LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
JOHN W. RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY


EXPERIENCED PASTORAL BURNOUT AND THE SELF-REPORTED ROLE OF

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

DURING BURNOUT


A Dissertation in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Craig W. Folds


Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2022

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**ABSTRACT**

Emotional intelligence (EI), employee burnout, and effective leadership traits are constructs that have been researched from a traditional, organizational perspective since the 1970s. Over the past 15 years, pastoral leaders and clergy have been identified as leaders working in the same capacity as public safety officials, medical professionals, mental health specialists, and other helping professions. Research suggests that leaders working in helping professions are often exposed to situations that may induce burnout, create emotional dissonance, and may have adverse implications on effective leadership behaviors during experienced burnout. The significance of this study lies in its identification of a gap in the literature that investigates the self-reported causations of pastoral burnout and the roles of self-reported emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during burnout. Therefore, this phenomenological study explores the self-reported factors that contribute to levels of pastoral burnout and the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout among 12 senior-level pastors who lead in non-denominational churches with 50-500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The study was conducted using a phenomenological qualitative research design. The participants were interviewed face-to-face. The interviews were uploaded into the NVivo data analysis program where the participants' statements were transcribed to identify themes and patterns that satisfied theoretical saturation. The constructs of this study were founded on theological and theoretical frameworks that supported the research and interview questions that guided this study.

Keywords: *Burnout, emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, self-efficacy, self-awareness, clergy*

## Dedication

This study is dedicated to my grandfather, Robert L. Osborne. He was a veteran of the Korean Conflict and a pastor for 32 years. My grandfather showed me how to love through hurt, laugh through the pain, and to live every day in the admiration of God with purpose and excellence. Rest in peace, Poppy. To my mother, Leigh O. Folds. My mother taught me the power of prayer, being resilient through trials, and how to love unconditionally. My mother was my greatest fan and encouraged me to be the best I can be in any situation. Finally, to my father, Ferrell Smith. My father spent 38 years in law enforcement. He was also a man of God and served with vigorous passion. My father passed away May 2022, and my mother passed away in October 2020. May you both rest in peace. Thank you for loving me and teaching me how to be the person I am today.

## Acknowledgments

To Jamie

My loving wife. She has been my better half for over half of my life now, and she is my inspiration. She has encouraged me every step of this journey, provided me with three amazing children, and has made me a better man by being in my life. She is the best part of myself and encourages me to grow in Christ daily. I appreciate her sacrifice and encouragement through this process.

To Tanner, Brooke, and Julia

Thank you to my three children who inspire me to be the best daddy, friend, and spiritual leader that I can be. They have taught me what unconditional love is and how to see the world through the innocence of a child-like lens. I appreciate their support, love, and understanding while I have been on this journey.

To Leigh Folds

My mother passed away October 10, 2020. My mother taught me the power of prayer, faith, and resilience. Thank you, mom, for challenging me never to give up, showing me how to serve others, and providing me with a strong spiritual foundation. I will never forget you, and I know you are very proud of me. I miss you and love you.

To Dr. Bredfeldt and Dr. Hege

Thank you for your countless hours of prayer, encouragement, and direction. You both have been a blessing to me and a huge inspiration. I am thankful God placed you in my journey.

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**List of Abbreviations**

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Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Phenomenological Qualitative Research Design (PQRD)

## CHAPTER ONE: RESEARCH CONCERN

## Introduction

Being a senior pastor can be one of the most rewarding roles and offices one may fill in God's Kingdom. The office of a pastor serves a vital role in the body of Christ, equipping believers for service so the body of Christ may be elevated (Ephesians 4:11-12). Pastors fill many functions outside of preaching the Gospel. Pastors may fulfill needs, such as visiting the sick, counseling with individuals and families, leading ministry team members, providing spiritual direction, and using biblical authority to build excitement within a ministerial context (McGarity, 2016).

Although being a pastor has many rewards, pastors also face many challenges in their professional and personal lives. Balancing the needs of congregants, subordinate leaders, and family lives can create stressful situations. For example, pastors do not typically have a Monday through Friday job with office hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pastors often answer phone calls, text messages, and other communications when they are away from their physical church office. Pastors are expected to be available to people in times of distress, moments of rejoicing, and through life events such as weddings, funerals, and dedications. These types of interaction can intrude upon a pastor's relationship with his or her own family members such as spouses and children (Adams et al., 2017).

The stress caused by balancing various dynamics of a pastorate, and that of a pastor's personal life, can create feelings of being overwhelmed that eventually lead to burnout (McGarity, 2016). Pastors often counsel congregants as well as others outside of his or her ministry that seek advice for challenges they face. People often present many life difficulties to pastors that may be emotionally charged. Pastors can become emotionally, and even

psychologically, overwhelmed when they are continuously involved with others' emotionally charged issues. McGarity (2016) stated that pastors may experience withdrawal and emotional dissonance as defense mechanisms to combat fatigue and burnout. Dealing with emotionally charged issues may also induce vicarious emotional trauma if a pastor does not take appropriate actions to cope with emotions created through his interactions with others (Krotz, 2019). The stress of consistent emotionally charged situations may create burnout, which, consequently, usually influences a pastor's leadership effectiveness (McGarity, 2016).

Humans are created with emotions that elicit responses. For example, Jesus exhibited sadness as he wept at the tomb of Lazarus, wept over the city of Jerusalem, and was moved with compassion when he fed the 5,000 (Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 19:41-44; John 11:35). Followers of Christ are likewise encouraged to take on one another's burdens, rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep (Romans 12:9-17). These types of emotional engagement can have a great impact on pastors as they daily support the many needs of their congregants. Scott and Lovell (2015) argued that pastors who experience high levels of emotional stress are more likely to experience burnout and exhibit ineffective leadership behaviors.

Therefore, the concern for this research may be found within the question, "*What experiences create dynamics of pastoral burnout among senior-level pastors leading non-denominational churches consisting of 50-500 congregants located in the South-eastern region of the United States, and what role does emotional intelligence (EI) have on a pastor's leadership effectiveness while experiencing burnout*"? The question above was relevant to a gap in literature that has not addressed the dynamics of burnout causation and the role of emotional intelligence among the demographic group mentioned above.

**Background to the Problem**

Burnout is a term coined by Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 (Adams et al., 2017). Freudenberger studied the behaviors different employees exhibited in response to intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influenced their motivation, morale, efficacy, self-esteem, and overall job performance (Jimenez et al., 2017). Although Freudenberg's research was initially conducted in a secular job setting, studies conducted over the past ten years suggest that clergy members also experience burnout due to intrinsic and extrinsic stressors (Scott & Lovell, 2015). Pastors are faced with physical, emotional, and spiritual demands found within the duties of their office that may induce psychological, emotional, and physical fatigue.

McGarity (2016) concluded that some pastors experience emotional and psychological fatigue because of the ever-growing use of social media platforms and technology. The use of social media and technologies such as Instagram, Snap Chat, Facebook, and Twitter can create a church's belief that its pastors should be accessible on a 24-hour basis. Before applications such as those listed above, pastors were not accessible to congregants to the extent that they are currently. The demand for pastors to be readily available through such media may create emotional, psychological, and physical fatigue among those pastors, contributing to burnout. This burnout may cause pastors to distance themselves because of their inability to care for themselves otherwise (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2016).

Pastors may also experience burnout in response to vicarious trauma (Krotz, 2019). Vicarious trauma results from individuals taking intrinsic ownership of the hardships others experience (Krotz, 2019). Pastors fill many roles, such as spiritual advisor, counselor, mentor, teacher, and preacher; in these roles, pastoral leaders may experience emotional transference as they collaborate with others through life's challenges (Krotz, 2019). Vicarious trauma may create

feelings of loneliness, helplessness, and negative emotional effect among pastors, thus inducing burnout. Researchers believe that these dynamics impact a pastor's leadership effectiveness if proper self-care and coping mechanisms are not in place to support healthy emotional and spiritual well-being (Krotz, 2019; McClanahan, 2018).

## Statement of the Problem

Burnout is not limited to the factors discussed above. Burnout can occur because of several other circumstances as well, often unique to individuals. These factors include their ability to cope with environmental structures, to identify emotional challenges, to balance work/life issues, to exhibit high self-awareness and self-efficacy, and their ability to maintain healthy spiritual discipline and self-care (Krotz, 2019; McClanahan; McGarity, 2016). Although researchers such as those listed above claim to have studied burnout among clergy members, Krotz (2019) suggests burnout causes, in the context of specific churches or denominations, have not been well researched. Possibly, additional research is needed on the role that emotional intelligence plays during the experience of burnout. Specifically, research is needed that examines the potential relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness during elevated burnout among senior or solo pastors.

According to Ward (2012), traditional organizational leadership has been studied through the lens of business theories and leadership trends. However, over the past 15 years, clergy leaders, pastors, and their well-being have been considered through a traditional organizational leadership and theological lens that addresses sacred texts, social interactions, leadership behaviors, and spiritual support (Krotz, 2019; Ward, 2012). This study addresses both theological and empirical frameworks. It will address the biblical aspects of the office of a pastor, the relationship between spiritual discipline and emotional well-being, effective

leadership practices, and effective leadership dynamics. A lack of research remains that investigates the role of a pastor's self-proclaimed emotional intelligence and his burnout as it applies to effective leadership behaviors among senior or solo pastors in non-denominational churches.

## Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to better understand the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. Over the past 20 years, researchers have looked at clergy burnout causations and the influence of emotional intelligence upon leadership effectiveness; however, to this researcher's knowledge, there is no study that explores the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout as they apply to pastoral leadership effectiveness. The general problem of this study is that burnout is a significant concern. Still, no research identifies a relationship between the role of emotional intelligence and burnout as applied to pastoral leadership effectiveness.

Burnout is generally defined as, "A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment that comes from a prolonged exposure to stress" (Fee, 2018, p. 13; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Emotional intelligence is generally defined as one's ability to recognize his or her self-awareness, self-efficacy, levels of empathy, interpersonal relationships, and motivation (Killian, 2012).

The theory that guided this study is Freudenberger's (1974) burnout theory and Maslach and Jackson's (1981) theory of emotional intelligence. Freudenberger's (1974) burnout theory

suggests that workers in constant contact with others in a social services job-related field may experience burnout because of self-depletion. Maslach and Jackson's (1981) emotional intelligence theory led to the creation of the Self-reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), which enables the test taker to evaluate his or her own self and emotional awareness. These two theories are connected to the research because pastoral leaders may experience burnout due to self-depletion; however, pastoral leaders that exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit effective leadership behaviors and self-efficacy during burnout (Scott & Lovell, 2015). With a lack of research exploring the relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence, this researcher sought to understand how emotional intelligence influences effective leadership behaviors during burnout among senior/solo pastors.

## Research Questions

The following Research Questions guided this study:

**RQ 1.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive burnout effecting their own overall well-being?

**RQ 2.** What factors contribute to senior pastors' level of burnout, specifically those pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 3.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their interpersonal relationships with subordinate leaders?

**RQ 4.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their self-esteem?

**RQ 5.** What role does emotional intelligence play on senior pastors' leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 6.** To what degree, if any, is the size of the church a differentiating variable in the responses of the participants in this study?

**Research Assumptions and Delimitations**

**Research Assumptions**

In any qualitative study, the assumptions of the study are established regarding the researcher's beliefs about the study (Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell (2018), the researcher is obligated to define personal assumptions. The following explanation of assumptions will enable the reader to evaluate the quality of this study.

This researcher assumed that participants were truthful in their descriptions of their current or past experiences of burnout. The participants recollection of experienced burnout is assumed to be founded on their memory and self-awareness of their experienced burnout, and it was assumed the implications of their experiences provided an explanation of the impact burnout had on their emotional well-being and leadership effectiveness. While there was not a specified time delimitation on the participants experience of burnout and the interviews, the participants suggested they experience some form of burnout in their daily pastoral functions.

Burnout does not label participants with a stigma; therefore, this researcher assumed the participants accurately described the causation of their burnout experiences, honestly discussed their emotional well-being, and truthfully described the impacts of burnout on their leadership effectiveness. This researcher also assumed that each of the pastors interviewed accurately described their understanding of burnout and their emotional experiences during burnout. It was also assumed that the interview process and protocol were appropriate for gathering valid and reliable data. The inclusion of the burnout theory and the emotional intelligence theory provided theoretical support for the research while the construct of servant leadership offered theological and theoretical support. This researcher assumed the servant leadership theory is the most fitting theoretical leadership framework due to the empirical information that is found throughout this

body that suggests members of helping professions such as clergy members, medical staff, and public safety officials display high levels of servant leadership behaviors (Adams et al., 2017). Although this researcher has assumed pastoral leaders may display servant leadership traits, it should be noted this author did not assume every pastoral leader in the study displayed servant leadership traits or behaviors. These theories provided a greater understanding of the spiritual and natural development of pastors as leaders and illustrated the participants' understanding of their own emotional intelligence.

**Delimitations of the Research Design**

The challenge of attempting to research emotional intelligence, pastoral leadership effectiveness, and burnout was narrow to purposive sample of pastoral participants. Because these three dynamics have multiple components that could steer the research in directions not applicable to this study, delimitations were established. Although this study could not address emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, and burnout among pastoral leaders outside of the delimitations, this study may advance understanding of the self-proclaimed role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout among pastoral leaders in non-denominational churches with 50-500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States.

The delimitations of this study enabled this researcher to understand the roles and influences of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout. The delimitation pertaining to the participant's congregation size also provided a better understanding of the level(s) of burnout, if any, experienced by the participants. The delimitations were not established as exclusionary boundaries but as an intentional means used to guide the focus within the scope of a phenomenological study. The following delimitations

were used to guide the study:

1. This study was not extended to pastoral leaders that are currently licensed with a religious organization or denomination such as the Southern Baptist Convention, the Church of God in Christ, the Church of Christ, the Church of Latter-Day Saints, and/or other religious entities that are established as within a national or regional collaborative religious organization.

2. This paper did not expend energy validating the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) or SSEIT as both assessment tools stand on their own merits based on past and current research wherein these assessments have been successfully utilized.

3. This study was guided by specific theories, such as servant leadership and burnout theories. Although there is no assumption that all pastoral leaders exhibit servant leadership traits, the servant leadership theory was discussed to provide biblical and natural revelation of servant leadership dynamics that may enhance positive leadership behaviors and provide causations and/or implications of burnout that influence leadership effectiveness. The emotional intelligence theory will be introduced to support the participants' self-proclaimed perception of the role of emotional intelligence on the participants' leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout.

4. Because this study is a qualitative study, this researcher gathered data from the participants' firsthand perceptions and experiences. The data collected was interpreted by using the NVivo qualitative software. The data was not used to validate or reject theoretical frameworks. Therefore, the research method was delimited to a qualitative research methodology.

5. The research was delimited 12 to senior-level pastors leading congregations of 50-500 congregants without limitations on gender, race, or cultural variance.

6. The study was delimited to 12 pastoral leaders that are independent or non-denominational in theological practice and fit the criteria of a participant who exhibits emotional intelligence and have experienced or is experiencing burnout.

7. The area of concentrated focus for this study was on the causation and/or influence of burnout on pastoral leadership effectiveness, as well as the role of emotional intelligence, if any, on leadership effectiveness during burnout. The logic of this delimitation will be explained in the Methodological Design section.

**Definition of Terms**

1. *Burnout:* A syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment that comes from a prolonged exposure to stress (Fee, 2018; Freudenberger, 1974).

2. *Clergy:* The professional body of pastors, ministers, or cleric members who lead local churches and congregations. The terms "clergy," "pastor," and "minister" have been used interchangeably throughout the course of this document. They are not specific to gender and will refer to both males and females (Fee, 2018, p. 25; Sparks & Livingstone, 2013).

3. *Congregants:* The group of individuals associated with a local assembly of the church (Fee, 2018, p. 25; Sparks & Livingstone, 2013).

4. *Emotional Intelligence (EI):* EI is the ability of individuals to understand their own emotions and those of others, cultivating their understanding of the emotions and improving their awareness and efficacy (Duncan, 2018). Emotional intelligence is founded upon four dynamics: the ability to perceive emotions, to understand emotions, to facilitate emotions, and to manage emotions, which enhances self-awareness, self-efficacy, and self- motivation (Duncan, 2018).

5. *Leadership:* Leadership is the process in which an individual or group of individuals influence others to accomplish a shared goal (Duncan, 2018, p. 12; Northouse, 2016; Yukl, 2013).

6. *Ministry:* The work performed, duties fulfilled, or roles taken that clergy carry out in the context of local church leadership (Fee, 2018, p. 25; Sparks & Livingstone, 2013).

7. *Senior pastor:* A pastoral leader with subordinate ministerial leaders under his or her leadership and has no other pastoral leader above their own position. A senior pastor is responsible for the totality of effective ministry and organizational functionality.

8. *Self-awareness:* The ability for one to recognize her own emotions and their effects upon others, and the ability for one to know her internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions (Sullivan, 2017).

9. *Self-efficacy:* The definition of self-efficacy for the current study utilizes Bandura's definition—the belief in one's personal ability to complete a task necessary to produce a specific performance and the belief in one's capabilities (Bandura, 1997a). Essentially, self-efficacy is having the can-do spirit and belief in one's abilities to accomplish a given task (Johnson, 2017, p. 8).

10. *Self-esteem:* The feeling of self-value and worth; it is the perception of personal value to the world and the perception of worth to the local community and social groups (Mbuva, 2016).

11. *Southeast:* Southeast is the region of the United States consisting of the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

12. *Solo pastor:* A pastor that has no subordinate ministerial leaders in the church other than himself. A solo pastor is responsible for leading and managing every aspect of ministry within his congregation.

13. *Well-being:* Well-being relates to the intrinsic and extrinsic health of an individual. Well-being is founded upon the spiritual, cognitive/psychological (emotional), and physical health of an individual. Spiritual and cognitive/psychological health relates to intrinsic well-being, and physical health relates to extrinsic well-being. These dynamics influence personal state of wellness depending upon depletion or positive reserves of spiritual, cognitive/psychological (emotional), and physical health (Fisher, 2011).

## Significance of the Study

Emotional intelligence and burnout have been researched over the past years in both secular and religious organizations in the context of leadership effectiveness; however, to this researcher's knowledge, there are no studies that discover the first-hand experiences of pastors' individual burnout and the role of their emotional intelligence during burnout that influenced their ability to lead others effectively. The element of emotional intelligence is significant to this study as research suggests leaders that exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to combat burnout successfully due to the leader's ability to exhibit high emotional awareness, self-efficacy, self-awareness, and intrinsic motivation (Duncan, 2018; McClanahan, 2018).

Although Freudenberger's burnout theory initially explained burnout in a secular job setting, research suggests pastoral leaders experience similar burnout because of the emotional, physical, and spiritual demands associated with the role of a pastor (Adams et al., 2017). Previous studies have evaluated the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership as well as the impact of burnout and effective leadership among clergy members; however, the significance of this study is found in the information obtained through firsthand accounts of the participant's burnout and the implications of burnout upon his emotional well-being. These variables directly impact leadership effectiveness; therefore, the significance of the research is its contribution to our understanding of how emotional intelligence influences

leadership effectiveness among the participants during experienced burnout (Fee, 2018; McClanahan, 2018).

This study adds to the body of empirical literature and provides information for future studies examining emotional intelligence, burnout levels, and leadership effectiveness. This researcher believes this study describes categorical information concerning burnout, the role of emotional intelligence, and leadership effectiveness due to the amount of diversity among the pastors that participated. The ability to categorize pastoral participants contributes to the body of literature by providing firsthand accounts of factors that cause burnout that are exclusive to the participants' perceptions.

The study's significance is found in the firsthand accounts of each participant's emotional status during burnout and the implications of his emotional status on his leadership effectiveness. Data gathered from this information was used to provide participants and other pastoral leaders with information that may create greater awareness around this issue, enabling pastors to combat burnout and to improve leadership practices during times of burnout.

**Summary of Design**

According to Creswell (2018), "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). Leedy and Ormrod (2018) assert that a major dynamic in qualitative research is that data is collected through real-world experiences in an effort to explain those experiences through new and existing human concepts. This collection might include conducting human observations and personal interviews, collecting historical artifacts, researching various cultures to understand cultural phenomena, and conducting longitudinal studies to understand human dynamics of cause and effect pertaining to a specific topic or interest.

According to Creswell (2018), selecting the correct research methodology is vital to the validity and reliability of a research topic. This study was guided using a phenomenological qualitative research design. According to Creswell (2018), a phenomenological qualitative research design (PQRD) is centered around psychological and philosophical dynamics of interest. PQRD enables a researcher to study the gathered data that projects a phenomenon through the lived experiences of study participants (McGregor, 2018; Creswell, 2018). The goal of a PQRD is to study several participants who share the same experience of a phenomenon in hopes of understanding the themes, patterns, causes, and consequences of a phenomenon among the participants (Creswell, 2018).

The PQRD is significant for this study because it enabled this researcher to gain firsthand perceptions and testimonies from participants regarding their understanding and possession of EI and identified causations of pastoral burnout. The PQRD provided better understanding of what, if any, role EI has on the participants' leadership effectiveness during burnout. As with most qualitative methodologies, a PQRD enabled this researcher to gather information through interviews, observations, historical documents, and other needed artifacts (McGregor, 2018). This author concluded that a PQRD is the most appropriate research design for the topic because of the subjective participant testimonies that enabled the researcher to understand the phenomenon of the topic "The Self-Reported Role of Emotional Intelligence on Pastoral Leadership Effectiveness During Burnout."

**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

**Overview**

The topic of "burnout" has been studied among leaders in various organizations since the 1970s. Herbert Freudenberger (1974) first coined the term "burnout." Burnout refers to the depletion of self-care. It creates social withdrawal and elicits feelings of depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, and emotional dissonance (Freudenberger, 1974). The phenomenon of burnout is usually attributed to job-related stresses such as job fatigue, job dissatisfaction, over-working in a job function, and leadership in-effectiveness, among many others (Prilipko, Beauford, & Antelo, 2019; Scott & Lovell, 2015; Freudenberger, 1974). According to Scott and Lovell (2015), burnout has a direct impact on leadership effectiveness as burnout influences a leader's ability to cope with the demands of the job as well as the ability to create and maintain positive relationships with subordinates during burnout. Pollak (2017) suggested that leaders who possess high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to combat burnout successfully because of their ability to recognize the influence of burnout on their emotional states and those of others. Scott and Lovell (2015) concluded that pastors who exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence are likely to develop meaningful relationships with followers, display authentic leadership behaviors, build trust and rapport with followers, and practice sound spiritual discipline. These leadership dynamics are believed to influence pastoral leadership effectiveness.

The implications of burnout on leadership effectiveness may also be observed through a theological lens within examples provided by Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Jesus, Moses, and Elijah experienced burnout because of the demands found within the high calling of their ministries (Little, 2020). The dynamics of emotional intelligence may also be found in scriptural examples provided by Jesus and Paul. Jesus and Paul recognized their own emotions and those of others

during their time of ministry and moments of distress. The following sections will provide

empirical and theological frameworks with examples of leadership effectiveness using the

servant leadership style. The next section also describes and analyzes the burnout theory and

emotional intelligence theory. Finally, the relationships between burnout, emotional intelligence,

and effective leadership behaviors will be discussed.

