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Emotional intelligence in nonprofit hiring practices: a new criterion

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Emotional Intelligence in Nonprofit Hiring Practices: A New Criterion

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Abstract

In the most basic sense of the concept, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the level of ability to identify, understand, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, others, and groups. It is a concept that has received popular acclaim over the past three decades since the term was first coined. Much of the growing literature on EI is in managerial and organizational behavior fields. The primary goal of much of this literature is to determine the extent to which EI can affect workplace outcomes. Suggestions that EI has a significant impact on workplace success have led to increased interest on how to effectively asses EI in individuals.

In the following qualitative study, the role of EI in hiring processes is examined within nonprofit organizations. Qualitative interviews are utilized to explore the hiring process in nonprofit organizations. An in-depth review of the literature is provided and major conceptualizations of EI are explored.

The present research suggests that despite the increasing popularity of the concept of EI in the business world, nonprofit leaders are unaware of the concept and its present hype. Regardless of their unawareness, some utility of the term is reflected within the hiring processes of those organizational leaders. This paper makes the case that the concept is particularly relevant to some types of nonprofit organization and suggests that nonprofit leaders learn more about it.

Introduction

In an increasingly globalized and advanced world, the importance of finding even the smallest edge over the competition has become a central focus of many organizations and businesses. The nature of today's workplace is very different from what it was five decades ago, and the contemporary understanding of what makes for an effective and healthy organization has changed dramatically. Notably, attention to human behavior has become a central concern for many organizations.

Increased attention to the human facet of organizations has occurred in large part due to changing economic trends. In the early 1900's, as interest in human behavior was growing, the world saw the birth of disciplines such as organizational behavior and scientific management. The early years of these disciplines are often referred to as the Classical period and are characterized by a "mechanical view of man" perspective (Fry, 1989, pg 5). For example, in the work of Fredrick Taylor, the primary goal of scientific management was to determine the most efficient way to perform routine and repetitive tasks (Fry, 1989). In these formational years, interest in human behavior was limited to questions on how to maximize physical efficiency.

Belief in these Classical ideas began to shift with the changing nature of the economy. The major economic growth of the 1950's completely changed the face of the workforce causing employment trends to shift dramatically

away from the industrial (Licht, 1988). In 1952, over 30% of the nation's workforce was employed in manufacturing and less than 65% were employed in the service industry. By March of 2007, the number of individuals employed in manufacturing dropped to a meager 10%, while individuals employed in the service sector rose to 83%. The dramatic change from jobs primarily requiring manual labor to white collar work required a skills upgrade from the nation's workforce (Lee & Matler, 2008). These changes led to the growth of what is now known as the behavioral period.

Unlike the Classical authors whose primary focus was on controlling workers, Behavioral authors believed it was important to understand human needs and personal motivation. Laying much of the groundwork for the Behavioral period was psychologist Elton Mayo, whose famous Hawthorne Studies laid the foundation for the Human Relations Movement. According to Mayo, social and psychological factors are essential to understanding individual motivation in organizations. Specifically, Mayo focused on the role of group interaction in the workplace. He found that informal groups form within the workplace to serve the unmet social needs of individuals and that these groups could have a significant impact on the behavior of those individuals (Fry, 1989).

The differences between Classical and Behavioral ideas of management are illustrated by the work of another major theorist, Douglas McGregor. McGregor is famous for his two theories of human motivation, Theory X and

Theory Y. Under Theory X, workers need to be rigidly controlled because they are inherently lazy, unmotivated, and are only concerned with monetary gains (Denhardt, Denhardt, & Aristigueta, 2013). This theory of human motivation is very representative of Classical ideas of management. Conversely, Theory Y espouses that individuals are intrinsically motivated, ambitious, and have needs other than money (Denhardt et al, 2013). This theory is characteristic of the Behavioral period. These two theories effectively capture the changes that have occurred in management thinking over the years and demonstrate the growing importance of understanding human behavior in organizations.

As people began to be seen less as cogs in the machine and more as essential elements to the success of organizations, increased attention was given to the role of human capital in reaching organizational outcomes (Colfax, Rivera, & Perez, 2010). Over the intervening years, various studies have been conducted to determine the extent to which human capital affects firm performance and numerous studies have found that human capital has a positive impact on firm performance in both financial and non-financial outcomes (Marimuthu, Arokiasamy, & Ismail, 2009). For instance, in a study of 25 financial firms by Bontis and Fitzenz, it was discovered that human capital development has a direct effect on financial yield per employee. In other words, improving the human capital of an organization directly impacted that organizations return on investment (as cited in Marimuthu et al, 2009).

