

Literature review  
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### **Dissertation title**

A non-experimental quantitative study: Predicting Emotional Intelligence ability through the investigation of Trait Emotional Intelligence, burnout, age and gender of Non-Profit organizational leaders.

### **Mentor and committee members**

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### **Research topic**

The non-profit organizational industry has unique cultural characteristics that include having a strict financial budgets, mission/vision practices (Phipps & Burbach, 2010) as well as lack of effective leadership succession planning (Carman, Leland & Wilson, 2010; Brannick, Wahi, Arce & Johnson, 2009; Kahnweiler, 2011). The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been associated with effective leadership skills such as motivation, effective management and productivity (Khalili, 2012). Additionally, burnout is a consistently emerging issue within all professions (Sharma, 2007). Due to the ensuing cultural characteristics of non-profit organizations the issue of burnout is a stable factor. The purpose of this study is to examine EI and burnout in regards to non-profit organizational leadership. Specifically, this study is focused on identifying the predictive relationship of Emotional Intelligence ability, trait Emotional Intelligence and burnout of current non-profit leaders.

### **Literature review**

There has been an enormous amount of scholarly literature devoted to both burnout and EI. However most of the literature has been focused on the private and public sector. The non-profit organizational sector is a very distinctive industry with unique cultural characteristics such as governance from a board of directors, restricted budgets, mission driven practices and lack of financial resources. Additionally, non-profit organizations are ill prepared as demonstrated by a lack of succession planning (Elkin, Smith & Zhang, 2012; Santora, et. al., 2015) and leadership development within non-profit organizations (Carman, et al., 2010) for the approaching leadership crisis due to the retirement of baby boomers (Carman, et al., 2010). Therefore, a consequence of these issues related to non-profit organizations has provoked this study in investigating and applying the concepts of EI and burnout to current non-profit organizations.

As previously stated, non-profit organizations suffer from a lack of financial resources and a heavily labor driven budget as compared to the public and private sectors. Due to these factors, employee-enrichment programming such as leadership development is scarce as well as succession planning. Santora, Sarros, Bozer, Esposito and Bassi (2015) indicated that non-profits in general are not equipped and unprepared to cope with changes related to their respective administrative structures.

Additionally, Elkin, et al. (2012) reported that non-profit executive plan on leaving their position within the next 5 years due to a lack of support and poor strategic planning efforts. The necessity to seek change in current programming efforts is pivotal for the sustainability of the non-profit sector. Therefore, the examination of research based leadership development initiatives is essential for non-profit organizations. The focus of this study is on the application of the concepts of EI and the ability to cope with burnout of current non-profit leaders.

The concept of EI has a storied history dating back to ancient Greece where the philosophy was founded on the two opposing processes of thought and emotions (Mayer, Salovey & Causo, 2004). The Mayer, et al. (2004) is the most recognized definition of EI which is ability to identify, perceive, facilitate, comprehend and manage emotional content in social exchanges. There are currently three working model of EI. However, this research is focused on the EI ability and trait EI models.

The theoretical basis of the EI ability model is founded upon the Four-Branch Ability Model. The Four-Branch ability model is a hierarchical system consisting of the following stages: 1) perceiving emotions, 2) facilitating emotional reasoning, 3) comprehending and communicating the cognitive process regarding emotions and 4) managing emotions (Mayer, et al., 2004). Currently scholarly literature on the framework of EI ability has been linked to leader's self-perception (Zammuner, Dionisio, Prandi & Agnoli, 2013), subordinate trust (du Plessis, Wakelin, & Nel, 2015) and effective leadership practices (Anand & UdayaSuriyan, 2010). This study is intended to study current leaders within the non-profit sector to identify the correspondent relationship of EI ability, trait EI and the ability to cope with burnout.

The trait EI model indicates that behavioral dispositions within the lower-level of the personality hierarchy assist with self-perception and management of "emotional information" (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides & Furnham, 2003; Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki, 2007). The significant difference of trait EI from EI ability is based on behavioral disposition (i.e. personality) and self-perception. The theoretical basis of trait EI is a fairly new concept within the psychological community. However, trait EI has been associated with job satisfaction and motivation (De Haro Garcia & Castejón Costa, 2014), predicting job performance (Joseph, Jin, Newman & O'Boyle, 2015) and employee engagement (Leary, Green, Denson, Schoenfield,

Henley& Langford, 2013). Both of the theoretical frameworks of EI ability and trait EI have been linked to leadership and performance. However, the focus of this research is to narrow the gap in the literature as well identify the predictability of current non-profit leaders EI ability from trait EI and the ability to cope with the effects of burnout.

The process model of burnout indicates that negative social interactions both professionally and personally may lead to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduction of personal accomplishments (Maslach & Jackson, Leiter, & Schaufeli, 1981). Leiter and Maslach (1988) indicated that burnout is caused by the number of interaction with other individuals (i.e. clients and co-workers) that are involved in crisis situations, a consequence of job stress and a lack of support within the workplace. Due to the nature of non-profit organizations the susceptibility to burnout is a well-known consequence. Nonetheless, leaders that are able to cope with burnout are able to engage employees (Leary, et al., 2013), combat employee burnout (Haung, Chan, Lam and Nan, 2010) and reduce turnover (Carman, et al., 2010). Additionally, leaders that are have higher levels of EI ability are known to cope with the effects of burnout (Haung, et al., 2010). The process model of burnout, EI ability and trait EI has been individually been research within scholarly literature. However, the correspondence of these concepts and the lack of research within the non-profit sectors is motivator regarding this study.

### **Synthesis of the research findings**

Most previous research literature found on the topics of EI ability, trait EI, burnout and non-profit organizational leadership were conducted from a quantitative research design respective. Examples of quantitative research include identify the disadvantages that executives in the non-profit sector face (Carman, et al., 2010), organizational commitment and burnout

(Beheshtifar & Omidvar, 2013), employee satisfaction, leader dysfunction and burnout (Leary, et al., 2013), EI, burnout and productivity (Haung, et al., 2010) as well as self-efficacy and EI ability (Barari & Barari, 2015). Additional examples of quantitative studies include trait EI, employee satisfaction and commitment (Webb, 2014), accountability of subordinates, productivity, organizational commitment, leadership and EI ability (Yaghoubi, Mashinchi & Hadi, 2011), trait EI and turnover rate (Siddiqui & Hassan, 2013), EI ability, leader self-perception and leadership effectiveness (Zammuner, et. al, 2013). As previously stated, current scholarly literature continues to neglect the non-profit organizational industry in regards to establishing a correlation with EI ability, trait EI and burnout. This study employed the use of a non-experimental quantitative research design to identifying the predictability of non-profit leaders' EI ability from the variable of trait EI, burnout, gender and age.

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