## Theological Framework

But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Matthew 20:26-27).

The purpose of this theological framework is to provide a biblical perspective and a

researched, relevant foundation for this study. The researcher's goal is to create a complete,

robust, and concise biblical review of literature that supports his research. The literature provided

in this section will be used to analyze and discuss works that highlight essential biblical

examples and principles related to this dissertation's research.

According to Beck (2012), theology is defined as the study of God. Furthermore, "the

word 'theology' comes from '*theos'* meaning God and *'logos'* meaning rational expression"

(Beck, 2012, p. 32; Ryrie, 1999, p. 13). Beck (2012) concluded that Christian theology is a

rational interpretation of the Christian faith. Therefore, a theological framework is a vital part of

this study. Since servant leadership is attributed to the leadership exemplified by Jesus Christ, we

can also postulate that historical biblical leaders experienced burnout just as modern leaders

experience burnout; the Bible provides scriptural examples of leaders' behavior during

emotionally charged situations. This theological section of the study consists of four subsections.

The first subsection highlights examples of burnout within Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. The second

subsection discusses emotional intelligence exhibited by Jesus and Paul. The third subsection

identifies servant leadership behaviors exhibited by Jesus Christ. The fourth subsection addresses servant leadership traits exhibited by the Apostle Paul. Finally, the summary will identify the biblical relationship between effective leadership behaviors and emotional well-being during burnout found in the examples of Jesus and the Apostle Paul. Each of these examples will contribute to the framework of the study of modern pastoral leaders.

**Burnout in the Bible**

The term "burnout" was first coined by Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 (Adams et al., 2017). Freudenberger defined burnout as a syndrome of depersonalization, emotional fatigue, and sense of personal failure resulting from extended periods of stress (Fee, 2018; Freudenberger, 1974). The consequences of job-related burnout are often substantial, and leaders who experience burnout are likely to withdraw from others, exhibit signs of depression, display a reduction in successful job performance, grow depersonalized, exhibit job dissatisfaction, and present signs of diminished emotional and physical well-being (Adams et al., 2017). Previous studies concerning the causation of burnout among clergy members suggest burnout occurs because of the never-ending demand for clergy services from those that utilize clergy services (Adams et al., 2017).

The Bible provides examples of burnout among various leaders. Although multiple leaders experienced burnout in the Bible, this section will discuss the phenomenon of burnout experienced by Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. Based on Freudenberger's definition of burnout, Jesus, Moses, and Elijah clearly experienced burnout due to the stress and demands of their ministry and leadership roles. The following discussion will highlight burnout causation and emotional response to burnout by Jesus, Moses, and Elijah.

***Jesus and Burnout***

Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, 1 Tim. 3:16). If Jesus is God manifest in the flesh, and Jesus was sent to the world as a sacrificial lamb for the atonement of sin, then, one may conclude the nature of God's love towards humanity is displayed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ so that believers may have a natural and eternal life with God (Is. 53:1-12; John 1:29, 36; John 1:1-5; John 3:16; John 10:10). Although Jesus understood His mission was to bring salvation and everlasting life to the lost, there was also a great amount of emotional, spiritual, and physical stress placed on Jesus during His ministry (Little, 2020).

In Matthew 28:11, Jesus showed Himself as a compassionate savior who will give rest to all who come to Him. According to Little (2020), the commission for all to come unto Jesus suggests that Jesus invites every person to confess with their mouths that Jesus is the Lord and to believe in their hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead so that salvation is obtained (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Rom. 10:9). Matthew 28:11 illustrated a moment wherein Jesus spoke to people concerning the choice to find refuge in Him when they feel overwhelmed in their carnal, emotional states, spiritual states, and in life (Little, 2020). The weight of carrying every person's burden, sin, and trajectory of eternal life have implications that only Jesus, being God in the flesh, could maintain (Little, 2020). Although God placed Himself on earth as the way, the truth, and the life, the nature of emotional fatigue, physical stress, and spiritual depletion that Jesus experienced during His incarnation is also displayed in scripture.

Jesus's experience with job-related stress in the business of the Kingdom may be indicative that Jesus experienced some level of burnout. According to Chandler (2009) and

Freudenberger (1974), burnout is defined as an employee's job-related fatigue, which can influence one's productivity and performance; furthermore, burnout is responsible for emotional, physical, psychological, and social depletion resulting from job-related fatigue. Individuals experiencing burnout usually display signs of social withdrawal, emotional exhaustion, and loss of performance (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018).

One example of Jesus's burnout experience is found in Mark 6:31 as Jesus goes into the desert to remove Himself from the crowds of people and to rest in the Spirit. According to Frederick, Dunbar, and Thai (2018), social withdrawal is not only a beginning sign of burnout but is also a preventative measure that leaders may practice as a means of combatting burnout. Jesus' removal represented an example of social withdrawal due to over-exertion; however, the withdrawal also seemed to provide Jesus with a healthy restoration of emotional boundaries and restoration. Although Jesus withdrew from others, He was later moved with compassion to feed the 5,000 with bread and fish (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Mark 6:34-54). Another example of burnout that Jesus experienced may be found in the Garden of Gethsemane. In Luke 22:41-44, Jesus enters the Garden of Gethsemane to pray alone, withdrawing from others. While praying, Jesus is emotionally distressed to the point that His sweat manifests as great drops of blood (v. 44). An angel ministers to Jesus and helps Him regain strength (v. 44). These two examples illustrate experiences of burnout based upon the dynamics of physical and emotional strain. In both cases, Jesus withdraws from others and from the stress of His job assignment before completing the works of death, burial, and resurrection.

*Moses and Burnout*

Another example of burnout is found in Moses's biography in the Old Testament. According to Robinson (2018), Moses experienced burnout due to his inexperience leading

others, his inability to share leadership roles with others, and his attempt to judge all the people by himself. These factors created job-related frustration that led Moses into moments of rage, withdrawal, and produced emotional depletion (Robinson, 2018).

In Exodus 18:1-27, the priest of Midian, known as Jethro (Moses's father-in-law), visited Moses because of leadership issues against which Moses struggled. Moses had become self-centered in his perception of his own ability to lead and his belief that he was the only one that could lead the people as God desired (Robinson, 2018; *King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Exodus 13-16). Moses experienced emotional frustration as he felt isolated and alone due to the role(s) of his office (Robinson, 2018). Jethro explained to his son-in-law that it was not good for Moses to judge alone, and Jethro instructed Moses to select abled men to assist him in his leadership roles, lest Moses's experience burnout (Robinson, 2018; Ex. 18:19-27). This conversation is another example of Moses's overexertion. Jethro instructed Moses to select influential leaders instead, those who would follow Moses and take some of the stress from Moses in his leadership capacity (Robinson, 2018).

Another example of burnout displayed by Moses is found in Moses's social withdrawal in response to his disdain for the children of Israel and their immorality with idols, sex, and lack of faith in the wilderness. According to Sacks (2014), Moses is credited with being a founder of the vision of healthy social family dynamics. However, Moses tended to display frustration by becoming socially withdrawn at times from his own family and followers. Sacks (2014) concluded that Moses withdrew from the children of Israel due to emotional, psychological, and physical fatigue while leading them in the wilderness.

In Numbers 20:1-12, Moses becomes cynical due to the stress he experienced while leading. The children of Israel complain about Moses's and Aaron's leadership. Moses became

agitated, and Moses and Aaron withdrew into the presence of God (vs. 1-6). God instructed

Moses to speak to a rock to cause water to flow so that the children of Israel would not thirst (vs.

7-8). Finally, Moses spoke to the children of Israel in anger, calling them rebels, striking the rock

out of frustration, and disobeyed God (vs. 9-10). Sacks (2014) argued that Moses acted in such a

manner because he displayed signs of burnout that resulted from his distress as a leader.

### *Elijah and Burnout*

The last example of biblical burnout to be discussed in this study is found with the

behaviors exhibited by the prophet Elijah. In 1 Kings 19:1-21, Elijah displayed emotional

fatigue, psychological fatigue, physical fatigue, and social withdrawal. In verses 1-8, Elijah

displayed fear of Jezebel, placed himself under a juniper tree to die because he believed himself

a failure. An angel ministered to the prophet and gave Elijah food and water. From that point,

Elijah spent 40 days and nights traveling to Mount Horeb (vs. 7-9). Once Elijah reached Mount

Horeb, he entered a cave and became distressed once more. Elijah begged God to let him die

because Elijah, once again, felt as though he failed because he saw the sin of the children of

Israel against God during his time as a leader (vs. 10-14).

Elijah's burnout was so severe that he desired to die, became isolated, and was depleted

on every level. Elijah displayed elements of burnout such as social withdrawal, emotional

distress, psychological distress, performance reduction, lack of self-efficacy, and diminished

overall well-being, as described by Freudenberg (1974). Elijah came out of the cave as God gave

him strength; however, it appears that Elijah suffered from burnout to the extent that God

relinquished Elijah by enabling him to pass a mantle of anointing on to Elisha (1 Kings 19:19-

21).

According to Mo and Shi (2017), pastoral leaders experience stress induced by ministry leading because of the constant availability demands, cultural challenges, technology advancements, and other extrinsic factors that may prevent pastoral leaders from practicing self-care and spiritual disciplines. The examples of burnout experienced by Jesus, Moses, and Elijah indicate that burnout may create emotional, physical, psychological, and spiritual fatigue, and modern pastoral leaders are not exempt from the same challenges; however, Scott and Lovell (2015) concluded that ministerial leaders that exhibit high levels of emotional and spiritual intelligence are more likely to combat burnout and effectively lead followers during burnout.

**Emotional Intelligence in the Bible**

EI is defined as a mental potential that relates to the interaction between emotion and cognition, as well the ability to practice emotional self-regulation during emotionally charged experiences with others (Hajncl and Vučenović, 2020; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999, 2004) posited that, "EI comprises four abilities allowing an individual to (1) perceive, (2) use, (3) understand, and (4) manage emotions" (p. 119-120). Jesus and the Apostle Paul displayed high levels of emotional intelligence according to the definition provided above. Elliot (2012) argued that Jesus embodied the emotions of love and compassion. The Apostle Paul is noted for exhibiting authentic care for others, love, and authentic happiness during his time of ministry and leadership (Beck, 2012). This section will discuss the display of emotional intelligence that Jesus and the Apostle Paul exhibited. According to Hajncl and Vučenović (2020), the emotions of love, compassion, authentic care, and happiness are foundational emotions exhibited by Jesus and the Apostle Paul. These types of emotions are believed to be foundational emotions that Jesus and Paul not only illustrated in their ministry and servant leader behaviors, but that Jesus and Paul also recognized among their followers and those in need

(Hajncl and Vučenović, 2020; Stenschke, 2020; Thompson, 2015). The emotional intelligence displayed by Jesus and the Apostle Paul will be further analyzed, discussed, and supported with scriptural and empirical texts.

### Jesus and Emotional Intelligence

According to Buşu (2020), emotional intelligence emerged due to the research conducted and works written by Daniel Goleman from 1990-1995. The origins of emotional intelligence are believed to be a continued study of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Carl Roger's theory of self-conceptualization (Buşu, 2020). The dynamics of high emotional intelligence reflect one's ability to connect to the emotions of others while having awareness of one's own emotions (Buşu, 2020; Dhliwayo & Coetzee, 2020). Leaders that display high levels of emotional intelligence are believed to display emotions such as empathy, love, compassion, sympathy, and positive holistic effect (Buşu, 2020; Dhliwayo & Coetzee, 2020; Fink & Yolles, 2018). Finally, Lamothe (2010) concluded that individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to practice faith-based religion. Lamothe's (2010) research indicated that healthy emotional intelligence may be correlated with healthy spiritual intelligence.

The possible connectivity of emotional intelligence, healthy spirituality, and cultural intelligence may be seen through the love, leadership, and ministry of Jesus Christ. Throughout Jesus's ministry, he connected with people on an emotional level during moments of distress. One example may be found in the Canaanite woman who had a daughter vexed with a devil. Matthew 15:22 states, "And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Clearly the woman was in distress as the scripture notes she "*cried unto him.*" The woman went on to use language that was emotionally charged to gain the attention of

Jesus as she proclaimed, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David" (King James Bible,

1769/2017, Matt. 15:22). The fact the woman was a Canaanite indicated she was typically not

permitted to address Jesus as she was considered as low as a dog by the Jewish community. This

is shown in verses 23-26 as the disciples urged Jesus to send her away, and Jesus explained he

was not sent for the house of Israel alone. Finally, the woman began to worship Jesus, saying,

> Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to
> cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from
> their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith,
> be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.
> (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Matt. 15:25-28)

One may conclude that Jesus was moved by the emotion and worship the woman exhibited. If

this be the case, the scriptures support Lamothe's (2010) conclusion that emotional intelligence

and faith may be correlated. The correlation in this scripture setting may be found in the woman's

change of language and heart. She moved into a place of worship from emotionally charged

language, explaining that she believed Jesus would respond.

Jesus felt the woman's pain and urgency; however, the act of worship displayed her faith.

This is relevant because Jesus recognized the existence and implications of emotions such as

burdens, heaviness, sorrow, and so forth, as Jesus stated: Come unto me, all ye that labour and

are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek

and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (Matt. 11:28-29). This scripture

indicates the correlation between emotional weariness and spiritual restoration. One may

conclude that desires not only to restore one's emotional well-being, but also to move one from a

place of emotionally driven responses into a place of spiritual restoration.

In Matthew 5:1-14, Jesus displayed emotional intelligence and encouraged others to

embrace their emotions; however, the scriptures highlighted Jesus's ability to move people from

an emotional state into a spiritual state of being. This is observed in verses 1-5 when Jesus addresses meekness, hunger, poorness, and so forth; however, Jesus shifted from the carnal into the blessings of living in the love of God in verses 7-14. Finally, verses 41-48 note Jesus's heart of love towards others, even during persecution.

The Gospels are filled with examples of Jesus's ability to connect with others during an emotionally charged moment; however, one of the greatest examples of Jesus's emotional intelligence is found with the thief on the cross beside Jesus during the crucifixion. Luke 23:39-43 illustrates the love Jesus had even during His moment of passion on the cross. One of the two malefactors rebuked Jesus, while the other showed love towards Jesus. It was then that Jesus recognized the emotion and faith of the malefactor, that exhibited love and mercy towards Jesus. Jesus responded, "this day ye shall be with me in paradise" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Luke 23:43). Once again, Jesus recognized the emotion of fear and remorse; however, Jesus comforted the malefactor's emotional distress by acknowledging his heart, and Jesus moved him into a state of peace in the spirit with the promise of eternal life. Beck (2012) suggested that Jesus displayed the greatest emotional intelligence through agape love when He responded to the emotional responses of others. Furthermore, Jesus not only comforted those in emotional distress, but He also provided spiritual and natural healing, rest for the weary, and gave Himself as the ultimate gift of love towards all of mankind (Beck, 2012).

### *The Apostle Paul and Emotional Intelligence*

There is no question that Jesus provided the world with an example of unconditional love through His completed works (Beck, 2012). After the death of Jesus, the disciples were empowered with the gift of the Holy Ghost after the Holy Ghost came upon them in the upper room (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Acts 2:1-38). The Holy Ghost enabled followers to pray

over the sick that they would be healed, to connect with all people in spirit as a collective body

of Christ, and to carry out the commission to preach the Gospel to all the world and baptize new

believers so they would bury the old flesh and arise a new creation in Christ (Acts 8:14-19; Rom.

6:1-11; Eph. 4:4-6).

The information above is relevant to this literature review because, once a person accepts

salvation, the spirit of God lives and dwells in the heart of the believer (1 Cor. 3:1-23). The

Apostle Paul displayed emotional intelligence through spiritual discipline during his time of

leadership as he taught followers how to overcome emotional distress. For example, Paul

identifies the emotion of fear and love but correlates fear and love with the Spirit, and a concept

of the carnal mind. This is found in 2 Timothy 1:1-7 as Paul instructs Timothy to become

mindful of his tears and joy. Paul then concludes, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear;

but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, 2 Tim. 1:7).

This is an example of Paul's emotional intelligence and his instruction for Timothy to

become mindful of his emotions in both his body and spirit. According to Fink and Yolles

(2018), mindfulness is a characteristic of high emotional intelligence. Being mindful refers to the

ability to acknowledge, accept, and interpret the meaning of emotions (Buşu, 2020; Fink &

Yolles, 2018). Being aware of one's emotions enables one to cognitively move from an

emotional state into a rational state of being (Buşu, 2020). An emotion is defined as a short-lived

phenomenon of a feeling; however, Williams et al. (2016) described a feeling as a belief that

may be rational or irrational. The Apostle Paul seemed to understand the implications of

emotionally driven feelings on both the carnal mind and spirit man.

Another example of Paul's emotional intelligence is seen in his instruction to resolve

conflict among members of the body of Christ. Paul instructs the church of Ephesus to "Let all

bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all

malice:  And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for

Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Ephesians 4: 31-32). This

instruction notes Paul's awareness and mindfulness both spiritually and carnally of the dangers

of emotionally charged language. Paul then encourages followers to counter carnally charged

language with spiritual fruits that promote kindness, forgiveness, and love.

Paul exhibited emotional intelligence by virtue of promoting unconditional love as Christ

loves (Beck, 2012). According to Beck (2012), Paul understood emotional contagion, and the

influence of emotion on authentic happiness, subjective well-being, and patience. This is

displayed in 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, wherein Paul concludes that love is patient, kind, diminishes

fear, is not jealous, does not provoke anger, and does not promote evil. Although Paul

understood human emotion, he also suggested the carnal mind is an enemy of God (*King James*

*Bible*, 1769/2017, Romans 8:7-8).

Finally, Paul spoke to the emotional context of mankind in terms of mindfulness as a

discipline; however, Paul warned believers of the dangers the carnal mind presents towards the

spirit man. Meiring (2016) highlighted Paul's concern with the duality of the emotional man in

the flesh and the spirit man. The spirit and the flesh cannot exist in a duality according to Paul, as

one must crucify the flesh daily and renew oneself with the mind of Christ; however, Meiring

(2016) argued that concrete and abstract mapping of the human brain indicates the human brain

is reinforced and conditioned abstractly with past experiences, feelings, and sensations.

From a biblical perspective, the Apostle Paul acknowledges the emotional essence of

human emotion as Paul himself experienced emotion. Therein lies Paul's urgency for the

believer to be mindful of fleshly desires and feelings, but then to crucify the flesh daily in

submission to God (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Galatians 5:24-26). Paul understood emotions can make one puffed up and can create dissension among believers. Therefore, Paul followed the example of Jesus Christ to lead as a servant first so the body of Christ would be edified ahead of himself (Stenschke, 2020).

**Biblical Concepts of Servant Leadership**

Robert Greenleaf coined the term "servant leadership" in 1977 (Cincala & Chase, 2018). Although Greenleaf guided some of this servant leadership theory from the life of Jesus, Greenleaf's main ideas were founded on Herman Hesse's concept of a servant imagery related to a servant named Leo (Mulinge, 2021). Greenleaf stated that a servant leader is one who makes a conscious choice to lead others but has the desire to serve followers' needs first before self (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Greenleaf, 1977). Although Greenleaf coined the term "servant leadership," the leadership theory has been studied, revised, and critiqued by other leadership theorists as well (Cincala & Chase, 2018). Greenleaf's servant leadership theory is focused on serving others while placing oneself last without the concept of becoming a slave "*doulos*" unto God (Mulinge, 2021). While this notion may be observed in the modern secular service of being a pastoral leader, there may be danger in this approach of servant leadership as there is no concept of serving others in a Christ centered capacity of servitude.

Currently, theorists have revised the servant leadership model to suggest that servant leadership "is an (1) other-oriented approach to leadership (2) manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, (3) and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community" (Eva et al., 2019; Cincala & Chase, 2018, p. 80). The dynamics of servant leadership mentioned above are considered to be a more secular point of servant leadership; however, according to

Samuel (2022), Christian servant leadership should embrace the form of doulos. Doulos is

defined as slave (Samuel, 2022). The difference between Greenleaf's servant leader concept and

that of doulos is identified in Greenleaf's perspective of a servant leader's identity of self and

others, versus doulos wherein  the servant leader has total surrender as a slave to God first to

serve others through the love of God (Samuel, 2002) .

Samuel (2022) noted that Jesus instructed believers to place themselves beneath the

master, yet to strive to be like the master. Furthermore, Samuel (2022) highlighted Romans

12:10 wherein the Apostle Paul instructed believers to serve one another in brotherly love,

preferring one another through living in the service of the Lord. Although Greenleaf's servant

leadership theory is used throughout this research as a theoretical framework, this researcher

acknowledges Greenleaf's theory does not adhere to the theological depth of doulos that

encourages the believer to serve mankind through becoming a slave to God in service. A main

servant leadership concept of doulos may be found in Jesus's instruction to "Jesus said unto him,

thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy

neighbour as thyself (Matthew 22:37-39). Serving God foremost in the sense of doulos creates a

willingness to be a slave to God's will first so that serving others may be directed with the

wisdom and love of God (Samuel, 2022).

Although there are several schools of thought regarding servant leadership, Hajncl and

Vučenović (2020) and Eva et al. (2019) contended that leaders that exhibit a servant leadership

style are believed to exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence. This is relevant to the

research in this section as past research has suggested that leaders exhibiting high levels of

emotional intelligence are more likely to lead effectively and to combat burnout successfully

(Busu, 2020; Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015). This section will discuss the servant leadership behaviors exhibited by Jesus and the Apostle Paul that support the servant leadership theory and its relationship to emotional intelligence and burnout.

### *Jesus and Servant Leadership*

Thompson (2015) conducted a review of Jesus's role as a servant leader in his work *Servant, Leader, or Both? A Fresh Look at Mark 10:35-45*. Thompson (2015) provided strong theological and theoretical frameworks that argue points for and against Jesus's role as a servant leader. Thompson (2015) dissected the scriptures above to investigate the nature of servitude and the type of leadership Jesus exhibited. One side of Thompson's argument suggests Jesus was all-powerful with Kingdom authority as Jesus spoke concerning lordship in Mark 10:42-45, stating,

> But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017).

Thompson (2015) suggested that the significance of debate around this scripture is found in Jesus's statement concerning Himself as minister being greater than a lord or governor? Thompson (2015) argued that this statement may suggest the all-powerful authority Jesus had as God, manifest in the flesh, and would indicate Jesus's role as transactional leader based upon past arguments. Thompson (2015) concluded that Jesus was living as a servant before any authority. Jesus stated, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Mark 10:45). This author believes Thompson's (2015) argument to be relevant to this literature review because Thompson (2015) provided a perspective that highlights Jesus as having heavenly authority before earthly authority; however, Thompson also provided a sound argument that Jesus cements His purpose

as a servant first by finishing His comments with the declaration that He would be the ransom for many.

The New Testament Gospels provide several illustrations of where Jesus gave of Himself for others. Jesus led the disciples with love, compassion, and discipline, even in His servitude. One example is found when Jesus corrected Peter in Matthew 16:21-27. Peter had the faith to know Jesus was the son of God; however, when Jesus told the disciples that He would have to endure suffering, be killed, and arise on the third day, Peter became emotional and pleaded with Jesus for it not to be so. Afterward, Jesus rebuked Peter and stated, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017, Matthew 6:24). Once again, Jesus displayed behaviors that indicated a servant-first mentality, suggesting that one should deny himself as Jesus denied Himself so salvation would free mankind from sin. The final display of servant leadership may be found in Jesus's interactions with the disciples at the last supper. Here, Jesus gave of His body symbolically through the act of communion, washed the disciples' feet as a sign of humility, and instructed them to do the same for each other as Jesus provided leadership through example (Luke 22:1-30).