With the growing understanding of the impact of human capital on organizational performance, organizations are increasingly seeking out ways to improve upon the quality and effectiveness of their workforce. There are two primary avenues for accomplishing this workforce improvement available to organizations. On one hand, many businesses and organizations provide extensive training to maximize employee potential. On the other hand, many organizations seek out individuals with higher levels of pre-developed competency (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). From an organizational perspective, the idea that individual's with higher levels of pre-developed competency can improve organizational performance serves as the primary motivator for studying what personal abilities are most useful (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). One such factor that is receiving growing interest is the concept of Emotional Intelligence.

In the past 25 years since the idea of Emotional Intelligence was first explored, considerable attention has been given to the concept both academically and in popular culture. There is a rapidly growing body of literature on the topic and commercially, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been the topic of several best-selling self-help books (O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2010; Colfax et al, 2010). The term has gained prominence amongst professionals across various fields. In the 10th Anniversary Edition of Daniel Goleman's seminal book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ,* the *Harvard Business Review* hailed the concept of

Emotional Intelligence as a "ground-breaking, paradigm-shattering idea, one of the most influential business notions in a decade" (Goleman, 2012). In a 2006 article in the Boston Globe, award winning journalist Erica Noonan deemed Emotional Intelligence the "New Hiring Criterion", calling it more than "just a trendy HR phrase" (2006).

Motivation

As organizations continue to seek out better and more effective ways to achieve organizational outcomes, thereby gaining a competitive advantage, increased attention will continue to be given to those ideas that promise to deliver an answer. Given the growing popularity of EI, very little literature exists that explores the concept within nonprofit organizations. In addition, while there is a fair amount of research demonstrating that EI can improve workplace outcomes, very little previous research explores why this occurs. There is a large gap in the literature with regards to the causes of the results that are being seen. Most previous research on EI only establishes a link between certain outcomes and never explores the reasons those links may have emerged. The primary purpose of this research is to explore the concept of EI and the role it plays in nonprofit organizations, as evidenced by interviews of nonprofit managers. More specifically, the present research seeks to determine whether nonprofit organizations value and seek out qualities associated with EI, either intentionally or inadvertently. This

research expands prior research by indicating the extent to which the concept has reached outside of the business sphere.

Literature Review

Conceptualizations of Emotional Intelligence

The idea of Emotional Intelligence appears to have first arisen in the late 1980's in the writings of several different researchers. One of the early pioneers of the idea of Emotional Intelligence was Rhodes University doctoral student Reuven Bar-On, who presented the framework for the very first measurement scale for emotional well-being in his 1988 dissertation (Khalili, 2012; Colfax et al, 2010). Subsequently, the notion of EI was first conceptualized, defined, and explored by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 (O'Boyle et al, 2010; Colfax et al, 2010; Khalili, 2012; Cherniss & Goleman; 2001). However, it was not until the publication of Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* that the concept of EI received much attention. Goleman's 1995 book is widely credited with the popularization of EI and significant research has been conducted on the topic since (O'Boyle et al, 2010; Colfax et al, 2010; Khalili, 2012).

In the years since the term EI was first coined, many diverging schools of thought have arisen. Much like the available knowledge and literature on personality and cognitive intelligence, there are widely varying theories and

ideas with regards to EI. Conceptions of EI vary widely within the literature
and new models of EI arise regularly. Despite the relative infancy of EI, there
are presently more than ten empirically studied EI measures and new
measures and models arise regularly. While there are many different
conceptualizations of the concept and many ways to classify these different
conceptualizations, the present paper will focus on the two major formational
models of EI.

These two major models of EI are 1) the Mayer and Salovey model and
2) the Goleman model. These two models may also be labeled as either the
ability model or the mixed model within the literature. While the term model
is used in ability model and mixed model, these terms do not actually refer to
a new model. They are labels used to differentiate between the two major
models mentioned previously. As the name implies, an ability model of EI
only encompasses specific cognitive-emotional abilities. Conversely, mixed
models mix in qualities and attributes that may not be a direct cognitive-
emotional ability. These two terms are further explained as they relate to
their corresponding models. Table 1 below briefly summarizes the two major
models of EI.

	Mayer and Salovey	Goleman
Model Classification	**Ability Model:** Used to classify models that focus solely on cognitive emotional abilities and abilities related to emotional processing	**Mixed Model:** Used to classify models that "mix in" non-cognitive factors such as motivation and persuasion
Framework	Emotional Ability	Emotional Competence
Definition	"Emotional intelligence is the set of abilities that account for how people's emotional perception and understanding vary in their accuracy. More formally, we define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).	"The abilities called here *emotional intelligence*, which include self-control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself" (Goleman, 1995, p. xii) […and…] "There is an old-fashioned word for the body of skills that emotional intelligence represents: *character*" (Goleman, 1995, p. 28).

