Let's start with self-perception. This factor is defined as how you view yourself and it includes understanding and accepting one's strengths and weaknesses, the willingness to try and improve oneself, and recognizing personal emotions. In your opinion, does The Bible provide support for self-perception? Can you explain?*
 - b. *The second factor is self-expression, is defined as how you express yourself. This concept includes emotional expression, assertiveness, and independence. In your opinion, does The Bible address how individuals should express themselves? Can you explain?*
 - c. *The third factor is interpersonal. This factor details how you relate to others and includes relationships with others, empathy, and social*

- responsibility. In your opinion, does The Bible address how to relate to others? In what ways?*
- d. *The fourth factor, decision making, includes how an individual chooses between alternatives. This concept includes problem solving, reality testing, and impulse control. In your opinion, does The Bible provide support on how to make decisions? In what ways?*
- e. *The final factor, stress management, is defined as how individuals deal with increasing workloads. This concept includes flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. In your opinion, does The Bible provide support on how to deal with stress? In what ways?*
2. *This next section is going to examine the same five EI factors for areas of biblical disagreement. EI models generally assess for the presence of the following factors however, their presence may not be supported through scripture:*
- a. *According to your perspective, does The Bible disagree with the concept of self-perception? This concept is defined as how one see's themselves, and includes recognizing and understanding one's own emotions, the willingness to improve oneself, and understanding and accepting one's strengths and weaknesses. If yes, how so?*
- b. *Does The Bible disagree with the concept of self-expression? This concept is defined as how one expresses themselves, and includes emotional expression, assertiveness, and independence. If yes, how so?*

- c. *Does scripture disagree with the concept of interpersonal relationships? This concept includes relationships with others, providing empathy, and engaging in social responsibility. If yes, how so?*
 - d. *Does scripture disagree with the concept of decision making? This concept includes problem solving, reality testing, and impulse control. If yes, how so?*
 - e. *Lastly, does The Bible disagree with the concept of stress management? This concept involves flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism. If yes, how so?*
3. *This next section evaluates any areas that are missing from secular EI models. In your pastoral opinion, are there any additional biblical principles that aid with emotional processing that are not included in the five-factor EQ-I model?*
- a. *Probing Assistance: Researcher can review the concept of emotional processing by giving participants the following definition of EI:*
 - i. *Emotional Intelligence (EI) is “...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” (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, p. 433). EI encompasses an individual’s ability to recognize emotional experiences within themselves and others, managing their experiences to enhance personal processing and maximize external behavior.*
4. *In the final section of our interview, I would like to know how would you describe the usefulness of EI development for pastoral leaders?*

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW INFORMATION

Hello [Name],

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. Prior to our interview, I wanted to send you a brief overview of the questions we will be discussing. As disclosed, this study will evaluate if key components of an emotional intelligence model are biblically based. The five key components we will be discussing are detailed below:

- Self-Perception: how individuals view themselves. This concept includes respecting and accepting oneself, understanding and accepting one's strengths and weaknesses, and awareness of personal emotions.
- Self-Actualization: how individuals express themselves. This concept includes emotional expression, assertiveness, and independence.
- Interpersonal: how individuals relate to others. This concept includes building relationships with others, demonstrating empathy, and social responsibility.
- Decision Making: how individuals choose between alternatives. This concept includes problem solving, evaluating differing options, and controlling impulses.
- Stress Management: how individuals deal with increasing workloads. This concept includes flexibility, stress tolerance, and optimism.

During our brief time together, I will be asking you if according to your perspective as a Christian pastor, if you believe there is biblical support or a lack of biblical support for the five emotional components mentioned above. I wanted to ensure you were familiar with the five emotional intelligence concepts prior to our interview, so you could engage in any preparations you felt necessary.

Thank you again for lending your expertise to this project! I am excited to partner with you as we explore the components required for a biblical model of emotional intelligence.

Blessings,

Brittany Littrell