### *Paul and Servant Leadership*

Acts 9:1-22 discusses the Apostle Paul's transformation from scholar and enforcer of the Old Testament law into a servant of God's grace. Prior to Paul's transformation on the road to Damascus, he was called Saul, and he persecuted believers of Christ. God introduced Himself to Saul, blinded him, and instructed him to go to the house of Ananias to receive salvation so he could preach the Gospel (Acts 9:11-18). Paul's conversion from law into grace was a supernatural experience wherein God specifically required Paul to recognize Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior. Paul was a revered and educated leader who was responsible for persecuting

followers of Christ (Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2018). After Paul was converted, his love for

Christ and the body of Christ was apparent in his leadership. Jones, Murray, and Warren (2018)

suggest Paul was an example of a leader who had wisdom, showed humility, practiced patience,

was of Godly character, and served others before himself. These types of traits are found in the

servant leadership model.

Although Greenleaf highlighted Jesus as the example for a servant leader, Jones, Murray,

and Warren (2018) argued that the Apostle Paul continued to lead within the servant leader

example provided by Jesus. Paul took on the high calling of ministry and made a conscious

decision to walk in God's calling. Paul understood the role of a leader based on experience in the

Roman Empire; however, after Paul was converted, his heart was softened; he received the Holy

Ghost, and Paul's primary concern became preaching and teaching Jesus Christ (Jones, Murray,

& Warren, 2018; 1 Cor. 2:2).

Paul led without the influence of personal ego by maintaining grace and humility as Jesus

taught and exemplified. Jones, Murray, and Warren (2018) revealed Paul's heart for humility and

grace and highlighted Paul's heart in Philippians 1:7 which suggests the Lord requires Christians

to be humble while providing grace to others. Jones, Murray, and Warren (2018) conclude,

> Although this is not an easy task, as we discover our weaknesses, we can draw on God's
> wisdom and power for help with the understanding that it is God who works in you to
> will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. (Phil. 2:13, NIV, p. 96)

Finally, Paul exhibited servant leader behaviors by his willingness to exhort others ahead of

himself yet practicing doulos by keeping God first in all things done. An example of this is found

in Colossians 3:1-25. Paul expressed the importance of keeping Christ first in all manners,

submitting oneself to Godliness by putting away things of this world and the flesh, and finally

serving others through the love of Christ (Colossians 3:1-9). Paul goes on to suggest that no one

person is greater than another in God's kingdom; therefore, Paul instructs believers to have grace, admonish one another, and worship God with one another (vs.10-17). Finally, Paul provided instruction for children to obey their parents and have order in their homes. Paul concluded that God's grace and love is for all (vs. 18-25). Paul lived by his words and led the churches with grace, selflessness, and love (Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2018).

**Conclusion**

Pastoral leaders are not immune to stress in their functions as leaders, servants, husbands, sons, or whatever roles they fulfill. Pastoral leaders often experience job-induced stress that impacts their personal lives (Scott & Lovell, 2017). The consequences of job-related burnout can be substantial, and pastoral leaders who experience burnout are more likely to withdraw from others, exhibit signs of depression, display a reduction in performance, become depersonalized, exhibit job dissatisfaction, and present signs of diminished emotional and physical well-being (Adams et al., 2017). Finally, research suggests that servant leaders exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence; therefore, the servant leadership style stems from high emotional intelligence and the ability of leaders to combat elevated burnout (Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2017).

Previous studies concerning burnout among clergy members suggest that burnout occurs because of the demand for clergy services from followers, congregants, and family (Adams et al., 2017). The theological literature provides a biblical perspective of burnout experienced by Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. The literature also gives theological and theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence and examples of Jesus's and Paul's use of emotional intelligence. Finally, an analysis of servant leadership displayed by Jesus and Paul was discussed. The examples of servant leadership discussed does not imply nor suggest that all pastors are servant leader; rather,

the discussion was to provide an explanation of servant leader behaviors that may benefit

pastoral leaders in their own leadership traits that may exalt God first and best serve believers in

their congregations. The conclusion summarizes the content in this section.

<div align="center">**Theoretical Framework for the Study**</div>

The term "burnout" was coined by Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 (Adams et al., 2017).

Freudenberger studied employee behaviors in response to intrinsic and extrinsic reinforcements

that contributed to an employee's motivation, morale, efficacy, self-esteem, and overall job

performance (Jimenez et al., 2017). After Freudenberger identified and coined "burnout,"

Maslach and Jackson (1981) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which measured

the level of burnout an individual experienced by assessing the person's emotional exhaustion,

depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (de Vine & Morgan, 2020).

During the early 1990s, organizational behavioral theorists took an interest in issues such

as burnout; however, theorists like Salovey and Mayer (1990) began to link motivation, esteem,

job performance and other intrinsic dynamics to emotional well-being, which was later coined as

"emotional intelligence" (EI) by Salovey and Mayer (Busu, 2020; Dhliwayo & Coetzee, 2020;

Salovey & Mayer, 1990). After Salovey and Mayer identified emotional intelligence, Goleman

(1995) wrote the book *Emotional Intelligence*. Since 1995, emotional intelligence has been

widely researched and categorized into EI traits and EI models (Kanezen & Fauzen, 2019).

The information in this background is relevant to the research because research

conducted since the early 2000s has linked effective leadership to leaders that display high levels

of emotional intelligence (Cohen & Abedellah, 2015). Research also reveals that leaders with

high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to combat burnout successfully (Chen &

Chen, 2018; Adams et al., 2017). Although the exact participant leadership style(s) were not

identified in this research, past research suggests that the servant leadership style is a primary leadership style used among clergy members (Wilson, 2018). Servant leaders are said to exhibit higher levels of emotional intelligence and more effective leadership behaviors; however, servant leaders may experience burnout due to the nature of a serve-first mentality (Fredrick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Elliot, 2020). Finally, pastors are engaged in a helping profession. The stress that helping professions engender is believed to contribute to burnout (Fredrick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015). This theoretical literature review will provide further discussion and analysis of the burnout theory, models of emotional intelligence, and the servant leadership theory. These dynamics will be discussed to provide the theoretical background that supports the purpose statement and research questions.

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to better understand the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States.

**Freudenberger's Burnout Theory**

Freudenberger first coined the term "burnout" in 1974 (Adams et al, 2017). Freudenberger's research identified extrinsic and intrinsic factors that influence employees' job satisfaction, motivation, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and overall job satisfaction (Adams et al., 2017). The term "burnout" also refers to the process of depletion in care and professional attention given to users of human services organizations (Freudenberger, 1974). According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), burnout is a psychological syndrome that occurs among people who work with others (Coker, 2009; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). One key dynamic found among

those who experience burnout is increased feelings of emotional exhaustion that deplete emotional resources; as a result, individuals believe they cannot perform at optimal psychological levels (Fredricks, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Chen & Chen, 2017; Adams et al., 2017).

Another aspect of burnout is depersonalization. Depersonalization refers to a negative, callous, cynical attitude or feelings towards others often experienced during burnout (Bidlan & Sihag, 2014; Coker, 2009; Malcach & Jackson, 1981). The third element of burnout is reduced personal accomplishment. Reduced personal accomplishment is a negative self-evaluation wherein the person experiencing burnout views her work with others negatively; thus, the individual experiencing burnout usually feels unhappy about herself and is often dissatisfied with her job-based accomplishments (Bidlan & Sihag, 2014; Coker, 2009; Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

The burnout theory is relevant to the current study because it provides a theoretical foundation supporting the burnout experienced by those in helping professions. Adams et al. (2017) conclude that clergy and pastoral leaders are identified in the same category as those in helping professions because of the help they provide to followers and others in need of their services. Finally, the burnout theory is not exclusive to one type of work industry, and research suggests that pastoral leaders may experience burnout that creates feelings of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and reduced personal accomplishment (Fredrick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015).

### *Measuring Burnout*

Maslach and Jackson developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which evaluates the three dynamics of burnout discussed above (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Kenesan & Fauzen,

2018). The MBI is formatted as a Likert scale, and the MBI has evolved to evaluate burnout from both the "3 job-demands resource" model to the "five-factor personality traits" model (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). According to de Vine and Morgan (2020), the five-factor personality trait measures the influence that burnout has upon an individual's neuroticism, extraversion, openness to new experiences, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Measuring an individual's emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment assists with understanding his social and job-related burnout; however, assessing the influence of burnout on the Big-five Personality Traits enables one to understand more clearly the implications of burnout, not only from a job-related perspective, but also from a personalized perspective (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). Personal perspective refers to the manner in which burnout influences a person internally that manifests externally through dynamics such as *neuroticism* (predisposition towards negative emotions), *extraversion* (optimistic, excited, ambitious, caring, and outgoing), *openness* (curious about their world, open to new experiences), *agreeableness* (compliant, likable, friendly), and *conscientiousness* (motivated, self-driven, determined) (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Cohen & Abedellah, 2015; Bidlan & Sihag, 2014).

**Summary**

Measuring burnout is relevant to this study because the information gathered enables us to understand the influence of burnout on job performance, social interactions, and self-esteem. Furthermore, assessing the influence of burnout on the elements of the Big-five personality traits provides details that highlight the implications of burnout on a personalized level reaching beyond job-related burnout (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). Measuring pastoral burnout may provide details related to the pastor's job satisfaction, self-image, relationship with others, and causation

for self-depletion (Adams et al., 2017). A key reoccurring theme among those that experience

burnout is depletion (Busu, 2020; Chen & Chen, 2018).

**Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is identified 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" (Vincent et al., 2017, p. 47; Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). EI is an

important intrinsic dynamic among leaders, especially those who are clergy (Vincent et al.,

2017). This dynamic is caused by the constant need for compassion, empathy, and love that a

follower may expect to receive from clergy leaders (Scott & Lovell, 2015).

Social intelligence was introduced by Edward Thorndike in 1930; however, Roger

Goleman popularized EI after further researching work completed by Salovey and Jackson, who

first coined the term "emotional intelligence" (Vincent et al., 2017). According to Yadav and

Lata (2019), Goleman defined emotional intelligence as

> a set of abilities including zeal, self-control, self-motivation, and persistence. These
> abilities were further categorized by him under five major domains each having
> numerous attributes, i.e., to understand self-emotions, manage emotions, keep
> himself/herself motivated, recognize emotional state of others, and handle relationships.
> (p. 28)

In more recent years, Dr. Reuven Bar-on (2002), a well-known researcher in the field of EI,

further defined the model of EI. Bar-on defines EI as the non-cognitive skills, capacities, and

competencies one possesses that deeply influence her ability to handle environmental pressures

and demands successfully (Yadav & Lata, 2019; Bar-on, 2002).

*Measuring Emotional Intelligence*

There are several EI measurement tools utilized to measure emotional intelligence. First,

the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Tests (MSCEIT) assesses emotional

intelligence through trait and ability assessments. This tool was developed by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso in 2002. The scale evaluates the ability to feel emotion and the behavioral traits that result from emotional responses (O'Connor et al., 2019). Second, the Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) discovers an individual's overall EI (O'Connor et al., 2019). Next, the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire is used to assess self-reported measurements from participants (O'Connor et al., 2019). Finally, the Emotional Quotient Inventory was developed by Bar-on to predict the participant's overall physical and psychological well-being, self-actualization, and social interaction behaviors (O'Connor et al., 2019). There are more EI assessments; however, O'Connor (2019) suggests that the four discussed above are the most reliable and valid because of their use in clinical settings. Finally, all the EI assessments mentioned are formatted in Likert scales. The questions are set up to discover the perception, regulation, and utilization of emotions (O'Connor, 2019).

### *Emotional Intelligence and Burnout*

The relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout is significant because it points to the level of ability of an individual experiencing burnout to recognize his own emotional status. Adams et al. (2017) suggest that pastors experience burnout because of the ongoing services they provide. The constant demand for advice, attention, prayer, and other services are factors that create emotional and self-depletion among pastoral leaders (Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015).

Research suggests that individuals who exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to combat burnout because they also possess higher levels of self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Busu, 2020; de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Cohen & Abedellah, 2015). According to Kim and Qu (2019), emotional exhaustion and depersonalization create negative

relationships between employees. Failure to acknowledge negative emotions often creates work environments of distrust, instability, and possible hostility between employees; however, employees who exhibit emotional intelligence are believed to build trust, create a positive vision, move through challenges with innovation, and to encourage others through their behaviors (Kim & Qu, 2019).

Leaders who do not exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence during emotionally challenging engagements are likely to create an environment of uncertainty, social distress, have an adverse effect on peers, and usually cannot clearly articulate the vision needed for task completion (Busu, 2020; de Vine & Morgan, 2020). On the contrary, leaders and employees who exhibit high emotional intelligence are more likely to articulate the organization's goals and visions, to encourage followers and peers through their actions, to empathize with others, and to create an environment that encourages innovation, creativity, and trust (Cincala & Chase, 2020; Hajncl & Vučenović, 2020; Kanesen & Fauzen, 2019).

**Summary**

The theoretical relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout is found in the ability of a leader to maintain effective leadership behaviors and emotional awareness as means of intrinsic and extrinsic balance during burnout (McClanahan, 2020). Leaders who exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence are more likely to lead others effectively because EI is related to effective leadership traits such as establishing trust, creating excitement, motivating others, encouraging innovation, and understanding personal emotions as well as others', even during burnout (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2017; Sullivan, 2015). This information is relevant to the study as the questions were formatted on the relationships between facets of emotional intelligence and the implications of burnout. The facets of emotional intelligence were believed

to be related to many of the traits found within the servant leadership style. The next section will introduce the servant leadership theory and its relationship to leadership effectiveness and emotional intelligence.

### Servant Leadership and Emotional Intelligence

Although there has not been a significant amount of research conducted that correlates servant leadership and emotional intelligence, Pollock (2017) and Carrington (2015) conducted studies that suggest a relationship exists between them. Pollock (2017) argued that empathy and trust are two key traits found among servant leaders. Empathy and trust are also found in the trait model of emotional intelligence; therefore, Pollok (2017) concluded that a servant leader possesses some traits of emotional intelligence.

Likewise, Carrington (2015) highlighted Mayer and Salovey's (1997) correlation of four factors of emotional intelligence within the servant leadership traits. The four factors are: identifying emotions, emotional facilitation of thought, understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Carrington, 2015; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Carrington (2015) further noted that servant leadership traits seem to have a connection with emotional intelligence; however, it is not clear if emotional intelligence is directly correlated to the servant leadership style or a leader in general. Finally, Carrington (2015) presented a study conducted by Parolini (2005) that supports the theory that EI is not a predictor of servant leadership; however, the study indicates that servant leaders possess EI based upon factors such as "age, gender, and utilization of emotions." Parolini further found, "through multiple regression analysis, followers' perception of servant leadership behaviors in supervisors was found to be a significant predictor ($p < .01$) of followers' perception of servant leadership culture" (p. 1). These findings suggest the need for further

research on the correlation between emotional intelligence and servant leadership (Carrington, 2015).

**Summary**

The servant leadership style consists of traits such as selflessness, strong morals, and ethics, promotion of unity, encouragement of innovation and employee growth, promotion of inclusivity, possession of emotional intelligence traits, and leadership by example (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2018; Carrington, 2015). Although the servant leadership style is believed to be an effective one because of dynamics such as those listed above, some theorists and researchers argue that servant leadership is ineffective because it may be functional only in certain environments and situations. The term "servant" may be correlated with the term "slave," and servant leaders may be observed as weak and passive (Carrington, 2015).

Although some researchers argue that servant leadership is not an effective leadership style, the vast body of research suggests that servant leadership promotes trust, motivation, environments of innovation and creativity, encourages collaboration, and that servant leaders possess some traits found within emotional intelligence (Busu, 2020; Carrington, 2015; Parolini, 2005). This section of the literature review is relevant to the study because many studies indicate that clergy members utilize a servant leadership style in their leadership roles (Cook, 2020; Cincala & Chase, 2018; Carrington, 2015). Furthermore, the significance of the literature highlights the relationship between EI and servant leadership (Pollok, 2017; Carrington, 2015). Finally, these relationships lead this author to believe there is a connection between EI and the effectiveness of the servant leadership style that may enable pastoral leaders to combat burnout.

**Conclusion**

The literature in this theoretical framework embraced Freudenberger's burnout theory, the background and use of the Maslach Burnout Inventory as a measurement of burnout, the background and theory of emotional intelligence, models of emotional intelligence, the background and traits of the servant leadership theory, and the relationship between emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and leadership effectiveness during burnout. The literature also provided empirical resources that supported the relationship between emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and the positive implications of both on combatting burnout. However, empirical research was also provided that rebutted the effectiveness of the servant leadership style that may best combat leadership burnout. The purpose of this theoretical literature review was to provide empirical resources that discussed job-related burnout, emotional intelligence, the servant leadership theory, and the relationship between emotional intelligence and servant leadership as an effective leadership style during burnout.

## Related Literature

The purpose of this portion of the literature review is to provide the reader with an in-depth review of various subtopics related to and relevant to the topic of this research. The structure of this section reflects an in-depth survey of relevant dynamics and the content of the study that framed and informed the research. This part of the literature review will be divided into four sections, 1) The Pastoral Role and Servant Leadership, 2) Pastoral Stress and Burnout, 3) Implications of Burnout, and 4) Combatting Pastoral Burnout.

### The Pastoral Role

A pastoral leader is considered to fall within the category of *clergy*. Adams et al. (2017) state,

> The job description of clergy is diverse and includes leadership roles that involve constant engagement with others. Clergy roles have been grouped into six categories: (a)

preacher, (b) deliverer of rituals and sacraments, (c) pastor, (d) teacher, organizer, and (f) administrator. (p. 149)

Therefore, a pastoral leader may have various responsibilities in the duty of his/her office based on the description above. The Bible references the term "pastor" in Ephesians 4:11 stating, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017).

Although the word "pastor" is found nine times in scripture, many theologians argue that the office of a bishop fills the role and description of the office of the modern-day pastor (McGarity, 2016). Furthermore, McGarity (2016) concluded,

pastors are also responsible for shepherding and caring for others that are entrusted to their care. The pastor is to, "Preach the word, be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. The pastor is also to equip others for the work of the ministry." (p. 25-26)

According to Titus 1:7-9, the role of a bishop/pastor is founded upon morality:

For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (*King James Bible*, 1769/2017).

Being a pastor in the United States has become more complicated. According to a Pew Research Study, fewer people identify as Christian than ever before in the history of the United States (McGarity, 2016). Pastors are responsible for church budgets, for business structure model positions such as a CEO title, for maintaining parishioners, and for adjusting to the modern demands of cultural norms (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2016).

Scriptures such as Titus 1:7-9 as a standard for the behaviors a pastor should display; however, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-4 also support these same dynamics with the added roles of shepherding, leading, and correcting followers. The role of a pastor has become

complicated because of issues that go beyond the scope of shepherding and preaching that have

been introduced into ministries, such as political correctness, reduction of leaders in ministry,

emotionally driven dilemmas, social media, and other dynamics created by social and cultural

norms (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2016; Faucett, Corwyn, & Poling, 2013). Finally, pastors

fill the role of a servant leader through the act of shepherding according to the scriptures

discussed throughout this section.

**Servant Leadership Theory**

Robert Greenleaf coined the term "servant leadership" and assessed servant leadership

effectiveness based upon the overall success of followers, enabling them to benefit from

leadership in professional and personal development, leading followers in a positive direction,

and becoming servants themselves (Carrington, 2015). Carrington (2015) also highlighted

Whetstone's definition of servant leadership in his study by presenting the following statement:

"Whetstone (2002) further solidified the idea that 'success is measured by growth in the people

served and the positive effects on the least privileged in society'" (p.18). Many leadership

theorists concur that the key dynamics found in the servant leadership model indicate servant

leaders possess self-awareness, self-efficacy, selflessness, the desire to promote the good of

others ahead of themselves, the desire to see followers' needs met, the desire to see followers

thrive, moral and ethical behaviors, and emotional intelligence (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Jones,

Murray, & Warren, 2018; Carrington, 2015).

Not every leadership theorist agrees that servant leadership is an effective leadership

style. According to Carrington (2015), researchers such as Whetstone (2002) argued that the

servant leadership style is only functional in certain industries, and the term "servant" may be

likened to the term "slave." Furthermore, servant leadership may be considered too passive and

unrealistic (Carrington, 2015). Finally, Carrington (2015) highlighted the argument made by Whetstone (2002) that sees transformational leadership as unrealistic because the theory suggests there is no shift in the leader's paradigm; however, Carrington (2015) presented a rebuttal against Whetstone's statements by using Sendjayah and Cooper's (2011) statement that, "servant leaders are authentic not for the sake of being authentic, but because they know that they are driven by a sense of higher calling to make a morally positive difference in the lives of others" (p.18). Although there are arguments for and against the effectiveness of the servant leadership style, the goal of a servant leader is to lead by example, placing the needs of followers ahead of self, inspiring motivation, creating an environment of inclusion and diversity, and challenging followers to grow personally and professionally (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Pollock, 2017; Carrington, 2015).

The servant leader theory is important to the body of literature as research suggests that servant leaders place others ahead of self, exhibit emotional intelligence, and build healthy relationships with others (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Pollock, 2017; Carrington, 2015). Although some theorists argue that weaknesses are found in the servant leadership theory, other theorists argue that many pastoral leaders exhibit servant leadership traits. Traits such as those mentioned above are believed to assist pastoral leaders with identifying their own emotions and those of others, developing meaningful relationships, and effectively combating burnout while leading others (Cincala & Cha, 2018; Adams et al., 2017; Carrington, 2015). The following section will further analyze and discuss the causation and indications of pastoral stress and burnout.

**Pastoral Stress and Burnout**

Herbert Freudenberger first coined the term "burnout" after researching the impacts of occupational stress on nurses (Stephens, 2020). Helping occupations, such as clergy or pastoral

ministries, may have various stress factors wherein the employee gives time, effort, emotions, and spiritual assistance to others (Stephens, 2020; McGarity, 2016; Faucett, Corwyn, & Poling, 2013). Adams et al. (2017) suggest that pastoral stress and burnout is like stress and burnout found among medical professionals due to the demands and the nature of a pastor's role in a profession that is closely related to the helping profession of a medical professional. Burnout is defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment that comes from prolonged exposure to stress (Fee, 2018; Freudenberger, 1974). Therefore, pastoral stress and burnout is often created by job demands, personal relationships, professional relationships, and feelings of reduced accomplishment (McClanahan, 2018; Johnson, 2017).

### *Job Demands*

Adams et al. (2017) conducted a significant study that evaluated the level of burnout, types of stress, and job demands among clergy, law enforcement, and emergency response personnel. Adams et al. (2017) conclude that the role, duties, and nature of a clergy member closely resemble the same duties among public safety and first responders, as the three professions are believed to have a foundation of service. Therefore, clergy members, such as pastors, are identified as working in a "helping vocation" (Adams et al., 2017). This section will identify job demands among pastors and clergy that induce stress and contribute to burnout. This information is important to the literature review because it will provide an understanding of the challenges pastors and clergy members face that enable their jobs to be labeled as demanding.