Note. From *Handbook of intelligence* p. 401, by R.J. Sternberg, 2000, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mayer and Salovey

Serving as the foundation of most academic research, is the original

theory of EI proposed by Mayer and Salovey. Within their formative article

on EI, Salovey and Mayer outlined the theoretical basis for the existence of an

Emotional Intelligence, defining emotional intelligence as "the ability to

monitor one's own & others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among

them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking & actions" (pg 189).

Salovey and Mayer further expound upon this definition by presenting a four

factor model of emotional intelligence. According to this model, emotional

intelligence is categorized by four major abilities:

(a) Perceive emotions: Able to accurately identify and assess emotions in

oneself and others

 (b) Understand emotions: Able to accurately label emotions and understand

underlying causes of emotional responses

 (c) Use emotion for thought facilitation: Able to use emotions to guide

personal judgment and prioritize thinking

(d) Manage emotions: Able to effectively monitor and regulate emotional

responses and reflectively manage emotions to promote personal growth

(Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

This model is often referred to as the ability based model since it is

founded upon a strictly ability based theory of EI. Unlike the Goleman model,

which is labeled a mixed model, an ability model attempts to frame EI so that

it adheres to the standards of an actual intelligence. The ability based models

of EI meet the three criteria for being considered a real intelligence by being

operationalized conceptually as a set of mental abilities, being interrelated but

distinct from other mental abilities, and by being subject to age (Mayer,

Caruso, & Salovey, 2000). An ability model views EI as a form of pure

intelligence that only includes cognitive factors and pure mental abilities

(Izaguirre, 2008).

Amongst academics, the Mayer and Salovey model of EI is the most

widely accepted scientifically and forms the foundation for most theoretical

and academic EI research (O'Boyle et al, 2010). In large part, support of an ability based model of EI is due to its narrow definition. Unlike other models, an ability model only considers cognitive factors, which helps to solidify this conceptualization of EI as a real intelligence. In comparison to other models such as the Bar-On and Goleman models, this model overlaps the least with other constructs such as personality and social intelligence (Sternberg, 2000). However, despite academic support, there are some major limitations of the Mayer and Salovey model that limit its practical applicability.

While the Mayer and Salovey model is widely regarded in academia because of its narrow definition, some theorists have suggested that this may actually be a weakness rather than a strength. Conceptually, the narrow definition is advantageous, but in a real world setting, may often be too rigid. According to Howard Gardner, the Mayer and Salovey model subscribes to a psychometric tradition that only considers those intellectual capacities that can be measured using standardized tests. Gardner argues that only considering these types of capabilities is extremely limiting and may neglect the true complexity of intelligence. Moreover, Gardner suggests that because of the extremely limited nature of these traditional measures, successful performance on these tests often does not translate to real-world success (as cited in Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

Similarly, the theoretical complexity of the Mayer and Salovey model might make it less accessible and subsequently, less useable in a practical

setting. Since the Mayer and Salovey model is ability based, it cannot be gauged intuitively. Under this model, the only way to identify EI would be through the use of the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) or another similar EI measurement tool. The MSCEIT can cost anywhere between $50 and $195 per assessment and most other EI measures fall in a similar price range. For many organizations that might be interested in applying the concept of EI to their organizations, the cost associated with using these tests may not be an option. Effectively, this reduces the accessibility of the Mayer and Salovey model and may limit broad use of the model in managerial and organizational spheres.

Goleman

The other major model of note is the model proposed by Goleman that popularized the concept of EI. The Goleman model provides a broader and more expansive conceptualization than the Mayer and Salovey model of EI and is more typically used in commercial and organizational settings. This model of EI is often referred to as a mixed model, a model that mixes in factors and attributes that may not be directly related to the processing of emotional information (Mayer, 2007). This type of model is not necessarily framed theoretically as an intelligence and is often more concerned with the utility of EI over the legitimacy of the concept. Looking at the rapid ascent of the concept of EI, it is models like Goleman's that are most commonly cited in

literature across disciplines such as management, human resources, and organizational behavior.

According to Goleman, his famous model of EI is framed as a theory of performance and a model of competency, one which may serve as a relevant and prudent tool for understanding the applicability of emotions to work domains (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). This model of EI takes a functional approach to the concept and is less concerned with theory. Goleman frames his model of EI as a model of performance that focuses on relevant competencies. In essence, this model does not originate from a theoretical standpoint and concerns itself with application over theory. Consequently, Goleman does not define EI theoretically, but regards the term EI as a host of competencies that reflect an individual's ability to handle the emotional side of life. In Daniel Goleman's own words,

> Emotional Intelligence is a different way of being smart. It includes knowing what your feelings are and using your feelings to make good decisions in life. It's being able to manage distressing moods well and control impulses. It's being motivated and remaining hopeful and optimistic when you have setbacks in working toward goals. It is empathy; knowing what the people around you are feeling. And it's social skill—getting along well with other people, managing emotions in relationships, being able to persuade or lead others (O'Neill, 1996, pg 6).