"Job demand" refers to the physical and emotional stress one experiences because of job tasks (Adams et al., 2017; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Pastoral leaders must fill several roles and functions in their leadership capacity. Some of those roles and functions include, but are not

limited to, conducting weddings and funerals, mentoring followers, filling a CEO or organizational president capacity, preparing sermons, teaching, chaplaincy, serving as a life coach, manager, and spiritual leader (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Adams et al., 2017; Carrington, 2015).

The roles and functions of pastoral-ship indicate that pastors must be flexible, open to new experiences, able to multi-task, take on a servant approach, and ebb and flow between a spiritual and carnal leader (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018). These dynamics are believed to place different demands on a pastoral leader because of the pastor's need to maneuver between types of leadership. Muse, Love, and Christensen (2016) conducted a study examining factors in the pastoral profession that create job demand and lead to stress. The study revealed factors such as over-functioning for others and neglecting self-care, work overload, constant service demand and accessibility, lack of healthy intimacy, lack of relationships outside of the congregation, high role expectations, lack of spiritual well-being, and vicarious Post Traumatic Stress (Muse, Love, & Christensen, 2016).

Increased job demand has several implications on a pastoral leader's intrinsic and extrinsic well-being, on his or her emotional, psychological, spiritual, and physical health (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018). Diminishment of pastoral intrinsic and extrinsic well-being, due to high levels of stress created by high job demand, is believed to be responsible for burnout (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2018; Adams et al., 2017). Burnout is responsible for diminished personal and professional relationships, feelings of depression and withdrawal, creating a sense of self-failure, and depletion of emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018). Highlighting the impact of job demand on pastoral burnout is valuable because research presented throughout this

paper illustrates the types of demands that are placed on a pastor; therefore, the relationship between job demand and pastoral burnout is reflected in this section, which supports the literature found in the theoretical and theological framework.

### *Personal and Professional Relationships*

A pastor's job demands may influence burnout; however, the essence of pastoral-ship is found within the relationships established between a pastor and those in his/her personal and professional life (Pickett et al., 2017). The role of "shepherding" itself connotes the concept of caring for others while placing oneself last; therefore, shepherding indicates that relationships are established between a pastor and those being led (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Carrington, 2015).

Healthy professional relationships in a pastoral capacity are essential for networking, collaborating, and implementing effective ministry strategies. However, maintaining healthy professional relationships, in the roles and functions of a pastoral leader, is important in managing followers and maintaining healthy networking relationships (Pickett et al., 2017). Maintaining healthy relationships may create stresses that later enable burnout because of the demand placed on a pastoral leader to maintain healthy relationships out of obligation (Pickett et al., 2017).

Robin Dunbar (1992) developed the social network theory. Dunbar theorized that people network because of a commonality; however, social networking may create stress, emotional depletion, and social withdrawal as more people move into one's inner circle. This occurs because people feel obligated to remain emotionally engaged (which causes emotional fatigue over time), individuals may lose autonomy because of social grouping (people become depressed if groups become dismissive), and people may feel inadequate compared to others in their social

group because others in the social group may display accomplishments alone instead of accomplishments and failures (Pickett et al., 2017; Dunbar, 1992).

The social theory network is relevant to the literature because Picket et al. (2017) conducted a study that evaluated the relationship between ministry effectiveness, burnout, and social networking. Pickett et al. (2017) utilized the social networking theory to better understand the phenomenology of the relationship between social interactions among pastoral leaders, burnout, and ministry effectiveness. The study indicated that professional networking and relationships are healthy, but only if social circles are intimate, one person is not invested with minimal reciprocation from other participants, and collaboration is present among the networking group (Pickett et al., 2017).

This study is relevant to the body of literature because it is a current study that highlights the implications of healthy versus non-healthy professional relationships and the implications of professional relationships on burnout and ministry effectiveness. The study provides research that addresses this writer's research topic from a professional relationship context. Finally, Pickett et al. (2017) conclude that burnout may influence professional relationships adversely; however, unhealthy professional relationships may contribute to burnout.

The same is true concerning personal relationships. According to Adams et al. (2017), pastors experiencing burnout are likely to withdraw from people in their personal lives. The stresses and demands of being readily available to followers, collaborators, or others may create emotional and physical exhaustion (Muse, Love, & Christensen, 2016). Another contributing factor leading to depersonalization among pastoral leaders may be found in compulsive cross-bearing (taking care of others without regard for self) and compulsive caregiving (Muse, Love, & Christensen, 2016). These two dynamics are believed to drain pastoral leaders of their desire to

communicate with people in their personal circle, such as their spouse or children (Muse, Love, & Christensen, 2016).

Bahnaru, Runcan, and Runcan (2019) researched the role of religion, particularly Christianity, in marital satisfaction. Their research evaluated stages of marriage among Christians based upon age, generation, and emotional intimacy. The findings suggest that couples who practiced Christianity were more likely to remain married over the participants who were not Christian. Varying generations and genders also influence marital satisfaction, based upon differences in beliefs and values of generational and gender-specific participants. Finally, as stated above, Bahnaru, Runcan, and Runcan (2019) indicated that Christian believers are more likely to have a successful marriage; however, religious affiliation also adds stress to marriages based upon how the couple aligned in their beliefs and the ability for Christian couples to show emotional intimacy towards one another.

The research is important to this body of literature because the study indicates that Christians are less likely to identify with emotional intimacy. Thus, marital dissatisfaction may occur between Christian males and females as females reported feeling emotionally dissatisfied (Bahnaru, Runcan, & Runcan, 2019). To this point, pastoral leaders who give their emotional reserves to others are more likely to forsake the emotional needs of those in their personal circles (Bahnaru, Runcan, & Runcan, 2019; Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Bidland & Sihag, 2014). Pastoral leaders who feel emotional depletion are more likely to experience burnout. As burnout occurs, the pastoral leader may become more reclusive in their personal relationships, and the strain of their personal relationships may contribute to more emotional distress and burnout (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015).

**Conclusion**

The connection between personal and professional relationships and burnout are correlated to a pastoral leader's ability to balance personal life and professional relationships, which influence job satisfaction and leadership effectiveness (Busu, 2020; Cohen & Abedellah, 2015; Faucett, Corwyn, & Poling, 2013). Research suggests that job satisfaction and personal achievement influence each other; a pastoral leader's emotional well-being influences his ability to maintain healthy relationships and manage job demands (Busu, 2020; Adams et al., 2017; Scott & Lovell, 2015). This section is important to the literature because the elements of research, such as emotional intelligence, burnout, and effective leadership, are addressed in the studies discussed. Furthermore, the literature provided in this section specifically identified the influence that job demand, personal relationships, and professional relationships have on emotional well-being and leadership effectiveness among pastoral leaders.

**Implications of Pastoral Stress**

In previous sections, this author presented three dynamics that are believed to induce burnout among pastoral leaders. Job demand, personal relationships, and professional relationships are complex; each of these three dynamics has many unique factors. Although the dynamics discussed above are individualized based upon single studies that address the dynamics, Lewis (2017) concluded that the dynamics discussed, along with others, are encompassed within the category of "occupational stress." This section will further analyze and discuss the implications of burnout pastoral burnout on elements such as overall pastoral well-being, relationships, job satisfaction, and job performance.

*Burnout and Pastoral Well-being*

For the purposes of this literature review, well-being relates to the intrinsic and extrinsic health of an individual. Well-being is founded upon the spiritual, cognitive/psychological

(emotion), and physical health of an individual. Spiritual and cognitive/psychological health relate to one's intrinsic well-being, and physical health relates to extrinsic well-being. These dynamics influence a state of wellness depending upon depletion or positive reserves of spiritual, cognitive/psychological (emotion), and physical health (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Salwen et al., 2017; Fisher, 2011).

The implications of burnout may be observed in three stages: the first stage of exhaustion may create emotional and physical fatigue (Lewis, 2017; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). In relation to a pastoral leader, emotional fatigue may deplete a pastor's positivity and motivation to complete tasks, mentor others, lead effectively, and maintain healthy behaviors and relationships (Lewis, 2017). Emotional fatigue may also create anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal (Lewis, 2017). Physical fatigue is believed to influence a pastoral leader's desire and motivation to complete tasks adversely, leaving the pastor feeling physically depleted of energy, and may create unhealthy issues in the body that may require medication (Lewis, 2017).

The second stage is cynicism (Lewis, 2017; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Cynicism creates negativity and scornful behaviors towards followers and co-workers; furthermore, cynicism causes a negative perception of the job, and distrust is often observed because of cynicism (Lewis, 2017; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Cynicism may cause pastoral leaders to withdraw as a mental guard against future stress and frustration. Pastors may exhibit such behaviors towards individuals that cause contention, have betrayed the pastor previously, and/or other leaders who have caused emotional harm to the pastor (Lewis, 2017).

Finally, the third stage is inefficacy. Maslach and Jackson (1981) defined inefficacy as a feeling of insufficiency, negative self-image, and the perception of being unable to be productive. Inefficacy is believed to leave the pastoral leader feeling overwhelmed, even in the

basic duties and roles of his/her office (Lewis, 2017). Inefficacy also diminishes one's self-awareness, self-efficacy, and sense of worth (Lewis, 2017; Cohen & Abedellah, 2015; Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

The three stages of burnout have been used in studies to identify and understand how pastors who experience burnout display signs of the three stages, how pastors cope with burnout, and how each stage impacts a pastor's well-being, relationships with others, and job performance. Lewis (2017) suggested that all three stages of burnout are related to a pastor's overall well-being, and a pastor's well-being influences the severity to which burnout stages are experienced. Stages of burnout have significant influence and implications on a pastor's professional and personal life (Lewis, 2017).

### *Diminished Self-efficacy*

Self-efficacy refers to the belief and motivation in accomplishing a task or goal and manifesting the intrinsic "can do" spirit (Johnson, 2017). Alfred Bandura (1977) defined self-efficacy as belief about the ability to complete a task that is specific to a performance goal (Johnson, 2017). Lewis (2017) conducted a study that identified the causation and implications of pastoral burnout. Lewis (2017) found that a pastor's self-efficacy is one of the first dynamics negatively impacted during burnout. Pastors who experience diminished self-efficacy often become depressed and develop feelings of unworthiness. The studied pastors also displayed observable frustration with others, developed anxiety, and began to neglect some aspects of their spiritual disciplines such as prayer and reading the Bible (Lewis, 2017).

Lewis (2017) noted that the pastoral participants diminished self-efficacy resulted from dynamics that created burnout, such as working with families in crisis, receiving little or no gratitude, feeling ineffective, working at over-load, and receiving low social support. The

implications of these dynamics left the participants feeling like there was no purpose for their actions; they were not able to help individuals in need successfully, and the participants began to withdraw from their families (Lewis, 2017).

Another implication of burnout is found in McGarity's (2016) study. McGarity evaluated the influence of social media on a pastor's well-being. The study revealed that social media applications, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat, created burnout among the pastoral participants. The participants reported feeling emotionally exhausted because of personal drama, political discourse, the perception of a perfect life presented by others, and the non-stop availability that social media brings. The participants reported feeling anxious, and desired to avoid others. Some reported marital discord, a decrease in spiritual discipline, physical exhaustion, and depression. The implications of burnout in McGarity's study suggest that the participants did not believe they had autonomy, experienced physical exhaustion because they felt obligated to interact with others on social media, and the emotional strain created exhaustion and the desire to become withdrawn. These types of behaviors are often created and displayed because of diminished self-efficacy due to burnout (Lewis, 2017; McGarity, 2016).

### *Diminished Relationships*

A pastoral ministry is founded on relationships. The role of a pastor embraces shepherding, loving others, correcting others, and preaching the Gospel (Cook, 2020). Burnout has negative implications regarding healthy relationships between a pastoral leader, congregants, followers, and the pastor's family (Adams et al., 2017; Louw, 2015). Crosskey, Curry, and Leary (2015) conducted research that explored the influence of burnout among clergy members. The research indicated that clergy who experienced burnout became emotionally withdrawn,

distanced themselves from social interactions and their families, and reduced their spiritual disciplines.

These types of behaviors develop negative interactions between the clergy members, their followers, and their family members (Crosskey, Curry, & Leary, 2015). The participants in the study reported feeling ashamed because of the decline in their spiritual disciplines. They also reported feeling anger and guilt towards themselves because of their reclusiveness towards family members and friends. Finally, the participants displayed diminished self-concept (efficacy) because they did not feel worthy to minister to others because of the shame and guilt that brought out an idealized self-transgressive image (Crosskey, Curry, & Leary, 2015). Pastoral leaders desire to have meaningful relationships; however, the implications of burnout in a pastor's professional and personal relationships may be significant, not in terms of someone else's perception of the pastor, but in how the pastor perceives his/herself if relationships are neglected or diminished (Crosskey, Curry, & Leary, 2015).

### Emotional and Spiritual Well-being

Spiritual well-being and emotional well-being are two intrinsic dynamics that are believed to have significant influence on the ways in which pastors cope with experiences of burnout. During burnout, pastors may struggle if their spiritual well-being is not healthy because their spiritual well-being is foundational to their identities as Christians and a prerequisite to their roles as pastors (Salwen et al., 2017). According to the Salwen et al. study, participants reported that their emotional well-being impacted their spiritual well-being and vice versa.

Low emotional well-being led pastoral participants to report feeling depressed, anxious, and thinking their self-worth was less than desirable. These types of feelings led the participants to a decrease in spiritual well-being as they reported they did not feel like praying, reading their

Bibles, or practicing other spiritual disciplines (Salwen et al., 2017). Likewise, the low spiritual well-being created feelings of anxiety, low self-esteem, and feelings of unworthiness among the participants.

In Crosskey, Curry, and Leary's (2015) study, participants reported that burnout left them feeling emotionally and spiritually drained because of guilt, shame, and role transgression. Participants acknowledged that burnout caused feelings of resentment, anger, and social anxiety; therefore, participants felt guilty because of their intrinsic and extrinsic behaviors towards others (Crosskey, Curry, & Leary, 2015). The participant pastors also reported feeling shame and guilt because they did not spend studying, praying, and meditating. The lack of spiritual discipline left participants feeling unworthy and shamed (Crosskey, Curry, & Leary, 2015).

These two studies are significant to this literature review because they provide two current examples of the relationship between emotional and spiritual well-being. The research discussed in this section implies poor emotional well-being may negatively impact spiritual well-being, and lack of healthy spirituality may adversely impact healthy emotional well-being. The relativity of this information to the research topic is found in the influence burnout may have on a pastoral leader's emotional and spiritual well-being. Salwen (2017) concluded that healthy emotional and spiritual well-being are two key components needed among pastoral leaders if the pastoral leader is to build meaningful relationships, to effectively lead others, to develop a strong sense of self-esteem, and to cope with burnout. Therefore, pastoral leaders that exhibit high levels of emotional intelligence and practice spiritual disciplines are more likely to combat burnout and maintain a healthy holistic well-being (Busu, 2020; Selwen, 2017; Carrington, 2015).

**Combatting Burnout**

"Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job" (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018, p. 268; Maslach et al., 2001, p. 397). Over the past twenty years, studies have been conducted to understand the causes and implications of burnout among helping professionals; however, more studies need to be conducted among clergy member, in particular, to help researchers understand the impacts of burnout among clergy members (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018). As more studies concerning burnout among clergy members are conducted, more answers may become apparent concerning effective methods for combatting burnout (Adams et al., 2017).

Although more studies are recommended, the research conducted over the past twenty years provides some insight on effective methods clergy members have reported that assist them with combatting burnout. Frederick, Dunbar, and Thai (2018) argued that clergy members experience burnout as a result of emotional, spiritual, and physical exhaustion. This occurs because pastoral leaders give of themselves, often without any type of reciprocation. Furthermore, pastors may experience vicarious post-traumatic stress and feelings of helplessness, becoming depersonalized and objectifying people, and feelings of emotional and spiritual abandonment (Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2020; Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; Adams et al., 2017).

Combatting burnout is not an easy experience due to the strain pastors experience in this helping profession. Pastors may combat burnout through several methods. First, practicing mindfulness is believed to assist pastoral leaders in coping with burnout and understanding their emotional status during stressful situations (Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018). Mindfulness refers to the awareness gained by intentionally paying attention, without judgment, to

experiences, feelings, and thoughts about an event as the moment unfolds (Luken & Sammons, 2016).

Practicing mindfulness is believed to enable one to understand how a moment impacts cognitive thought processes, emotions, beliefs, and values. Mindfulness also reduces situational avoidance. Luken and Sammons (2016) argued that situational avoidance contributes to burnout and social withdrawal. Therefore, practicing mindfulness assists with combatting burnout because the individual experiencing stress has a cognitive understanding of the factors creating the stress. Individuals who practice mindfulness are less likely to avoid situations and more able to navigate through their emotions, beliefs, and values without judgment towards the dynamics that create stress (Luken & Sammons, 2016).

Another way to combat burnout is through physical exercise. Webb and Bopp (2017) conducted a study that evaluated the relationship between physical exercise and well-being among pastoral leaders experiencing burnout. The study suggests that physical exercise increases self-efficacy, self-image, cognitive ability, emotional well-being, and fulfillment (Webb & Bopp, 2017). The participants in the study reported feeling more confident in their abilities, and they had more self-confidence because they felt better in body and mind. Webb and Bopp concluded that physical exercise effectively combats burnout among clergy members.

Finally, spiritual disciplines assist pastoral leaders with combatting burnout. McClanahan (2018) and Lewis (2017) also conducted two different studies that evaluated the causation of burnout among Christian pastors and best approaches for burnout resistance. Both studies evaluated the relationship between emotional and spiritual well-being; however, spiritual discipline concepts were also heavily discussed. McClanahan (2018) suggested that pastoral leaders should practice daily devotion without deviation. This includes daily prayer, reading and

studying scripture, and meditation. Praying and meditation is believed to provide clarity during

adversity, and reading scripture provides answers and direction according to Biblical principles

(McClanahan, 2018; Lewis, 2017). Meditation is also believed to enable one to distinguish

emotionally charged reactions versus reactions directed by one's spirit (Lewis, 2017). Finally,

fasting and meditating on specific scriptures may also assist with combatting burnout. Meditating

on biblical scriptures enables the believer to connect to the living word(s) of God and apply them

to life, while fasting disconnects one from the natural and connects the believer to God in spirit

(McClanahan, 2018; Lewis, 2017).

This section is important to the literature because it provides a look at natural revelation

that supports the best practices for combatting burnout among pastors. The research presented in

this section noted possible best practices a pastoral leader may implement to assist in combating

burnout. Finally, this section addressed best practices to combat burnout from emotional,

physical, and spiritual contexts.

**Conclusion**

The phenomenon of burnout among employees in helping professions has become a topic

of interest over the past 20 years. Helping professions such as medicine, teaching, public safety,

and ministry, are believed to create the greatest burnout because of the nature of helping, giving,

and serving (Adams et al., 2017; Carrington, 2015; Scott & Lovell, 2015). Burnout is created

because of over exhaustion from emotional, mental, and physical strain, caused by the demands

placed upon these leaders (Adams et al., 2017). The implications of burnout may be found in

mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical depletion. Such depletions may leave pastoral leaders

feeling helpless, hopeless, ashamed, in emotional and spiritual distress, and physically exhausted

(Frederick, Dunbar, & Thai, 2018; McClanahan, 2018; Adams et al., 2017; Lewis, 2016; Luke & Sammons, 2016).

Such implications usually have a negative effect on a pastor's personal and professional relationships and may cause pastoral leaders to become withdrawn from others (Johnson, 2017; Lewis, 2017). The nature of pastoral duties requires pastors to maintain healthy relationships with others; therefore, pastoral leaders may benefit from recognizing their emotions and behaviors as they experience burnout (Cook, 2020; Carrington, 2015). Mindfulness, spiritual discipline, and physical exercise are three practices that may assist pastoral leaders with healthy behaviors during burnout. The research presented in this section of this literature review reflects best practices for combatting burnout, implications of burnout on pastoral leaders, and causes of pastoral burnout.

## Rationale for Study and Gap in the Literature

Pastoral-ship is not a "job" that one embraces for wealth or fame. A pastor may experience several challenges while fulfilling the duty of his or her office. Pastors assist followers during moments of their lives that require love, empathy, compassion, and wisdom; therefore, pastors are believed to be servant leaders because of their capacity to serve while leading (shepherding) (Cincala & Chase, 2018; Carrington, 2015).

Pastors are more than "preachers" because they are presented with challenges found within emotionally charged situations that may lead to negative physical behaviors. The balance between a pastor's professional and personal life often becomes entangled if the pastor cannot establish boundaries for each (Bahnaru, Runcan, & Runcan, 2018). This issue of balance becomes apparent when a pastoral leader allows himself to become readily available and neglects his own self-care and that of his family (Adams et al., 2017).

The rationale for this study stems from this author's personal experience as a pastoral leader that experienced burnout. Many pastoral leaders do not discuss their need for support from others, and they do not wish to be transparent during moments of weakness. A pastor's unwillingness to receive support from others, acknowledge the issue and dynamics of burnout, and neglect self-care increases burnout. This author recognizes the severity of burnout among pastoral leaders, as burnout directly impacts a pastor's intrinsic health as well as his/her relationship with others. The rationale behind this study is to increase understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership during burnout. The relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness is important to this author as emotional intelligence is believed to correlate with spiritual intelligence, and both intelligences are believed to influence leadership effectiveness during burnout (Cook, 2020; Carrington, 2015; Cohen & Abedellah, 2015).

**Researcher's Relationship to the Research**

This researcher has been in ministry, serving as a leader for approximately 24 years, and this researcher is a third-generation pastor. Throughout the years in ministry, the researcher has observed the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual implications leadership in ministry has administered upon his grandfather, father, and himself. The implications of pastoral leadership are rewarding; however, some demands of pastorate care are challenging, often creating emotional and spiritual stress, physical demands from the number of hours required for effective leadership, strain on interpersonal relationships, and stress from balancing personal life and pastoral obligations.

This researcher has personally experienced burnout that influenced the dynamics of spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional well-being. The demands of pastoral duties often left

the researcher neglecting personal self-care and attention to the needs of family members. This experience created a negative emotional effect, spiritual discipline depletion, and feelings of loneliness that resulted in social withdrawal.

Furthermore, over the past decade, the researcher has engaged in conversations with pastors from various cultures and regions throughout the world. The pastors often express feelings of emotional dissonance, the need to withdraw from others to have time for themselves, and feelings of burnout. This researcher observed themes within conversations with various pastoral leaders that directed the research to be conducted towards better understanding the role of emotional intelligence during burnout as it applies to leadership effectiveness. In this researcher's personal experience, issues outside of spirituality resulted from of an emotionally charged challenge. Over time, the consequence of constant emotional challenges created physical illnesses within this researcher's body and left this researcher with the effects of burnout. The central dynamic that enabled the researcher to overcome burnout was spiritual discipline; however, the influence of emotional intelligence brought awareness to the researcher and enabled this researcher to recognize depletions and the need for self-care.

The researcher began speaking with other pastors concerning their emotional intelligence, burnout levels, and self-care. Therein lies the topic that will be researched as many pastors reported they were in emotional distress and did not practice healthy self-care. This researcher also has a bachelor's and master's degree in psychology, and the awareness of emotional intelligence, burnout, and leadership effectiveness became an interest. This researcher began examining the literature relevant to the topic in his doctorate program at Liberty University. It became apparent that no studies directly address the relationship between experienced burnout and emotional intelligence regarding leadership effectiveness. This researcher desires to research

this topic to add to the body of scholarly work already conducted from both an empirical and a theological lens. This researcher desires to research this topic to add to the body of scholarly work already conducted from both an empirical and a theological lens in hopes of bringing more awareness to clergy members regarding burnout causation, the role of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during experiences of burnout, and the role of emotional intelligence during as a possible means to combat burnout.

**Gap in Literature**

The literature provided in this literature review supports the topics of emotional intelligence and burnout. This researcher provided the servant leadership theory as the foundational leadership theory most used by pastors and/or clergy members. Although a heavy amount of research explains, analyzes, and discusses emotional intelligence and burnout, there is no literature that identifies the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness among pastors experiencing burnout.

Therein lies a gap in research because there are two theoretical components to this research. First, the theological framework addressed burnout in the Bible and identified emotional intelligence in the Bible; however, to this researcher's knowledge, there is not any literature that identifies the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership among Biblical leaders. This literature review identifies both dynamics among Biblical examples such as Jesus, Moses, Elijah, and the Apostle Paul.

The gap recognized in the theoretical context is the lack of research that identifies relationships between emotional intelligence and effective leadership among non-denominational pastors. Past research has evaluated the influence of burnout on leadership effectiveness among pastors in specific religious organizations. Research has also evaluated causation the of burnout,

best practices to combat burnout, and the relationship between emotional intelligence; however, the gap observed by this author falls within a lack of literature that recognizes the self-proclaimed relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness among non-denominational pastors that experience burnout. Finally, another gap in literature is a lack of research that evaluates the servant leadership style compared to other leadership styles to measure leadership effectiveness and levels of emotional intelligence during experiences of burnout. Such research may be conducted as a mixed method study or a quantitative study so that the data may be quantified rather than expressed through open ended life experiences alone.

## Profile of the Current Study

Employee burnout has been a topic of interest since the early 1970s. Burnout was first coined by Herbert Freudenberger in 1974 (Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010). Burnout has been defined by several researchers and theorists; however, Freudenberger defined burnout as, "The process of deterioration in the care and professional attention given to users of human services organizations" (Coker & Omoluabi, 2009, p. 232; Freudenberger, 1974). Numerous contributing factors are believed to be responsible for burnout. Still, research indicates that each person experiencing burnout may feel burnout based upon different environmental influencers, behavioral reinforcements, or conflict indicators based upon the individual's intrinsic intelligence traits and personality traits (Scott & Lovell, 2015; Zopiatis & Constanti, 2010).

Although burnout has primarily been explored among business professionals, recent studies have investigated the phenomenon of burnout among clergy leaders, including pastoral leaders. The intrinsic intelligence traits mentioned above embrace emotional intelligence (Scott & Lovell, 2015). Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize self-awareness,

self-efficacy, levels of empathy, interpersonal relationships, and motivation (Killian, 2012).

Modern researchers in Christian research have recognized pastoral leaders as career

professionals; therefore, over the past ten years, research has been conducted that investigates

emotional intelligence among pastoral leaders (Chandler, 2009). Pastoral leaders experience

burnout due to intrinsic, spiritual, and environmental factors (Scott & Lovell, 2015; Chandler,

2009). Even though these two phenomena have been individually researched, no current

research explores the firsthand account of emotional intelligence among senior pastoral leaders

who have experienced burnout while leading in non-denominational churches with 50-500

congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States.

Having the information above in mind, the purpose of this phenomenological study was

to explore factors that contribute to burnout and to better understand the self-reported role of

emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior

pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500

congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The study was guided by the

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Self-reported Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT)

among 12 senior pastors who have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with

50-500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The participant population

was categorized into sample sub-categories by their church sizes. The logic for sub-categories

is found in the ability to understand the influence and self-proclaimed role of emotional

intelligence on leadership effectiveness, and varying effects, if any, of burnout among the

participants based on their church sizes. The participant population had at least three years of

experience in a senior pastoral leadership position to establish a timeline that validated possible

burnout, causes of burnout, and the role of emotional intelligence during experienced burnout.

The participant demographics are not limited to a specific gender, race, or age. The study was delimited to 12 pastoral leaders that are independent or non-denominational in theological practice and fit the criteria of a participant who exhibits emotional intelligence and has experienced or is experiencing burnout.

Inclusion questionnaires developed from the MBI and SSEIT were sent via email or in-person to the participants. They identified the participants' level(s) of burnout and self-reported levels of emotional intelligence. This author used a self-developed inclusion questionnaire that was based on the dynamics of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) to assess the potential participants' burnout. The inclusion questionnaire did not reflect direct questions from the MBI; however, the questions for the inclusion questionnaire were developed from what this researcher believed to be the main overarching theoretical themes found in the MBI without using direct questions in the MBI. Maslach and Jackson created the MBI to measure the level of burnout an individual or group of individuals experienced by assessing their emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach and Jackson used the MBI to further highlight the long-term impacts of burnout identifying the physical, emotional, and psychological strain burnout imposes on an individual (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Jimenez et al., 2017).

This author utilized the Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) to create questions in the inclusion criteria. The questions in the inclusion criteria were not directly taken from the SSEIT. This researcher attempted to gain permission to use the SSEIT; however, the owner did not contact this author to grant permission. Therefore, the questions and the inclusion criteria were based on the theoretical support and validation found in the SSEIT. According to O'Conner et al. (2019), Mayer and Salovey constructed the SSEIT as an

instrument that measures personal perception of emotional intelligence. The SSEIT is valuable in selecting participants by identifying participants who exhibit high levels of self-reported emotional intelligence. Stratified convenient sampling was used to gain the participants that met the inclusion criteria, and it enabled control for church sizes as the church size was believed to be a confounding variable in this study. Anonymity was granted to the participants using coding and pseudonyms to ensure that the participants' identity was confidential. Finally, the data collected through interviews was interpreted through parent nodes and child nodes so themes, schemes, and/or patterns were identified within the participants' answers to the research questions.

**CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), "Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4). Leedy and Ormrod (2018) assert that a major dynamic in qualitative research is that data is collected through real-world experience and strives to explain those experiences through new and existing human concepts. This is done through such methods as conducting human observations and personal interviews, collection of historical artifacts, researcher integration into various cultures to understand a cultural phenomenon and conducting longitudinal studies to understand human dynamics of cause and effect pertaining to a specific topic of interest better. Therefore, this author concluded that a qualitative methodology was the most suitable methodology that enabled the researcher to understand the phenomenon of the topic "The Self-proclaimed Role of Emotional Intelligence on Pastoral Leadership Effectiveness During Burnout" more completely. Chapter Three provides a synopsis of the research design by identifying the research problem and purpose, a list of research questions, and discusses the research methodology and design. Then, the research setting, participants, and role of the researcher are identified and discussed. Finally, ethical considerations are discussed and analyzed.

## Research Design Synopsis

### The Research Problem

The topic of burnout has been of major interest in the past 15 years. Employee burnout occurs when employees experience physical, mental, and emotional distress or fatigue resulting from their job duties (Jimenez et al., 2017). Herbert Freudenberger is coined an expert in the field of research that investigated the dynamics of employee burnout. Freudenberger evaluated

the behaviors employees exhibited in response to intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influenced an employee's motivation, morale, efficacy, self-esteem, and overall job performance (Jimenez et al., 2017; Freudenberger, 1974). Although Freudenberger's research was initially conducted in a secular job setting, research conducted over the past ten years implies that clergy and pastoral leaders experience burnout due to intrinsic and extrinsic stressors (Scott & Lovell, 2015). Pastors are faced with several challenges found within the duties of their office that may induce psychological, emotional, and physical fatigue.

McGarity (2016) suggested that some pastors experience emotional and psychological fatigue because of the ever-growing use of social media platforms and technology. The use of social media and different technologies such as Instagram, Snap Chat, Facebook, Twitter, and others create a sense of accessibility to pastors on a 24-hour basis. Before applications such as those listed above, pastors were not as accessible to congregants as they are currently. For example, prior to the use of social media platforms, pastoral leaders were called at their offices, homes, and visited by congregants, so expectations of accessibility have always been high for pastors. Also, in the past, people expected the pastor to do hospital visits, not staff or laypersons. Pastors have always faced burnout because of these expectations, though the dynamics have changed and may have placed more instantaneous demands on pastoral leaders. Therefore, the demand for pastors to be readily available to individuals through social media platforms may create emotional, psychological, and physical fatigue that contributes to burnout (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2016). The burnout pastors experience due to constant accessibility may cause pastors to distance themselves because of the inability to care for themselves (McClanahan, 2018; McGarity, 2016).

Pastors may also experience burnout because of vicarious trauma (Krotz, 2019). Vicarious trauma results from individuals taking intrinsic ownership of the hardships others experience (Krotz, 2019). Pastoral leaders may also experience vicarious trauma by taking on roles such as spiritual advisor, counselor, or mentor. Pastoral leaders may experience emotional transference as they collaborate with others through life's challenges (Krotz, 2019). Vicarious trauma may create feelings of loneliness, helplessness, and negative emotional effect among pastors, which induces burnout. These dynamics are believed to impact a pastor's leadership effectiveness if proper self-care and coping mechanisms are not in place to support healthy emotional and spiritual well-being (Krotz, 2019; Fee, 2018; McClanahan, 2018).

Burnout is not limited to the dynamics discussed above; burnout can occur because of several factors that are unique to individuals. These factors include coping with environmental structures, identifying emotional challenges, balancing work/life issues, possessing high self-awareness and efficacy, and maintaining healthy spiritual discipline and self-care (Krotz, 2019; Fee, 2018; McClanahan; McGarity, 2016). Although burnout among clergy members has been researched, Fee (2018) suggests that burnout in the context of specific churches or denominations has not been researched. Additional research is also needed on the role of emotional intelligence during the experience of burnout. Specifically, research is needed that examines the potential relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness during elevated burnout among senior or solo pastors.

Leaders in a church setting have not been viewed as "traditional organizational" leaders because traditional organizational leaders have been studied through the lens of business theories and leadership trends. However, over the past ten years, clergy leaders, such as pastors, have been labeled as leaders in a helping profession (Adams et al., 2017). The inclusion of pastoral

leaders in the field of helping professions has broken the traditional methods of pastoral research from a singular theological lens that addresses sacred texts, social interactions, and spiritual support (Krotz, 2019; Ward, 2012). The research problem is found in the gap in research that investigates the relationship between the role of self-proclaimed emotional intelligence and pastoral leadership effectiveness during perceived burnout; therefore, this author concluded that a phenomenological research design is the most appropriate research design that captured the first-hand, lived, and shared experiences of the participant pastors who experience burnout and continue to exhibit effective leadership behaviors that may be positively influenced by emotional intelligence.

**Research Purpose**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to feelings of burnout and the role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during experiences of burnout among 12 senior pastors who have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. Burnout is generally defined as a state of psychological and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that may occur among individuals who interact with other people (Adams et al., 2017). Emotional intelligence is defined as one's ability to exhibit high levels of self-awareness, self-efficacy, levels of empathy, interpersonal relationships, motivation, and the ability to identify the emotional state of others (Prilipko, Beauford, & Antelo, 2019). The theory that guided this study is the burnout theory created by Herbert Freudenberger (1974).

Freudenberger identified the diminishment of professional and personal self-care during levels of exhaustion due to the nature of professional tasks. Research indicates that emotional

intelligence has a significant influence on leaders' effectiveness and their ability to combat

burnout due to the nature of self-awareness that emotional intelligence brings (Scott & Lovell,

2015). The focus of this study explored the self-proclaimed role of pastoral leaders' emotional

intelligence and leadership effectiveness during burnout.

## Research Questions

The following Research Questions guided this study:

**RQ 1.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive burnout effecting their own overall well-being?

**RQ 2.** What factors contribute to senior pastors' burnout, specifically those pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 3.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their interpersonal relationships with subordinate leaders?

**RQ 4.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their self-esteem?

**RQ 5.** What role does emotional intelligence play on senior pastors' leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 6.** To what degree, if any, is the size of the church a differentiating variable in the responses of the participants in this study?

## Research Design and Methodology

The study was a qualitative, phenomenological study. A qualitative, phenomenological

study enabled this author to obtain the participants' first-hand perceptions and experiences

regarding the role of the participants' emotional intelligence on the participants' leadership

effectiveness during experienced burnout. Using the research design also enabled participants to

answer open- ended questions that provided this author with in-depth data that expressed the

participants' worldviews. The questions identified various causations of burnout among the participants, identified the best practices described by the participants utilized to combat burnout. Themes and patterns were discovered in the participants' open-ended answers that illustrated the participants' perceptions of the role of emotional intelligence on their leadership effectiveness during burnout.

Qualitative research is defined as a research methodology conducted to explore a concept or worldview through firsthand accounts, views, and perceptions of those involved with the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research is gathered through narrative and phenomenological research, grounded theory, case studies, and an ethnographic study. This author will use the phenomenological research design.

A phenomenological qualitative research design (PQRD) is centered around psychological and philosophical dynamics of interest (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). PQRD enables a researcher to study the gathered data that projects a phenomenon through the lived experiences of study participants (McGregor, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A PQRD aims to study several participants who share the same experience of a phenomenon in hopes of understanding themes, patterns, causes, and consequences among the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The significance of using a PQRD is found in the ability of the researcher to gain firsthand perceptions and testimonies from participants regarding their understanding and possession of EI, to identify dynamics that provoked burnout from the participants' firsthand experiences, and to understand better what, if any, role EI has on participants' leadership effectiveness during their burnout. As with most qualitative methodologies, a PQRD enabled this author to gather information through interviews, observations, historical documents, and other

artifacts (McGregor, 2018). This author concluded that a PQRD was the most appropriate

research design for the suggested research topic because of the participants' subjective, first-

hand testimony regarding the phenomenon of burnout and EI.

<div align="center">**Research Setting**</div>

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), selecting the correct research setting

is a critical dynamic when conducting qualitative research. Qualitative research should be

conducted with the utmost integrity on behalf of the participant(s) and the researcher

(Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Participants in a study may not be truthful, may feel

pressured to participate, may experience distress, or may even withdraw from the study if

the research setting is not appropriate for the participant (Creswell & Creswell, 2018;

Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

This researcher used in-person and virtual interviews during the research process.

The participants were given the choice of in-person or virtual interviews to ensure that

the participants had the most comfortable environment during the interview process. If

the participants chose in-person interviews, this researcher traveled to a church building,

office, or another venue of the participant's choosing. If the participants chose a virtual

platform, this author offered platforms such as Zoom, WhatsApp, or any other platform

the participant chose to utilize. This researcher took notes, recorded the interviews using

a recording application on the I-phone, uploaded the interviews into NVivo, and

transcribed the interviews.

The logic behind allowing the participants to choose the setting was to have

flexibility to ensure the participants' needs and desires were met so that the most reliable

and valid data was collected (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The organizational setting

varied because the participant pastoral leaders were leaders in non-denominational churches in the Southeastern region of the United States consisting of 50 to 500 congregants.

As suggested by Creswell and Creswell (2018), this author was open to any ethical location wherein a participant desired to be interviewed; however, the ideal setting was at the church where the participant was a leader. Doing so enabled this researcher to observe the participant's behaviors in his leadership environment, physically to observe documents and/or artifacts in the setting that the participants believed to be of importance and to observe the participant's interactions with subordinate leaders (if applicable in the setting).

## Participants

The participant sample included 12 senior-level pastors that lead in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants located in the Southeastern region of the United States. The participant sample was categorized by church size. The logic for sub-categories is found in the ability to understand better the influence and self-proclaimed role of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness as well as varying effects, if any, of burnout among the participants based on their church sizes. The sample membership criteria were limited to with at least three years of experience in a senior pastoral leader position to establish a timeline that supported the possible burnout, causes of burnout, and the role of emotional intelligence during experienced burnout. The participants' demographics were not limited to a specific gender, race, or age. The study was limited to 12 pastoral leaders who lead a non-denominational church and fit the

inclusion criteria of a participant who exhibits emotional intelligence and has experienced
or is experiencing burnout.

The inclusion criteria questionnaire was provided to the participants to identify
the participants' feelings of burnout and the presence of their self-reported awareness of
emotional intelligence. Because this study is a phenomenological study, this researcher
utilized the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) as a guide for the inclusion questionnaire
to identify the potential participants' acknowledgment of self-reported burnout. Maslach
and Jackson created the MBI to measure the level of burnout an individual experienced
by assessing emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment (de
Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Maslach and Jackson used the MBI to
highlight further the long-term impacts of burnout by identifying the physical, emotional,
and psychological strains burnout imposes on an individual (de Vine & Morgan, 2020;
Jimenez et al., 2017).

This researcher also utilized the Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test
(SSEIT) as the theoretical framework for the inclusion criteria. According to O'Conner et
al. (2019), Mayer and Salovey (1997) constructed the SSEIT as an instrument that
measures personal perception of emotional intelligence. The SSEIT was a valuable
inventory that guided the inclusion questions used in selecting the study participants by
identifying participants who acknowledged their own self-reported emotional
intelligence. This author used purposive, stratified sampling to gain participants who met
the participant criteria. Purposive, stratified sampling provided better control for the
targeted church sizes, as church size was believed to be a confounding variable in this
study. Anonymity was granted to the participants using coding and pseudonyms to ensure

the participants' identities were confidential. Finally, because this study is a qualitative, phenomenological study, the MBI and SSEIT were used as guides only for the inclusion criteria questions, and the data is not quantifiable.

## Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in this study was straightforward. The researcher became a "human instrument" by way of collecting data through personal interviews with the participants, building ethical, professional relationships with the participants by establishing and building trust and rapport, and reporting accurate, non-biased findings through personal observations of the participants' behaviors and data collected from the interviews. The researcher used strong self-management skills during the research process as the researcher has personally experienced burnout while in a pastoral role; therefore, the researcher did not insert any emotion or opinions that would influence the participants' responses or views.

The researcher's role was to transcribe the participants' answers to the research questions accurately, to maintain self-awareness during the research process, and to ensure the participants were comfortable and any needs were met (within ethical boundaries) during the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a researcher conducting qualitative studies must maintain ethical and non-biased behaviors to ensure the data collection and analysis process is not tainted. Therefore, the researcher fulfilled the role of a non-biased, non-judgmental, and ethical researcher so that the data collection and analysis process was completed with the utmost integrity.

**Ethical Considerations**

While the research did not include children, inmates, mentally disabled persons, or other vulnerable populations, there are ethical considerations to discuss. One ethical consideration was found in the possible emotional or psychological stress participants could experience while discussing the causation(s) of their burnout; however, no participants expressed discomfort while discussing the influence of burnout on their well-being, interpersonal and social skills, and leadership behaviors.

Another ethical consideration involved providing the participants with anonymity and confidentiality. Because the participants are not limited to gender, race, or age, ethical considerations were given in respect of the participants' cultural differences and demographics. Therefore, coding and labeling were utilized to maintain the participants' confidential identity, as instructed by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

Finally, ethical considerations were reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) before any research being conducted. According to the Liberty University IRB (2021), the following criteria must be met before the IRB will approve a research project:

> Risks to participants are minimized: (i) by using procedures which are consistent with sound research design, and which do not unnecessarily expose participants to risk, and (ii) whenever appropriate, by using procedures already being performed on the participants for diagnostic or treatment purposes.

> Risks to participants are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to participants, and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result. In evaluating risks and benefits, the IRB considers only those risks and benefits that may result from the research (as distinguished from risks and benefits of therapies participants would receive even if not participating in the research). The IRB should not consider possible long-range effects of applying knowledge gained in the research (for example, the possible effects of the research on public policy) as among those research risks that fall within the purview of its responsibility. Selection of participants is equitable. In making this assessment the IRB takes into account the purposes of the research and the setting in which the research will be conducted and is particularly cognizant of the special problems of research involving

vulnerable populations, such as children, prisoners, pregnant women, mentally disabled persons, or economically or educationally disadvantaged persons.

Informed consent will be sought from each prospective subject or the subject's legally authorized representative, in accordance with 45 CFR 46.116.

Informed consent will be appropriately documented, in accordance with 45 CFR 46.117.

The research plan makes adequate provision for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of participants.

There are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of participants and to maintain the confidentiality of data." (Liberty University Internal Review Board, 2021)

The statements provided above highlight the IRB's participation in the approval process in ensuring ethical considerations were thoroughly evaluated. The IRB is useful as an ethical guide and resource for researchers to utilize before and during the actual research process. Creswell and Creswell (2018) conclude that the IRB acts as a guide that attempts to provide a researcher with all possible ethical considerations to steer the research in a manner that protects all individuals involved; therefore, this author conducted the research within the ethical guidelines and considerations provided by Liberty University's IRB.

## Data Collection Methods and Instruments

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2018), the process of data collection requires a researcher to use the correct data collection instrument(s) depending on the type of study that is being conducted. The data collection instrument(s) used in various studies provided correct or skewed information that influences the data analysis process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). The following sections will provide information regarding the data collection methods, instruments, and data analysis that were used in this author's proposed, qualitative research design.

**Data Collection Method**

Most qualitative studies are believed to involve an iterative process that may require a researcher to move back and forth between data collection, analysis, and interpretation; therefore, a researcher is encouraged to be flexible during the data collection, analysis, and the interpretation process (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). The data collection process may also require a researcher to modify certain elements of the research questions, the interview process, or the data collection instrumentation, depending on the needs of participants and the evolution of the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Leedy and Ormrod (2018) noted that collection strategies, such as strong organization skills, the ability to recognize themes and patterns, strategies for coding data, establishing sub-categorical data, and accurate data interpretation skills, provide support for the research questions, problem statement, and reliability and validity of the research conducted.

This author's phenomenological qualitative research investigated the first-hand experiences of the participants' perception of the influence of emotional intelligence on the participants' pastoral leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout. Therefore, this author used a stratified, purposive sampling method to obtain the desired sample group of participants. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2018), stratified sampling implies that a researcher subdivides sample groups from a population equally. Because the participant population consisted of 12 pastoral leaders who lead in churches with 50 to 500 congregants, this author utilized a stratified sampling to create sub-categorical groups, such as pastoral leaders in churches with less than 100 congregants, those between 101 to 200, and those between 201 to 300, 301 to 400, and 401 to 500.

The sub-categories did not provide this author with a significant understanding of the role of emotional intelligence among the pastoral leader participants in each subcategory. The sub-categories did enable this author to understand better the influence and perceived causation, if any, of pastoral burnout among the participants in each subcategory that may be related to the size of a congregation. The data collection methodology also required the use of questionnaires that identified burnout and the presence of self-perceived emotional intelligence, personal interviews, and any other data provided by the participants that were useful in gaining first-hand information from the participants' perspective.

*Interviews*

Interviews are widely used by researchers who conduct qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Interviews are conducted face-to-face, using virtual technology, and over the phone in most qualitative studies (Gray et al., 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). When conducting a face-to-face interview, the researcher should do so in an environment chosen by the participant that is most comfortable for the participant (Gray et al., 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Virtual interviews are also accepted in qualitative studies. Technology such as Skype, Zoom, and other virtual platforms enable researchers and participants to speak in person if variables such as distance, time, and scheduling that required virtual platforms (Gray et al., 2020; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

This author completed the participant interviews in a location of the participant's choice, as recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018). The interviews regarding the participants' first-hand experience(s) of burnout, perceived leadership effectiveness, and the perceived role of EI while leading in the office of a pastor were conducted after permission was granted by the IRB to proceed with the research and the participant's completion of the consent form. This

researcher recorded participants' answers to the questions via an audio recording device and then transcribed those answers into a written document, as recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018).

### *Data Collection Instruments*

The first data collection instrument used was the inclusion questionnaire that was sent via email or provided in person to the participants. The inclusion questionnaire identified the candidates' self-perceived emotional intelligence and experiences of burnout. This researcher provided 30 inclusion criteria questionnaires to pastoral leaders who lead non-denominational congregations of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The questionnaires enabled this author to identify the sample group of 12 participants. After the population was selected, this researcher used stratified sampling to divide the participants into equal strata groups. Once the strata groups were established, this researcher utilized NVivo to collect data from the sample group, such as schemes, themes, and patterns found within the participants' answers. The data was transcribed so that this researcher could better understand the relationship(s), if any, between the answers found among the strata groups to understand better the dynamics of pastoral burnout and the self-reported role of EI on leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout.

### Procedures

First, this researcher used the MBI and SSEIT as instruments that enabled support for the inclusion criteria questionnaire. It should be noted that the inclusion criteria questionnaire did not contain any direct questions from either of the instruments because of time constraints to obtain permission, the high cost of purchasing the instruments, and no information that was gathered required quantifiable results. The MBI and SSEIT were used as theoretical guides alone that

enabled this research to provide the most valid and ethical open ended inclusion questions possible. The MBI and SSEIT are considered valid and reliable instruments that measure burnout and emotional intelligence. The instruments were founded on theoretical constructs that provide validity and reliability to both instruments. This researcher did not use the instruments because this study was not a quantitative study. This researcher spoke with the chair for this study, and the conclusion was reached that this researcher was permitted to develop the questions found in the inclusion criteria if the questions were created from the instruments. The inclusion questionnaire consisted of original questions developed by this researcher, and they are supported by theoretical frameworks found in the MBI and SSEIT. The IRB approved the inclusion questions used in this study.

Maslach and Jackson created the MBI in 1981 as an instrument that evaluates one's level(s) of burnout, and the MBI is recognized as a reliable and valid instrument for data collection in the scholarly research community (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Burnout is identified as the influence of stress created in a professional work environment that influences one's sense of personal accomplishment, self-worth, emotional, physical, and psychological wellbeing, interpersonal skills, and self-motivation (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The MBI was used to assess the dynamics mentioned above and identifies the participants' perceived burnout.

The MBI is considered a valid and reliable instrument that has been used to assess burnout in a multitude of past studies (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). The information gathered from the MBI is important to burnout research because the data may illustrate different burnout that are significant to identifying patterns and themes of burnout that are dependent on dynamics such as one's job functions, roles, number of employees, and career field (de Vine, 2020).

Furthermore, the MBI also provides insight regarding the causation of experienced burnout that influence depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Finally, the MBI is recommended by de Vine and Morgan (2020) as the MBI consists of 33 questions, rated on a Likert scale, and takes approximately ten minutes to complete. The convenience of the MBI may encourage participants to take the assessment.

The SSEIT was used as a guide for the inclusion questionnaire by providing a foundation for EI questions that will identify the participants' self-perceived awareness of emotional intelligence. According to O'Conner et al. (2019), the SSEIT was developed by Mayer and Salovey in 1997 as an instrument that evaluates an individual's level of emotional intelligence based on the individual's self-perception. O'Conner et al. (2019) concluded that the instrument is reliable and valid in the research community; however, some critiques argue that the SSEIT may not be as strong as other emotional intelligence assessments because it is founded on an individual's self-perception of emotional intelligence.

The argument may hold some weight if the proposed study was quantitative; however, the subjective nature of the SSEIT was suitable for qualitative research because qualitative research embraces the subjective perceptions of study participants (O'Conner et al., 2019; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Finally, the SSEIT was used as a guide for the inclusion question for convenient assessment, as there are 33 questions. The SSEIT is a suitable instrument to guide the inclusion questions for the proposed study because the SSEIT provided this researcher with an umbrella of baseline questions that best illustrated various levels of emotional intelligence among the participants. This is significant because themes and patterns were established regarding the roles, levels, and influence emotional intelligence may have on pastoral leaders

who experience burnout that is dependent on the church size, years of experience, location, and other influencing dynamics.

**Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Instrument validity and reliability is founded on past research and theory (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Theoretical research conducted establishes the likelihood of reliability and validity that an instrument holds among the scholarly and research communities when the instrument is shown to validate theoretical claims through research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Although quantitative research is considered the standard for validating a theoretical claim, qualitative research uses past theories as a foundation to understand better a particular phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

As previously noted, the MBI was created by Maslach and Jackson (1981) as an instrument to assess the influence of burnout on emotional status, level of personal accomplishment, and personalization skills (de Vine & Morgan, 2020; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Since 1981, the MBI has been deemed valid and reliable as the MBI has been evaluated by several researchers and theorists. According to de Vine and Morgan (2020), the validity and reliability of the MBI is found in the consistency and accuracy of predicting burnout reported by participants within their own study and other studies. The MBI consists of standardized questions used without variation to predict burnout and provides data regarding the actual reported burnout among participants (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). Furthermore, the MBI has been used in many studies that evaluate employee burnout (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). de Vine and Morgan (2020) used the MBI in their study to evaluate the correlation between personality facets and burnout. The MBI supported de Vine and Morgan's (2020) thesis that personality facets and burnout were

closely correlated. de Vine and Morgan (2020) conclude that the MBI is a valid and reliable instrument used to assess burnout in their own study as well as within prior studies.

Another study conducted by De La Fuenta-Salano et al. (2020) evaluated the validity and reliability of the MBI regarding burnout predictability among police officers. The research findings suggest that the MBI was both reliable and valid concerning the predictability of burnout and the influence burnout had on the participants' emotional wellbeing, personalization skills, and sense of personal accomplishment (De La Fuenta-Salano et al., 2020). The data collected in the study illustrates the validity and reliability of the MBI by providing the participants' scores regarding burnout levels and validated the theory that burnout has adverse influence on the dynamics discussed above (De La Fuenta-Salano et al., 2020). Furthermore, De La Fuenta-Salano et al. (2020) concluded that the MBI was selected for the study based on past research conducted that suggested that the MBI is a valid and reliable instrument. Although there have been numerous studies that illustrated the validity and reliability of the MBI, this author presented the two studies above specifically because of how recent the studies were conducted and the way the studies illustrate the validity and reliability of the MBI in a peer-reviewed study.

The second theoretical instrument for the study was the SSEIT. The SSEIT has been used to assess self-reported emotional intelligence (Charupat et al., 2013). The instrument was developed by Mayer and Salovey in 1997 (O'Conner et al., 2019; Charupat et al., 2013). Some theorists have questioned the instrument's validity and reliability as it is noted that the SSEIT is dependent on the honesty of participants' answers (Charupat et al., 2013). Although some believe this to be a weakness in the SREIT, Charupat et al. (2013) conclude that the SSEIT has good internal consistencies and test-retest reliability. The SSEIT is also less complex than other emotional intelligence instruments, and Charupat et al.'s (2013) research suggests that

participants are more likely to participate in a questionnaire such as the SREIT than other instruments because of the simplicity of the instrument.

O'Conner et al. (2019) evaluated the validity and reliability of the SSEIT in their literature review. O'Conner et al. (2019) provided brief summaries of studies conducted over the past ten years that utilized the SSEIT as well as scholarly arguments from past literature that highlights the pros and cons of the SSEIT. The literature review mirrors Charupat et al. (2013) in that the SSEIT does receive some criticism for being more subjective and requires honesty from the participants; however, the SSEIT is an instrument that is recommended in qualitative studies wherein participants are asked to provide their self-perceptions of their emotional intelligence (O'Conner et al., 2019). Furthermore, O'Conner et al. (2019) suggest that the SSEIT may be an instrument that establishes a foundation for a correlational study that reveals strengths or deficiencies of participants' perception of emotional intelligence versus the reality of one's level of emotional intelligence when various emotional intelligence assessments are weighed against the SSEIT.

The MBI is both reliable and valid. The MBI illustrates the implications of burnout on dynamics that influence effective leadership behaviors, such as personal accomplishment, personalization skills, and emotional well-being (de Vine & Morgan, 2020). These dynamics are valuable to the proposed research because this author believes the validity and reliability of the MBI hold substantial weight regarding the use of the MBI as a guide for the inclusion questionnaire.

Although the SSEIT has been critiqued because it may be considered subjective, this researcher will discuss the importance of honesty on the participants' behalf. O'Conner et al. (2019) and Charupat et al. (2013) concur that the SSEIT is a reliable and valid instrument if the

participants are honest, and the researcher is evaluating the self-reported level of emotional intelligence among participants. Therefore, this author concludes the SSEIT is an instrument that was a suitable guide for the inclusion questionnaire used in this study based on the merits of the SSEIT in past studies. It should be noted that the inclusion questionnaire used in this study was not evaluated for reliability or validity. The questionnaire was used as a means to identify the sample group and not as a guide for the interview questions used in the study.

<div align="center">

**Data Analysis**

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**Methods**

The data analysis process utilized coding to establish patterns and themes discovered in the data collection provided by the instruments discussed in the section above as well as the data collected from the interview questions. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) concluded that data coding is useful when coding specific topics, participant traits, characteristics, values, beliefs, and emotions. Coding is also useful for maintaining the structure and order of data collected (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Finally, coding and sub-coding is useful in qualitative research as qualitative research may often require a researcher to create subcategories that are established as the research is conducted based on the participants' behaviors, answers to questions, or other unforeseen dynamics (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

The process of coding and sub-coding was conducted by obtaining the qualitative analysis software NVivo. NVivo was used to analyze schemes, patterns, and relationships found among participant answers during an interview process that was later transcribed into document format. Furthermore, the NVivo software was used as a resource that links responses by examining the relationships between participant answers. The coding process was categorized into open and/or axial coding by establishing parent and child nodes. According to Leedy and

Ormrod (2018), open coding is used to identify a participant's feelings, avoidance, or engaging behaviors and identifying the duration of feelings and behaviors. Axial coding may be used to identify participants' behavioral strategies, consequences of strategies, and conditions that influence behavioral strategies (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

The NVivo software identified key words and concepts found within participants' answers to open-ended questions and provided a coded report that identified common themes and patterns found among participants' answers. Leedy and Ormrod (2018) suggested that axial and open coding processes are the most common processes used in phenomenological qualitative studies. After the themes, patterns, and relationships between the participants answers were discovered, the data was analyzed and summarized to provide a better understanding of the participant's subjective statements, lived experiences, and commonality found within the participants' roles as senior pastors (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). These data collection methodologies enabled this researcher to present answers to the research questions used to guide this study.

**Trustworthiness**

Coding and sub-coding used in the research to analyze the data collected. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2018), an open coding system may be used to provide a broad identity to the participants while protecting the participants' identities. This researcher assigned a coding system by establishing parent and child nodes that identified each participant in the population group; however, sub-coding was given to the participants based upon the participants' answers to the questionnaires, research questions, and church sizes. Ratings were applied within the coding system to establish interrater reliability. Interrater reliability refers to the extent to which two or more participants provide identical judgments or provide identical answers to a question (Leedy

& Ormrod, 2018). An exclusion of the study was enabled so that the participants' responses were not guided when answering research questions to fulfill a research agenda. This is a significant exclusion as this researcher conducted interviews to obtain real-life experiences and insight; therefore, the scope of the results of this study was determined by the open-ended responses of the participants' self-proclaimed experiences. Non-guided questions were a beneficial dynamic that had positive implications concerning the trustworthiness of this study.

Finally, Leedy and Ormrod (2018) suggest that open coding may be most suitable for phenomenological qualitative studies. Open coding enables a researcher to go through the data collected with an open mind so themes and patterns may be established without bias on a researcher's behalf (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Open coding also provides a researcher with the opportunity to revisit dynamics that may have been overlooked early on during the data collection stage of research (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). Therefore, second-cycle coding may be implemented so a researcher may use coding approaches, such as pattern coding and selective coding (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). This author concludes that an open coding approach was the most suitable due to the subcategories found within the proposed research. An open coding approach enabled this author to use sub-coding, pattern coding, and selective coding approaches when there was a need.

**Summary**

Qualitative research is often conducted to understand the phenomenon of human behaviors, social interactions, human cultures, and other domains of human life, and it is founded on the first-hand experiences of the research participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The data collection process must be conducted in an ethical manner and without bias or interference from a researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Therefore, the data collection process should be

conducted using valid and reliable instruments (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Leedy & Ormrod, 2018).

This chapter provided and discussed the research methodology, research problem, questions, and purpose of the proposed research. Furthermore, the research setting, participants, role of the researcher, and ethical considerations were identified. The data collection process and the instruments used in the proposed research were identified and discussed, along with the best approach for the data analysis process. Finally, this chapter provided empirical findings that supported the theoretical use of the research instrumentations, as well as the research methodology and the dynamics found in ethical qualitative research.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

### Overview

Being a senior pastor can be one of the most rewarding roles and offices one may fill in God's Kingdom. The office of a pastor serves a vital role in the body of Christ, equipping believers for service so that the body of Christ may be elevated (Ephesians 4:11-12). Pastors fill many functions outside of preaching the Gospel. Pastors may fulfill needs such as visiting the sick, counseling with individuals and families, leading ministry team members, providing spiritual direction, and using biblical authority to build excitement within a ministerial context (McGarity, 2016).

Although being a pastor has many rewards, pastors face many challenges in their professional and personal lives. Balancing the needs of congregants, subordinate leaders, and their own family life can create stressful situations. For example, pastors do not typically have a Monday through Friday job with office hours of 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pastors often answer phone calls, text messages, and other communications when they are away from their physical church offices. Pastors are expected to be available to people in their times of distress, moments of rejoicing, and life events, such as weddings, funerals, and dedications. This type of interaction can intrude upon pastors' relationships with family members, such as spouses and children (Adams et al., 2017).

The stress caused by balancing various dynamics of a pastorate and a pastor's personal life can create feelings of being overwhelmed that eventually lead to burnout (McGarity, 2016). Pastors often counsel congregants, as well as others, outside of their ministries. People present many life difficulties to pastors that may be emotionally charged. Pastors may become overwhelmed emotionally and psychologically when they are continuously involved with

emotionally charged issues that others present. McGarity (2016) states that pastors may experience withdrawal and emotional dissonance as a defense mechanism to combat fatigue and burnout. Dealing with emotionally charged issues may also induce vicarious emotional trauma if a pastor does not take appropriate actions to cope with emotions during challenging times (Krotz, 2019). The stress of consistent, emotionally charged situations may create burnout, which consequently influences a pastor's leadership effectiveness (McGarity, 2016).

Humans are created with emotions that elicit responses in various situations. For example, Jesus exhibited sadness as he wept at the tomb of Lazarus; he wept over the city of Jerusalem, and he was moved with compassion when he fed the 5,000 (Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 19:41-44; John 11:35). Followers of Christ are likewise encouraged to take on one another's burdens, to rejoice with those that rejoice, and to weep with those that weep (Romans 12:9-17). These types of emotional engagements can have a greater impact on pastors as they daily support the many needs of their congregants. Scott and Lovell (2015) argue that pastors who experience high levels of emotional stress are more likely to experience burnout and exhibit in-effective leadership behaviors. Therefore, the purpose of this research is expressed within the question, "What experiences create dynamics of pastoral burnout, and what role does emotional intelligence have on a pastor's leadership effectiveness while experiencing burnout"?

## Compilation Protocol and Measures

To answer the question in the paragraph above, this researcher interviewed 12 senior-level pastors in face-to-face interviews or using Skype after meeting the inclusion criteria. This number of participants satisfied the minimum participants needed to provide adequate data gathered for this study due to the theoretical saturation found within the participant answers. The pastoral participants were selected by way of convenient stratified sampling. Although the

participants and researcher had personal knowledge of one another, the participants agreed to be truthful and unbiased in their subjective, experiential answers. The participants were selected by first meeting the inclusion criteria found in Appendix C. The participants were asked 12 open-ended questions found in Appendix B that will be discussed in this chapter.

The face-to-face and/or Skype interviews were conducted in each of the pastors' offices in confidential settings. The participants were provided with a copy of the questions and a copy of the consent form, and all understood and agreed to complete the interview. Furthermore, each participant was notified that his information would not reveal his identity, and his recorded interview would be deleted from the secure computer after the completion of the research. Finally, each participant was advised that he would receive a transcription of the interview for accuracy purposes. This researcher fulfilled the obligation of providing the transcripts.

The NVivo software was used for participant answer coding and to discover themes found within the participant answers. The participant coding was based upon parent nodes and sub-nodes (categories) defined by years of pastoral service, congregant size, experienced burnout, self-reported role of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness, and the influence (if any) of emotional intelligence on combatting burnout. The participant interviews were uploaded into NVivo. The NVivo program transcribed the interviews, and themes were discovered from the codes discussed above. One issue discovered with NVivo was the consistency within the transcription for the program to transcribe every word accurately. This researcher listened to the recorded interviews while reading the transcriptions to ensure that accuracy was prevalent, and the data is summarized or directly quoted in the following section.

**Demographic and Sample Data**

The participant demographics in this study consisted of 12 senior-level pastors that lead

in non-denominational congregations found in the South-eastern region of the United States of

America. Each participant has at least three years of experience in their roles as senior pastors.

The participants also pastored churches consisting of 50-500 congregants. The youngest

participant was 37 years old while the eldest participant was 58 years old. The participants were

all Caucasian males from the South-east region of the United States. Every participant held

ordination credentials with religious organizations such as the Southern Baptist Convention, the

United Pentecostal Church, the Church of God, the Southern Baptist Association, and the United

Methodist Church prior to pastoring in a non-denominational church. The participant's years of

experience, his congregant size, whether or not he has experienced burnout, and his self-reported

high emotional intelligence were used as main or "parent" nodes for coding purposes. The

representation of demographics is identified in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Parent Nodes used in Coding*

| Three to Five Years of Experience | Six to Ten Years of Experience | 10 Plus Years of Experience | 50-100 Congregants | 101-200 Congregants | 201-300 Congregants | 301-500 Congregants | Reports Burnout and Reports Emotional Intelligence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2/12 | 3/12 | 7/12 | 3/12 | 2/12 | 4/12 | 3/12 | 12/12 |

The table above illustrates the number of pastoral participants out of 12 that fit the parent

nodes. Two participants had three to five years of pastoral experience as a senior pastor, three

had six to ten years of experience, and seven had ten years or more of pastoral experience. Three

participants lead in churches consisting of 50-100 congregants, two lead in 101-200 congregant

churches, four lead in 201-300 congregant churches, and three lead in 301-500 congregant churches. All 12 participants provided a valid definition of burnout and reported feelings of burnout in their past or present moments as pastoral leaders. Finally, all 12 participants provided a definition of emotional intelligence and reported their ability to recognize their emotional intelligence which satisfied this researcher's inclusionary requirements.

**Data Analysis and Findings**

The initial coding process generated over five hundred coded dynamics. The interviews also produced approximately 500,000 transcribed words. Although the parent nodes and child nodes produced themes found throughout the transcriptions, the body of interview answers became redundant among some of the participant answers. This researcher concludes that 12 participants provided enough data to satisfy theoretical saturation due to the redundancy of answers. There were 12 open-ended questions presented to the participants regarding the causes and effects of pastoral burnout, the role/influence of emotional intelligence on their leadership behaviors during burnout, and the role of emotional intelligence (if any) on combatting burnout.

There were central themes found throughout the participant answers that all participants experienced burnout daily, to some extent. Another central theme discovered is the participants' ability to recognize and manage their own emotions as well as those of others. Finally, the third central theme gathered from participant answers is the relationship between burnout, spiritual disciplines, and emotional exhaustion. Although these three central themes are highlighted, each participant provided a subjective insight unique to his own experiences of burnout, his self-reported emotional intelligence, and the influence of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during burnout.

The central themes produced sub-themes wherein the participants shared their own perceptions of the influence of burnout on their well-being, emotional intelligence, and the ability to lead others effectively. The data collected from the interviews established common themes among the participants that highlight the participants' overall well-being, their understanding of the influence of burnout professionally and personally, the influence or role of emotional intelligence during burnout, and the influence or role of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during burnout. The following statements will introduce the questions presented to the participants and will identify common themes among their answers.

***Interview Question 1***

Research asked, "in your personal experience and perspective, what if any, are the greatest contributing factors to burnout found within your role as a senior pastor"? All 12 participants provided similar answers regarding their interactions with people in their ministries. To keep the participants anonymous, the participants will be identified as P1-P12. P1-P12 established common themes for this question. The themes included dealing with people who are dissatisfied with the way the ministry is led. P1-P12 also stated that competing with other ministries in their communities created feelings of burnout because pastors consistently start new programs that do not reach completion. P1-P12 reported that the amount of time spent at the church, financial planning, and various ministry obligations, such as preaching at other churches, also creates burnout. The statements above were common among the participants; however, P1 reported that political issues such as homosexual and transgender rights had created a sense of burnout for him because he has a large population of college students in the ministry that attend a liberal university in the city of his church. P1 expressed that he is having an issue with resentment because of the issues around such controversial topics.

P5 indicated that he is experiencing burnout because of staffing issues. P5 stated that he needs four to five more staff members to help with the food ministry, children's ministry, and foreign missions ministry. P5 said the weight of these needs is creating tension between himself and other subordinate ministers because of the workload. Pastoral accessibility was also a contributing factor to burnout. P8 stated that he never feels disconnected because he uses social media as an escape outlet; however, he also said, "I find myself checking up on people when I really do not need to look at their mess. I feel like I never get a break, and it is really my fault, but I can't help the fact that I care about what these people are doing. It's not that I care about their business, but it's more like, I hope I can help them make better decisions. It doesn't help that I see their issues all the time. They talk to me, and I can't be open because I have already drawn my own conclusions." P8 believes his inability to disconnect from social media burns him out because he feels like he has to respond to others on social media and is constantly worrying about his church members.

Finally, P3 provided a different insight to contributions toward burnout. P3 leads in a 101–200-member church. P3 said,

> My wife is one of the issues with burnout. I work a full-time job and pastor our church. She gets very jealous any time I have to go to the church for anything except actual services. I get tired of listening to her fuss at me, and our children are starting to catch on. So, yeah, she is a factor to my burnout because I do not get a break at home, not ever.

The common theme among the participant answers is the amount of time spent away from their families, dealing with emotionally charged issues, and feeling as though they do not receive spiritual encouragement due to pouring into others without engaging in self-care.

### Interview Question 2

The participants were asked, "in your personal experience and perspective, to what extent do feelings of burnout influence your personal relationships with other individuals such as family

members, friends, or others found in your social interactions"? The participants all agreed that feeling burnout creates withdrawing behaviors. P2 stated that he withdraws from others and finds comfort in food. P5 concluded that he binge-watches specific T.V. shows. P7 and P12 both identified that burnout causes them to lash out at times towards their family members because they do not feel like going anywhere with the family when they get home from the church. P12 stated that he often goes fishing or hunting as a way to deal with burnout. P12 also stated that going hunting has become a point of contention when he is burned out because his wife gets upset with him because of the amount of money he spends on hunting trips and hunting gear. P4 provided a different perspective as he stated, "burnout used to make me want to disappear, but honestly, this past time I felt burned out really brought my wife and I closer together because I take Friday as my sabbath now, and she and I are at home during the day when the kids are gone to school. So, yeah, it is a pretty cool concept that burnout can bring my wife and I closer together." The common theme found in the participant answers suggests that most of the participants find they do not do well with their personal relationships because of their desire to withdraw and "escape."

### *Interview Question 3*

Research question 3 asks, "how do feelings of burnout influence your overall well-being"? All participants emphatically agree and conclude that burnout has negative implications on their psychological, spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being. One common theme discovered is found in the relationship between the participants' emotional and spiritual well-being. P1-P12 all believe their spiritual well-being influences their emotional well-being and vice versa. For example, P4 stated that he has an auto-immune disorder. P4 said burnout causes him emotional distress, which, in turn, creates physical illness because his joints become

severally inflamed. Once that occurs, he becomes very depressed, blames God, and does not desire to be physically active an any capacity. In one example, P1 said,

> I am usually in very good shape, you know that. But, man, over the past three years we have grown so much that I don't take care of myself because I am not getting sleep. I may sleep two hours per night, but that just makes me more fatigued really. I went to the doctor last week, and everything is elevated, and I mean everything. I don't feel like praying, reading, or really even showing up on Wednesday nights because my body is so tired.

Overeating and a lack of exercise were also common themes found among the participants' answers as means of coping with burnout. Finally, a common theme identified in the answers to this question is a lack of desire to study the Word or to pray for oneself. Most participants said they suffer emotionally and physically when they are spiritually depleted from experienced burnout.

### *Interview Question 4*

The participants were asked, "in your personal experience and perspective, how do feelings of burnout effect your overall well-being"? This question did not seem to be a strong question, in this researcher's opinion, because there was not a significant amount of information provided through the participants' answers. The common theme found among the answers suggests that participants' professional and personal relationships with subordinates are not generally effected because the participants put on a front in hopes of people not recognizing that burnout is present. All but two of the participants suggested that they treat their subordinates the same as most any other time they are stressed; however, P7 and P10 both stated that they tend to lash out or put more on their subordinates when they feel burnout. P7 stated that he becomes rigid with subordinates and less empathetic towards others when they make mistakes that should be avoidable.

### *Interview Question 5*

The participants were asked, "to what extent, if any, do feelings of burnout effect your self-esteem, motivation, and morale from a personal perspective"? This question exposed a strong theme in response. All participants stated that they do feel less than worthy to lead when they feel burnout because of their internal dialogue or the way in which they neglect those around them that they love the most. Another theme discovered was the lack of personal motivation to pull out of burnout. P6 has been a senior pastor for almost 17 years. He stated that the past three years have made him question his worth and resiliency because of his relevance to younger generations. P6 concluded that he feels like he is not attractive enough for the media broadcast the ministry has; he feels that he is being attacked personally when someone brings new ideas to him because he has "hit a wall," and his motivation to interact with the youth has diminished because of his age. P6 said,

> I feel this way because I used to get out there and play basketball with our kids here at the church. I would get on the football field with them if I wanted to. I could understand what they are talking about and at least connect a little bit, but now, I just feel like I'm not relevant in a lot of ways. So, yeah, my self-worth and motivation might be beat up a little.

### Interview Question 6

Question 6 is similar to question 5, except for identifying the possible influence of burnout on a pastoral leader's professional motivation, morale, and innovation. The participants were asked, "to what extent, if any, do feelings of burnout effect your motivation, morale, and innovation from a pastoral leadership perspective"? Three pastors leading in churches with less than 200 congregants stated that feelings of burnout have not really blocked or hindered their abilities to stay motivated or innovative. However, three pastors leading in churches with 201-400 congregants agreed that they tend to become distracted. The three pastors established a theme of feeling helpless, overwhelmed, and confused when attempting to introduce innovative

ideas. On the contrary, the two pastors leading in churches with greater than 400 congregants state that they do not really experience a loss of innovation or motivation because they have a good number of resources available. Both pastors also indicated they have "Bishops" who pour into their lives and hold them accountable to continue walking in a "fresh and new vision" daily.

***Interview Question 7***

The researcher asked, "what role if any does emotional intelligence have on your leadership behaviors"? Three participants concluded that their emotional intelligence was very important to their leadership behaviors because of the emotional issues people in ministry often present to pastoral leaders. Six participants believed that emotional intelligence is critically important in their leadership behaviors when managing new projects, having to discipline or correct a subordinate, or providing spiritual guidance to others. Finally, all of the participants suggested that their emotional intelligence is guided by their spiritual intelligence. The theme discovered in this question suggests that the participants unanimously agree that the Spirit of God guides their leadership behaviors; however, during emotionally challenging moments, such as funerals, leading disgruntled congregants, or managing other issues, the weight of the present moment may promote negative emotional responses and a lack of self-respect. The participants all conveyed that the Spirit of God assists them in leading, but when they feel the emotions of others projected towards them, that is when their own emotional intelligence becomes important to their leadership behaviors.

***Interview Question 8***

The participants were asked, "in your opinion, what role does emotional intelligence have, if any, on your ability to combat burnout"? P4, P7, and P9 had a common theme among their answers. All three participants explained that they use time to self-reflect and to manage

their emotions. The three participants also shared experiences of visiting with clinical therapists when they were feeling emotionally burned out. Therefore, the participants that visited with a clinical therapist shared commonality in their comments by stating that visiting a clinical therapist has significantly enabled them to recognize their emotions and to manage the same.

P7 stated that, before he started going to the therapist, he did not have sense of emotional intelligence, nor did he care to talk about emotions. He believed everything that people experienced was brought on by God or by themselves; therefore, he did not believe in clinical depression or anxiety disorders. P7 stated that he now believes those things exist because he experienced an anxiety attack several years ago and had an emotional breakdown. After the emotional breakdown, P7's pastor advised him to seek help. He did so, and P7 believes that situation helped him to be more empathetic towards others and to recognize his emotional status when he is experiencing burnout.

Another theme discover is the ability of the participants to recognize emotional burnout in their subordinates through their own experiences of burnout. Two participants stated that they have a counselor on staff in their ministries, so when they recognize signs of burnout among their subordinates, they may offer services for emotional support in the hopes of assisting their followers with burnout. Finally, the participants answered similarly by stating that they believe that living a healthy emotional life enables positive thinking, and positive thinking combats burnout.

### Interview Question 9

Participants were asked, "to what extent does emotional intelligence influence your overall well-being"? This question seemed a little redundant because most of the participants addressed emotional intelligence earlier, during the first series of questions. Some of them

reiterated what they previously stated; however, P1 addressed this question with deeper detail.

P1 stated,

> When I become emotionally stressed, feel burned out, or I do not have sense of emotional awareness, it leads me to be someone I do not like. What I mean by this is, I just do not really care about much in that moment. Now, that does not mean I do not or cannot pull out of whatever I am feeling, but it does mean I just do not care about my health right then. I certainly do not care about anyone else's health either in that moment. Either way, I am good at recognizing I am being like that, so my emotional intelligence is there. I have to pick myself up, pray, read, or whatever I can do and I press on. You know what I mean? It's not like I am mean to people, but if I can't take care of myself…then, yeah, my emotional intelligence certainly influences my overall well-being. I get through it with God, and, again, it goes back to my thought that my emotional state effects my spiritual state, and it's true from the other way around.

The participants seemed to have like or similar answers regarding their emotional intelligence and well-being because the participants recognized that their emotions often reflect their daily health habits. Eight participants said that exercise is a big part of their well-being practices. If their emotional well-being is not healthy, there is a negative implication on their overall well-being. Finally, four participants developed a theme of increased prayer and reading because of their emotional intelligence. The four participants suggested that they would often neglect their physical well-being, such as eating, because of increased fasting or praying during emotionally charged situations.

### *Interview Question 10*

The question, "what role, if any, does emotional intelligence have on providing guidance to your followers" was presented. Three participants responded, "emotional intelligence has a lot to do with spiritual guidance." When asked why they believed this, the theme of, "because we are emotional beings, and even God is an emotional God" surfaced. Five participants suggested that they do not really see emotional intelligence playing a large role in spiritual guidance unless the person seeking guidance spiritually is really struggling with an emotional issue rather than a

spiritual issue. Finally, two participants believe emotional intelligence is important because, if

they are not emotionally sound, the inability to manage their emotions may influence the way in

which they speak or react to someone who needs spiritual guidance. For example, P3 stated that

there are days he feels emotionally drained, and when someone needs prayer, he does not "feel"

like praying with them. P3 said,

> It is almost like I am going through the motions when I feel emotionally depleted. I really
> do not want to pray, and there are times I'm like, do we really have to deal with this
> again? Good grief, we just prayed about this last week. But, I do it anyway because that is
> my calling, and I have to be aware of my emotions and separate that from the Spirit man
> inside.

### Interview Question 11

The participants were asked, "in your opinion, what role if any, do feelings of burnout

have on providing spiritual guidance to your followers"? After asking this question, the

researcher observed that most of the participants reflected deeply before answering the question.

Some common themes found in the answers were,

- "If I am feeling burned out, it is not usually over spiritual matters. But I do my best to be
  present with whoever I am talking to and put my feeling behind me and trust God."

- "Sometimes it effects the way I feel about someone that is talking to me about their issues
  when I have bigger issues. I have to remember that those people depend on me to help
  them. With that comes the issue of do they talk to me more than God? I really don't
  know, but some of the burnout I feel comes from people that constantly need "spiritual"
  advice, but they are not willing to change anything themselves."

- "Burnout does not really have an influence on the way that I pray for people or give them
  spiritual guidance because burnout is a 'me' issue, not really their issue."

### Interview Question 12

The final question presented identified the actions, if any, that participants implemented to combat burnout. Four participants stated that they take two or more vacations yearly as a means to disconnect for a short period of time. All participants mentioned vacations; however, the four participants who emphasized vacations stated that they usually travel out of the country, so they are not available at all during their vacation time. Two participants suggested that they attend church retreats or some type of ministry conference as often as possible so they can be in fellowship with other ministers or so they can be ministered to through song and Word. One participant stated that he enjoyed playing and singing music. The participant concluded that playing music brings comfort, peace, and joy to his heart. A common theme found in the participant answers suggested that all participants engage in prayer and worship, even when they do not feel like doing so. Finally, eight participants stated that they disconnect from social media as often as possible when they feel burnout occurring.

The interview revealed that the participants have experienced or currently experience some level of burnout. The themes found within the answers suggest that the participants experience burnout for a number of reasons; however, the common theme found in their answers illustrates that burnout may be induced by dealing with congregants on a regular basis who do not help themselves, leading through cultural and political issues, the overwhelming number of hours the participants spend away from their families, poor eating, sleeping, and exercise practices, a lack of self-worth or motivation because of age, relevance, or the ability to compete with other ministries, and the lack of spiritual discipline due to physical, emotional, or psychological fatigue. The use of social media and the information found on social media was also noted as a common theme that may encourage burnout. Finally, personal and professional burnout may be attributed to strains within the participants' family settings. The participants in

this study suggested that their experiences of burnout had negative implications on those in their immediate social circles and families, resulting in added stress that is often carried into their roles as pastoral leaders.

The interviews highlighted burnout may also diminish spiritual discipline among pastoral leaders who experience burnout. The participants' answers uncovered themes that suggest that spiritual discipline and emotional well-being influence the way in which the participants took care of their overall well-being, interacted with subordinates, and provided spiritual guidance for others. The theme discovered in the answers illustrates that burnout creates challenges to communicate effectively, to provide clear, innovative visions, to have a positive self-worth, and to provide a healthy balance to one's lifestyle in a pastoral, leadership capacity.

Emotional intelligence was an important dynamic regarding leadership effectiveness as a pastoral leader, as well as the ability for the participants to manage and understand the influence of their emotions while experiencing burnout. The participant answers created themes of emotional awareness and regulation; however, the participants' answers regarding their emotional intelligence may gesture toward a relationship between the emotional and spiritual well-being of the participants' roles as pastors. The common theme found within the answers suggest that, when the participants are emotionally depleted, there is a lack of spiritual well-being. Emotional intelligence did not seem significant when offering spiritual guidance for most of the participants; however, the participants indicated that there may be a lack of desire initially when someone is seeking spiritual guidance. Finally, emotional intelligence was a significant dynamic in the participants' leadership behaviors during experienced burnout. The majority of participants recognized the importance of managing their own emotions and those of their subordinates, even when burnout is a factor.

Finally, there was not a significant difference in the participants' answers regarding burnout causation, self-proclaimed emotional intelligence, or actions used to combat burnout. Although there were variations in church sizes, there was not enough difference in the answers to indicate that the size of a church or the number of congregants have an effect on the participants' experienced burnout. One participant indicated that working a full-time job and being a lay pastor with a congregation of 101-200 people created tension in his marriage; however, the issue was not entirely attributed to his ministry experience. The element of working a full-time job while attempting to lead a church created time lost with his spouse; thus, there were indications of marital strain. The actions taken by the participants to combat burnout were not abnormal. Most participants stated that they used time off, took out-of-country vacations, participated in outdoor activities, participated in physical exercise, and used spiritual disciplines to combat burnout. This author concludes that the data collected from the interviews became redundant; therefore, theoretical saturation was satisfied. Finally, the relationship between the research questions and the interview questions is identified in Table 3.

**Table 2.**

*The Relationship Between Research and Interview Questions*

| **RQ 1.** How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive burnout effect their own overall well-being? | **IQ 3.** How do feelings of burnout effect your overall well-being? <br> **IQ 9.** What role does EI have on your overall well-being? <br> **IQ 12.** What actions have your taken to combat burnout? |
|---|---|
| **RQ 2.** What factors contribute to senior pastors' level of burnout, specifically those pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States? | **IQ 1.** What are the greatest contributing factors that contribute to your experienced burnout? |

| | |
|---|---|
| **RQ 3.**  How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their interpersonal relationships with subordinate leaders? | **IQ 2.**  How do feelings of burnout effect your social relationships with others?<br>**IQ 4.**  How do feelings of burnout effect your professional relationships with subordinates?<br>**IQ 11.** How does burnout influence your ability to provide spiritual guidance to your followers? |
| **RQ 4.**  How do pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States perceive the way that burnout effects their self-esteem? | **IQ 5.**  How does burnout influence your self-esteem, motivation, and morale from a personal perspective?<br>**IQ 6.**  How does burnout influence your motivation, morale, and innovation from a leadership perspective? |
| **EQ 5.**  What role does emotional intelligence play on senior pastors' leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States? | **IQ 7.**  What role does EI have on your leadership behaviors?<br>**IQ 10.**  What role does EI have on providing spiritual guidance to your followers?<br>**IQ 8.**  What role does EI have in combatting burnout? |
| **RQ 6.** To what degree, if any, is the size of the church a differentiating variable in the responses of the participants in this study? | The answer to this question was provided based on the themes and patterns discovered in the participants' answers. Based on the participants' answers, there was not a significance among the answers to suggest that the size of their churches are a differentiating variable in this study. |

## Summary

The job functions and role(s) of a senior pastor have implications on pastoral leaders' overall well-being. Scott and Lovell (2015) conclude that pastoral obligations are similar to the obligations of serving others found in career fields such as medicine, psychology, public safety, and other careers wherein a service is provided for others. Serving in the office of a pastor is rewarding and challenging. Pastoral leaders are often called after hours to counsel or to visit with those in need; they spend a lot of time away from their families while serving others; pastoral leaders pour into others while experiencing personal neglect at times, and they may experience

vicarious Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) or direct PTS, depending on the situation (Jones, Murray, & Warren, 2018; Louw, 2015; Scott & Lovell, 2015).

Dynamics such as those described above are believed to be contributing factors to pastoral burnout. The interviews conducted in this research clearly identify some of the same dynamics. It is important to note that the participants in this study all felt burnout to some extent; however, the participants are emphatic that they are called to do pastoral work. The interview questions were open-ended, so that the participants could explain their personal opinions, views, and experiences.

The data collected from the 12 participants' interviews suggest that burnout is experienced among the participants regardless of their congregant population or church size. Theoretical saturation was present within the data collection because the participant answers were similar in nature. The main themes of burnout causation were congruent with the participants' time away from family, emotional issues within their ministries, relationship challenges within their own homes, starting new church programs, competing against other ministries, health issues and fatigue, social media drama, and the failure to practice personal spiritual disciplines resulting from emotional and physical fatigue.

According to the themes found in the data, feelings of burnout resulted in a diminishment of self-worth, innovation, motivation, and diminished spiritual well-being, and those dynamics created emotional fatigue. Throughout the interviews, emotional fatigue was related to a lack of spiritual discipline. Most participants believed their spiritual and emotional well-being was congruent in nature, and those two dynamics influence their overall well-being and ability to combat burnout.

Finally, most participants understand and believe they possess emotional intelligence; however, the common theme in their responses suggests that, during moments of emotional distress, the participants are not as concerned with the emotional status of those around them. The participants acknowledge that they become "snappy" or irritable in their leadership roles and social lives. The interviews provide themes that clearly identify the presence of burnout among the participants, causes of burnout, the influence (if any) of emotional intelligence on the participants' social and professional relationships during burnout, and the role (if any) of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during burnout.

The participants recognized the presence of burnout, of emotional intelligence, and the influence of both on their behaviors; however, at the conclusion of the interviews, most of the participants sat for a moment and then asked this summarized question, "So what now? I know how to help other people, but what do I do? I guess I need to pray more or read my Bible more." It is important to note that the participants do not desire to resign or leave ministry. Rather, the participants do not seem to have spiritual support outside of their immediate social circles, nor do they seem to have support from clergy such as Bishops. This is interesting regarding leading in a non-denominational church because there is no Biblical, hierarchical support for the pastors as there may be in a religious denominational entity.

## Evaluation of the Research Design

A phenomenological qualitative research design (PQRD) was used to conduct this study. Qualitative research is a research methodology used to explore a concept or worldview through firsthand accounts, views, and the perceptions of those involved with the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2018). According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), qualitative research is gathered through narrative and phenomenological research,

grounded theory, case studies, and an ethnographic study. This author used the phenomenological research design.

A phenomenological qualitative research design (PQRD) is centered around psychological and philosophical dynamics of interest (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). PQRD enables a researcher to study the gathered data that projects a phenomenon through the lived experiences of study participants (McGregor, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The goal of a PQRD is to study several participants that share the same experience in hopes of understanding themes, patterns, causes, and consequences of that phenomenon among the participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The significance of using a PQRD was the ability for the researcher to gain firsthand perceptions and testimonies from participants regarding their understanding of and possession of emotional intelligence (EI), to identify dynamics that provoked burnout from the participants' firsthand experiences, and to understand better what role, if any, EI has on participants' leadership effectiveness during their experience with burnout. As with most qualitative methodologies, a PQRD enabled this author to gather information through interviews and observations as described by McGregor (2018).

This author concluded that a PQRD is the most appropriate research design for collecting data because of the subjective nature of the participants' first-hand testimony regarding the phenomenon of burnout and EI. The data collection process enabled this researcher to collect and to gather data, to enter data into the NVivo qualitative analysis tool, and then to transcribe the data using coding and thematic data discovery. Table 3 demonstrates the evolution of the PQRD used in this research.

**Table 3.**

*Summary of Design*

| | |
|---|---|
| **Research Topic** | Experienced Pastoral Burnout and the Self-Reported Role of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership Effectiveness During Burnout |
| **Research Type** | Phenomenological Qualitative Research |
| **Research Tool** | Phenomenological Qualitative Interviews Consisting of 12 Open-ended Questions Pertaining to the Topic |
| **Population** | 12 Senior-level Pastors, Three Years of Experience, 50-500 Congregant Church that is Non-Denominational, Located in the South-east Region of the United States of America |
| **Sampling** | Purposive |
| **Data Collection Instrument** | Face-to-Face Interviews Uploaded into NVivo and Transcribed by use of Coding and Theme Discovery |
| **Output** | The Data is Transcribed, Summarized, and Entered into the Body of the Dissertation |

This research design seemed to be effective during the process of data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation. The research process did not present many obstacles; however, this researcher believes interviewing up to 20 participants that provided more diversity within ethnicity, gender, and education, for example, would have provided a greater perspective into the concepts of this study. This researcher concludes obtaining 12 participants provided a satisfaction of redundancy and theoretical saturation that was present within the coding and themes developed from the coding in this research.

One critique of the research design was the inability to test and quantify the participants emotional intelligence, level of burnout, or their exact leadership style outside of their self-opinions. Failure to quantify these dynamics does not provide a theoretical validity or reliability to the participants statements, nor do the participants self-reported statements provide theoretical validity to frameworks discussed throughout the study. Overall, the research plan was properly executed as a PQRD, and the participants were extremely transparent in their interviews. Their willingness and transparency made the interview process insightful and burdenless.

## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

### Overview

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to understand better the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The first three chapters of this research provided explanations of the theoretical and theological revelation that supported the concepts that were discussed and utilized to in the methodology used to gather, interpret, and transcribe the data collected in the previous four chapters. This chapter describes the research purpose, provides answers to the research questions, and concludes the research. The implications of the research are discussed and suggestions for the application of the research are provided. Then, the limitations of this research are highlighted and critiqued. Finally, the researcher provides some recommendations for future researcher that may fill gaps in the literature that may assist others in future research. The summary offers a critique of the body of work and concludes the content of information in this chapter.

### Research Purpose

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to understand better the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. Over the past 20 years, research has been conducted concerning clergy burnout causation and the influence of emotional intelligence upon leadership effectiveness; however, to this researcher's knowledge, there is no research that explores the relationship between

emotional intelligence and burnout as they apply to pastoral leadership effectiveness. Therefore, this researcher utilized a PQRD to interview pastoral leaders who are identified in this paragraph in hopes of gathering data that illustrates the possible causes of burnout, the role of EI, if any, on the participants' leadership behaviors during burnout, and the influence of EI, if any, on combatting burnout.

## Research Questions

The researcher developed the 12 interviews questions based on the six main research questions. The 12 interview questions were open-ended questions that enabled the participants to answer the questions from their own perspectives and experiences. The interview questions were intentionally worded as they are in hopes of better understanding the answers to the six research questions.

The Following Questions Guided this Study:

**RQ 1.** How does burnout effect senior pastors' overall well-being as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 2.** What factors contribute to senior pastors' level of burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 3.** How does burnout effect senior pastors' interpersonal relationships with subordinate leaders as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 4.** How does burnout effect senior pastors' self-esteem as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 5.** What role does emotional intelligence have on senior pastors' leadership effectiveness during burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?

**RQ 6.** To what degree, if any, is the size of the church a differentiating variable in the responses of the participants in this study?

## Research Conclusions, Implications, and Applications

**Conclusions**

As noted in previous sections of this study, pastoral leaders may experience burnout for several reasons. The duties, roles, and responsibilities of a pastoral leader do not come without opportunities that may challenge a pastoral leader's spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical well-being (Johnson, 2017; Muse, Love, & Christensen, 2017). Pastoral leaders are part of a group of caretakers found in "helping fields" of employment along with others such as nurses and public safety officials (Scott & Lovell, 2015). The task of working in a field of servitude often engenders burnout, personal depletion, and a sense of loneliness or social withdrawal (Pickett et al., 2017). This researcher has personally experienced such dynamics while serving in the role of a police officer and as a senior pastor. This researcher's father and grandfather were also pastors. The researcher selected the research topic after praying for God's direction, and after being in constant contact with pastoral leaders who strive to see God's Kingdom flourish. This reality led the researcher to investigate the research topic to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to understand better the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12-20 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States.

The data gathered and collected from the participants' interviews provided subjective answers to the six research questions. Due to the redundancy of the participant answers, this researcher concludes that theoretical saturation is satisfied, as common themes were heavily developed from the coding. The following answers to the research questions are summarized based on the themes created from the transcription process.

**Research Questions**

**RQ 1.  How does burnout effect senior pastors' overall well-being as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?**

Burnout has a diminishing influence on a pastor's overall well-being, according to the participants in this study. The overwhelming theme discovered is found in the physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological demands that burnout places on the participants. The participants suggest that burnout creates the desire to withdraw from others and to escape reality using varied methods. Burnout also creates feelings of helplessness, low self-worth and motivation, and causes anxiety and/or depression among most of the participants. The participants agreed that burnout creates cyclical spirals of negative behaviors in their personal and professional lives, which impacts their overall well-being.

**RQ 2.  What factors contribute to senior pastors' level of burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?**

Participants reported that burnout is created by feeling overwhelmed in their pastoral roles. Feelings of being overwhelmed are caused by competing with other ministries to be "relevant," starting new projects that are not completed, the inability to establish boundaries and tell others "no," the amount of time spent away from their families, spiritual depletion from pouring into others without reciprocation, physical health issues, ministerial obligations outside of their normal roles, decisions among Elders and/or Deacons, and constantly dealing with the same people with the same problems that never change. There were many other causations identified during the interviews; however, these dynamics were the main themes that were highlighted among the participant answers.

**RQ 3.  How does burnout effect senior pastors' interpersonal relationships with subordinate leaders as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?**

The participants in the study did not seem to have an issue with their interpersonal relationships with subordinates. Most of the participants explained that they have great relationships with their subordinates in ministry, for the most part because they spend more time with the subordinates than with their own families. The theme in the participant answers suggested that the pastoral leader and subordinate had healthy interpersonal relationships because the pastoral leader believed the subordinate mostly understood the pastor's behaviors because of walking in "like vision." Most of the participants stated that their subordinates understood their feelings of burnout because they serve together daily. Finally, some of the participants explained emotional transference with subordinates. This refers to the way in which emotions are transferred from one person to another (O'Conner et al., 2019). The participants explained that their interpersonal relationships with subordinates were not often effected by burnout because they could lean on their subordinates during burnout, and the subordinates often leaned on the participants as their leaders.

**RQ 4.  How does burnout effect senior pastors' self-esteem as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?**

The participants unanimously agreed by stating that burnout does have a negative effect on their self-esteem. The issue of being relevant to younger generations was developed throughout the interviews. Another theme established was self-esteem, based on the way in which the participant interacted with his spouse. Many of the participants suggested feeling withdrawn from their spouses, even unintentionally, and these feelings influenced their self-esteem in a negative manner. The theme of lack of innovation also

had an influence on the pastor's self-esteem. The participants' answers suggested that stagnant vision left them feeling worthless or as though their purpose was diminished. The feelings of burnout created feelings of emotional hopelessness, which in turn, created a lack of desire to replenish their own spiritual well-being. All of the participants expressed that the issue of spiritual depletion negatively influenced their self-esteem and self-worth from a professional and personal perspective.

**RQ 5. What role does emotional intelligence have on senior pastors' leadership effectiveness during burnout as perceived by pastors of non-denominational churches consisting of 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeast region of the United States?**

The majority of the participants believed emotional intelligence has a significant role in their effective leadership behaviors. The answers revealed that the participants performed effective leadership behaviors when they felt an emotional sense of achievement or emotional satisfaction. On the contrary, most of the participants explained that they have to use strong self-management skills during moments of emotional distress, especially when providing spiritual guidance or counseling to congregants. The ability to lead and to manage subordinates during emotionally charged situations did not seem to be a significant challenge from the perspective of recognizing and managing the emotions of others; however, the participants explained that they take matters personally in emotionally driven situations. Therefore, the ability to recognize and manage their own emotions and those of others was important to the participants in the context of effective leadership behaviors.

**RQ 6. To what degree, if any, is the size of the church a differentiating variable in the responses of the participants in this study?**

The 12 participants in this study worked in diverse churches. Two lead 50-100 congregant churches, one leads 101-200, three lead 201-300, four lead 301-400, and two

lead 401-500 congregant churches. There was not a significant difference in the causes of burnout among the participants based on church size alone. Most of the participants expressed similar contributing factors that led to feelings of burnout.

The main difference between answers regarding church size was found in the issue of leading more of fewer subordinate staff members and/or programs that the ministry offers. Some of the participants explained that having more ministries and programs leads to feelings of burnout; however, the core theme of burnout is found in the participants' interactions with congregants no matter the size of the church, personal interactions with those in their social circles, lack of spiritual discipline due to exhaustion, and a lack of enhancing well-being.

Although the participants did not specifically identify their church sizes as a contributing factor of burnout, there are dynamics found in their statements that indicate that church size may contribute to factors that create burnout, such as the time spent at the church, the emotional strain of providing spiritual and personal guidance, and the demands of ministry that take time away from the participants' personal interactions with their families. This researcher concludes that the participants experience burnout as a result of similar experiences; however, the magnitude of leading more congregants and having multiple ministries that are active may be a contributing factor to the burnout a pastoral leader may experience.

**Implications**

The implications of this study did not bring new revelation to the theological or theoretical revelations presented in Chapter 2 of this study. The study does confirm the realities of burnout causation among clergy members, the role, if any, of emotional intelligence on

leadership effectiveness, and the role of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during experienced burnout.

The servant leader may experience burnout due to the task of holding the vision and mission of an organization while keeping the needs of followers first, even before the needs of the servant leader (Johnson, 2017; Greenleaf, 1977). The participants in the study suggest that the dynamics of serving others first often enables behaviors that lead to self-depletion. Jesus Christ displayed behaviors that lead to self-depletion as well. An example of this behavior may be found in Matthew 26:36-56 when Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus understood the mission of giving His life for the promise of our eternal salvation; however, the physical and emotional distress created extreme physical reactions that enabled self-depletion (Little, 2020). The servant leader may be susceptible to similar burnout because of a continuous outpouring into others while placing oneself last (Little, 2020).

Therein lies the implication that pastoral leaders desire to give unto others, serve with selflessness, and desire to grow God's Kingdom, but those actions do not come without consequences. The implications of burnout found in this study suggest that pastoral leaders may experience extreme mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical fatigue. These dynamics are also observed in the behaviors and actions of Elijah. In 1 Kings 19: 9-18, Elijah dwells in a cave while begging God to die because of the self-depletions he experiences while carrying out God's commission towards Jezebel. Elijah's emotional state created feelings of depression, loneliness, and anxiety. Elijah was also malnourished because he would not dine for nourishment (1 Kings 19:10-13).

The implications of burnout found in the participant answers suggest that the participants behave in a similar fashion when they experience burnout. Most of the participants conclude that

they do not eat healthily, practice healthy sleep practices, and do not nourish themselves

spiritually as they should. The lack of self-care leads the participants to neglect their own

spiritual well-being, and that behavior leads to increased burnout and self-deprivation according

to the interviews. This researcher recognizes such implications as cyclical, negative, self-caring

behaviors.

Finally, the implications of emotional intelligence seem to be relevant in the way in

which the participants engaged others in personal and professional roles. The Apostle Paul

exhibited emotional intelligence by virtue of promoting unconditional love as Christ loves (Beck,

2012). According to Beck (2012), Paul understood emotional contagion and the influence of

emotion on authentic happiness, subjective well-being, and patience. This is displayed in 1

Corinthians 13:1-13, wherein Paul concludes that love is patient, kind, diminishes fear, is not

jealous, does not provoke anger, and does not promote evil. Although Paul exhibited an

understanding of human emotion, he also suggested that the carnal mind is an enemy of God

(Romans 8:7-8).

Finally, Paul spoke to the emotional context of mankind in terms of mindfulness as a

discipline; however, Paul warned believers of the dangers the carnal mind presents towards the

spirit man. Meiring (2016) highlights Paul's concern with the duality of the emotional man in the

flesh and the spirit man. The spirit and the flesh cannot exist in a duality, according to Paul, as

one must crucify the flesh daily and renew oneself with the mind of Christ. Meiring (2016)

argues that the concrete and abstract mapping of the human brain indicates that research has

shown that the human brain is reinforced and conditioned abstractly with past experiences,

feelings, and sensations.

The information above is unique to the implications of this research as the participants suggest that they know they are called by God, and they continue to work in their roles because of their individual callings. The significance of utilizing emotional intelligence in their leadership capacities may be found in the ability to practice healthy spiritual disciplines. The Apostle Paul recognized the emotional demands of leading people who walked in the emotion of carnality, yet Paul conceded that loving others and taking on the mind of Christ is paramount when separating the duality of spirit and flesh (Meiring, 2016). The implications of emotional reinforcements in a pastoral setting must not go unnoticed. This researcher did not hear one participant refer to his past relationships or experiences regarding his emotional development. Therein lies a significant implication that emotional intelligence may be developed through the span of a lifetime and experiences discovered within the functions of being a pastor.

## Applications

The application of this study has many opportunities to bring awareness to pastoral leaders regarding their emotional intelligence, causes and signs of burnout, and the role of emotional intelligence on effective leadership behaviors during burnout. Many of the participants in the study suggest that preaching and teaching are the easy components of ministry, but it's the ability to lead individuals that presents real life issues. This leadership can cause disgruntled views of the ministry, and the ability to balance positive self-care practices during challenges makes a difference between successful pastors and those that succumb to burnout. This study enabled the researcher to have a better understanding of the dynamics of burnout, the influence of emotional intelligence on leadership behaviors, and the role of emotional intelligence on combatting burnout; however, the question the participants presented was, "so now what do I do"?

The question presented above may not come with simple solutions or concrete answers because no one person is identical in their life experiences, decision making processes, intrinsic and extrinsic qualities, or in conflict resolution techniques. This researcher believes the participants had a basic understanding of their own EI, experience of burnout, and a sense of their leadership style; however, most of the participants acknowledged they believed EI to be simplistic and basic until they thought more deeply about their emotions and managing those of others. There seemed to be some confusion with some of the participants regarding their EI because they viewed themselves as empathic, understanding, or compassionate; however, after the interviews, most of the participants acknowledged they may be more rigid in their leadership style and emotional awareness.

After the interviews were completed, it became clear to this researcher that self-reported emotional intelligence may be tainted to an extent because the behaviors described by the participants did not consistently match their descriptions of their EI. This researcher also questions the application of the participants EI in terms of their ability to combat burnout. In most of the participants responses, it seemed a lack of EI created greater issues of burnout, and the greater burnout became, there seemed to be a diminished sense of EI. Therefore, this researcher concluded the participants had some knowledge of their EI and feelings of burnout, but there was no way to measure their true level(s) of EI or burnout because of their subjectivity. Throughout this study, this researcher has identified some answers to "so now what" question, but the application of those answers may be challenging if pastoral leaders are not willing to practice healthy self-care, spiritual disciplines, and self-discipline practices on a consistent basis.

This researcher proposes that the application of the research be administered through leadership coaching, spiritual mentorship, and personal coaching within the context of pastoral

leadership. The participants expressed a lack of support when they are not affiliated with a specific denomination that offers leadership and accountability; therefore, the information obtained in this study may be applied by establishing a leadership network for pastoral leaders who are not affiliated with a denominational support system.

## Research Limitations

There were some limitations during the research in terms of the data collection process. One limitation was the broadness of the South-east region of the United States. While the intentions were to investigate differences of pastoral experiences throughout the South-east region, the study could have been contained to one state alone. Another limitation is the scope of the non-denominational participants. Limiting the research to non-denominational pastors alone disabled this researcher's scope to pastoral leaders in other religious organizations, such as the Southern Baptist Convention, the Church of God, the Church of Christ, or other denominations that may have provided a different perspective in this research.

A limitation may also be identified within the interview questions. The interview questions were broad; however, the redundancy of the questions did not seem to provide a lot of diversity in the participant answers. Although the interview questions reflect answers that suffice theoretical saturation in answering the six research questions, the participants seemed to have similar answers that provided a satisfaction of theoretical saturation. The last limitation identified is found within the demographics of the study. The participants were all Caucasian males ranging between 37-58 years old. This is a limitation because there was not a diverse group of participants regarding ethnicity or gender. The scope of the research was limited in this regard because, if there were more diversity among the participants, there would also be a possibility that the information gathered may have offered a different perspective to the research.

**Further Research**

The researcher would recommend further research that focuses on the benefits, if any, of pastoral support systems by way of life coaching or another type of pastoral self-help program. Further studies may also evaluate the levels and causation of burnout among pastoral leaders in a denominational setting versus those that lead in non-denominational churches. This researcher proposes larger sample sizes may be beneficial in future studies that evaluate topics such as pastoral emotional intelligence, burnout, and leadership effectiveness. Although this study gathered first-hand pastoral experiences, a quantitative or mixed methods study may provide more validity and reliability to a study that explores correlations between emotional intelligence, pastoral leadership effectiveness, and causes of burnout. Further research that explores dynamics of pastoral behaviors and well-being may assist in providing more concrete solutions to pastoral leaders, as well as individuals that are entering into pastoral roles. Further research in the concentration of pastoral personality type and leadership styles may also provide pastoral leaders with a greater understanding of their own intrinsic strengths, weakness, and values. Having information such as this may enable pastoral leaders to create a greater sense of self-awareness, enhance their leadership abilities, and recognize and combat burnout more efficiently.

**Summary**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore factors that contribute to burnout, and to understand better the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during burnout among 12 senior pastors that have experienced burnout in non-denominational churches with 50 to 500 congregants in the Southeastern region of the United States. The study also explored the implications of burnout on the participants'

professional and personal lives, the role, if any, of emotional intelligence on combatting burnout, and the role, if any, of emotional intelligence on combatting burnout.

Due to the theoretical saturation of information found in the participant answers and time constraints, 12 participants were interviewed after meeting the inclusion criteria. The data was collected by way of interviews, uploaded into NVivo using coding so themes would be discovered, and the data was transcribed and summarized. The study was supported by theoretical and theological frameworks that introduced the burnout theory, emotional intelligence, and servant leadership theory. The elements of each dynamic in the study are supported in the literature review found in Chapter 2.

The study was conducted using a PQRD. The PQRD enabled the researcher to obtain firsthand, subjective statements regarding the real-life experiences of the participants within the study. The main weakness of the study may be found in the subjective nature of participant answers regarding their levels of emotional intelligence, leadership behaviors, and burnout. There were not instruments used to quantify the data or to provide participant tests, such as the MBI. Therefore, the research must assume that the participants were honest in their answers.

The findings of the study suggest that pastoral leaders meeting the specified demographics of the study do experience burnout. The data shows that burnout influences pastoral leaders' self-care practices, self-worth, overall well-being, their leadership and personal behaviors, and their ability to combat burnout through spiritual disciplines. Finally, the information gathered in the study provided some clarification in answering the research questions. Ultimately, the study suggests that pastoral leaders who fall within the demographics of this study feel somewhat alienated because of the lack of support systems; spiritual disciplines and emotional distress may be correlated, and the roles and functions of a pastor may create

feelings of burnout. The data suggests that there is clearly an issue of pastoral burnout that has implications on pastoral leaders' overall well-being and effective leadership behaviors.

Further research that addresses such dynamics may assist in providing elements to combat burnout, to increase pastoral well-being, and to increase effective leadership behaviors during burnout. The research may also provide an increased awareness for pastoral leaders that are experiencing burnout. Finally, participants in this study expressed feelings of loneliness and emotional depletion. These feelings may be attributed to several factors, such as changes in political challenges, financial strain, church services being conducted through media applications, and cultural changes in general. One thing remains the same; God does not change, His word does not return void; thus, they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Is. 55:11; Is. 40:31; Heb. 13:8).

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## Appendix A

## Consent

**Title of the Project:** Experienced Pastoral Burnout and the Self-Reported Role of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership Effectiveness During Burnout
**Principal Investigator:** Craig Folds, Liberty University, School of Divinity

### Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 21 years old or older, hold the position of an executive or senior pastor, lead a congregation of 50-500 members, have at least three years of pastoral experience, not be a member of a religious organization, and be located in the Southeast region of the United States (Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina). 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.

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

The purpose of the study is to explore factors that contribute to experiences of pastoral burnout. The study will also explore the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness during experienced levels of burnout.

### What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
Participate in a one-on-one interview or virtual interview (via Skype or Zoom). The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. The interview will be recorded with an audio and video recording device. The recorded interview will be transcribed; however, any information that may be personally identifying will be kept confidential, and the recording will be deleted after the completion of the study. Transcripts of your interview will be sent to you via email to review for statement accuracy.

### How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include:

1. Pastoral leaders that participate in the study may draw stronger perceptions of their own emotional intelligence, which may enable a greater sense of self-awareness while experiencing burnout. This may benefit the congregants, followers, and family of a pastoral leader.

2. This study may benefit society by enabling the participant to recognize and manage the influence of burnout on their leadership behaviors.
3. Pastoral leaders that identify best spiritual disciplines may effectively enable them to combat burnout, positively influence their overall well-being, and effectively lead and minister to others who may experience burnout in their own lives.

**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.

**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.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential through the use codes. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. Paper copies will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office. Only I will have the key to the locked filing cabinet. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted, and paper copies will be shredded and burned.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.
- Participant confidentiality will be safeguarded by declining to name the participants in the study, identify the church(es) in which the participants lead, or use of any other language that would compromise the participant's identity in the study.

**Is study participation voluntary?**

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

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

If you choose to withdraw from the study, 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?**

The researcher conducting this study is Craig Folds. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓ or ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓, at ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓.

**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.

*Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.*

**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 researcher 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.*

☐ The researcher has my permission to audio-record and video-record me as part of my participation in this study.

_____
Printed Subject Name

_____
Signature & Date

**Appendix B**

**Interview Questions**

The following interview questions will be used in this study to explore and better understand "EXPERIENCED PASTORAL BURNOUT AND THE SELF-REPORTED ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON LEADERSHIP EFECTIVENESS DURING BURNOUT."

1. In your personal experience and perspective, what if any, are the greatest contributing factors to levels of burnout found within your role as a senior pastor?

2. In your personal experience and perspective, to what extent do feelings of burnout influence your personal relationships with other individuals such as family members, friends, or others found in your social interactions?

3. In your personal experience and perspective, how do feelings of burnout effect your overall well-being?

4. In your personal experience and perspective, how do feelings of burnout influence your personal and professional relationships with subordinate leaders in your church/ministry?

5. To what extent, if any, do feelings of burnout effect your self-esteem, motivation, and morale from a personal perspective?

6. To what extent, if any, do feelings of burnout effect your motivation, morale, and innovation from a pastoral leadership perspective?

7. In your opinion, what role does your emotional intelligence have, if any, on your leadership behaviors?

8. In your opinion, what role does emotional intelligence have, if any, on your ability to combat experienced levels of burnout?

9. To what extent, if any, does emotional intelligence have on your overall well-being?

10. In your opinion, what role, if any, does emotional intelligence have on providing spiritual guidance to your followers?

11. In your opinion, what role, if any, do feelings of burnout have on your ability to provide spiritual guidance to your followers?

12. In your personal and professional experience, what actions, if any, have you taken to combat levels of experienced burnout?

**Appendix C**

**Participant Inclusion Criteria Questionnaire**

Because this study is a phenomenological study, the participant inclusion pre-selection questionnaire is guided by the questions used in the MBI and SSEIT. The rationale for using the MBI and SSEIT as guides for the inclusion criteria is described in the "Procedures" section of Chapter 3 in this study. The following questions will be used to select the participants in the study:

1. Are you a senior level pastor in a non-denominational church with 50-500 congregates in the Southeast region of the United States? Yes/No

2. Do you have at least three years of pastoral experience? Yes/No

3. During your pastoral experience, have you experienced feelings of burnout that resulted from your pastoral duties? Yes/No

4. During your pastoral experience, have you felt cynicism, emotional depletion, physical depletion, spiritual depletion, socially withdrawn, or a lack of personal and/or professional accomplishment? Yes/No

5. Do you believe you have an emotional awareness that enables you to recognize and manage your own emotions as well as those of others? Yes/No

6. During your pastoral experience, do you believe you have successfully utilized your emotional awareness to enhance relationships with your subordinates while experiencing burnout? Yes/No

7. In your opinion, does burnout influence pastoral leadership effectiveness? Yes/No

8. In your opinion, does emotional intelligence (awareness) influence pastoral leadership effectiveness? Yes/No

**Appendix D**

**Verbal Consent**

Hello Potential Participant,

As a student in the School of Divinity at Liberty University, I am conducting research to understand better the experience of pastoral burnout and the self-reported role of emotional intelligence on pastoral leadership effectiveness during experienced burnout. The purpose of my research is to understand better the influence of burnout on a pastoral leader's overall well-being, to identify contributing factors that lead to burnout, to explain how burnout may or may not influence a pastoral leader's relationship with subordinate leaders, to determine the effects of burnout on a pastoral leader's self-esteem, and to evaluate the role of emotional intelligence on a pastoral leader's leadership effectiveness during burnout. If you meet my participant criteria and are interested, I would like to invite you to join my study.

Participants must be 21 years of age or older, executive, or senior level pastors leading church ministries with 50-500 congregants, located in the Southeastern region of the United States (Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, South Carolina), not affiliated with a religious denomination, and have three years or more experience as an executive or senior level pastor. Participants, if willing, will be asked to engage in an in-person or virtual interview. After completing the interview, I will send you a transcript of the interview to review for accuracy. It should take approximately 30 minutes to complete the procedures listed. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

Finally, I will either hand deliver or email a screening survey to you consisting of nine questions. The survey will identify your age, congregant size, religious affiliation (if any), years of pastoral experience and role, and yes/no questions regarding your personal understanding or experience of burnout, leadership effectiveness, and emotional intelligence. Would you like to participate? [Yes], Great, can we set up a time for an interview? [No] I understand. Thank you for your time. If you choose to participate in this study, I believe the study will be a great resource to assist in future research, to provide relevant information for pastoral leaders experiencing burnout concerning spiritual, physical, and mental well-being, and to illustrate the role of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness during experienced pastoral burnout. If you choose not to participate, I am grateful for your time and consideration.

A consent document will be given to you in person at the time of the interview if the interview will be completed face to face; however, if the interview will be conducted via digital resources, you will be provided a consent via email. If you receive a consent document via email, please return the document to my email at ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Thank you for your time. Do you have any questions?