By Goleman's definition of the concept, it is not possible to isolate EI from the outcomes it provides. Therefore, in order to fully comprehend the concept of EI, it is necessary to consider it in the context of its application. The proceeding table provides a brief summary of Goleman's original model of EI. This model consists of 25 competencies, which together form the five major dimensions of the Goleman model. Table 2 on the following page provides a detailed explanation of each dimension, presents the various competencies associated with each respective dimension, and provides examples of potential work outcomes for each dimension. Each competency relates to various personal and work outcomes and the table identifies selected work outcomes.

In the years following the publication of Goleman's 1995 book, interest in the concept of EI sky-rocketed. However, as literature on the concept grew, the Goleman model of EI received substantive criticism. This criticism came in two major forms. First, many researchers believe that claims regarding the application of EI were grossly overstated. According to Frank Landy (2005), a major issue with Goleman's work is that much of the data Goleman used to support his conclusions is located on a proprietary database. Landy suggests that because individuals are unable to access any of the raw data used to support Goleman's conclusions, those conclusions may have been misrepresented or overstated. Similarly, many researchers suggest that

Table 2: Original Goleman Model of EI			
	Definition	**Key Qualities**	**Work Outcomes**
Self-Awareness	The ability to recognize and understand your moods, emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others	• Self-confidence • Realistic self-assessment	• Recognize how their feelings affect performance and moderate themselves accordingly • Able to learn from experience and are open to candid feedback and new perspectives • Have strong presence
Self-Regulation	The ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods and the tendency to pause before reacting	• Self-control; impulse control • Trustworthiness and integrity • Comfort with ambiguity • Openness to change • Taking personal responsibility for personal performance	• Think clearly & stay focused in stressful situations at work • Admits their own mistakes • Seek out fresh ideas & entertain original solutions to problems • Flexible; adapt smoothly to organizational changes and shifting priorities
Motivation	A passion to work for reasons beyond money and power and a tendency to pursue goals with energy and persistence	• Strong drive to achieve • Optimism, even in the face of failure • Organizational commitment	• Find a sense of purpose in organization's larger mission • Persists in seeking goals despite setbacks • Operates from hope of success not fear of failure • See setbacks as due to manageable circumstance rather than personal flaw
Empathy	The ability to understand the emotional make-up of other people and skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions	• Able to determine developmental needs of others • Ability to cultivate opportunities through diversity • Able to anticipate and recognize client needs • Able to read and understand power structure and political environment	• Attentive to emotional cues and listen well to others • Understand diverse worldviews & respect & relate to group differences • Accurately read key power relationships and understand where to fit • Understand forces that shapes views and actions of customers and competitors
Social Skills	Strength in managing relationships and building networks and an ability to find common ground and build rapport	• Superior listening skills and ability to send convincing messages • Persuasiveness • Expertise in building and leading teams • Effectively nurture relationships • Conflict management and resolution	• Effective in give-and-take communication, can read emotional cues and tailor their communications • Spot potential conflict, bring disagreements into the open and help to de-escalate • Cultivate and maintain extensive informal networks; build rapport and seek out mutually beneficial relationships • Help to build team identity in group efforts through respect and cooperation

Note. From *The emotional competence framework,* Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations**.**

excitement over the potential applications of EI proposed by Goleman is pre-mature at best, and completely misplaced at worst (Sternberg, 2000).

The second major and most significant criticism of the Goleman (and other mixed models) model is that it overlaps significantly with concepts such as personality and social intelligence. Truthfully, it is evident by reviewing the competencies presented by various mixed models that many attributes within these models of EI could be traditionally classified as social skills or personality factors. Goleman's model in particular has received significant criticism over the years for this very reason. It has been suggested that Goleman's model is a gross over-enlargement of the concept, an enlargement which has led to a substantial degree of conceptual confusion (Mayer, 2007). Essentially, the Goleman model is most criticized for "re-inventing the wheel".

While these criticisms certainly merit some concern, it is important to note that a review of extant literature suggests that not only does the Goleman model demonstrate a degree of predictive and construct validity in relation to workplace outcomes, but it also does so over and above personality and cognitive intelligence (O'Boyle et al, 2010). Whether the practical applications of EI have been exaggerated or not, empirical research establishes that the concept still has a notable degree of legitimacy. Though academics continue to criticize the use of the Goleman model, it might be considered that for managerial, organizational, and practical use, any theoretical overlap may not be relevant to the application of the theory in the

workplace. While models such as Goleman's do include factors such as social skills that may overlap with other areas of study, the argument could be made that for organizational purposes, EI may provide a more succinct and concise framework for considering all factors which may affect emotional and interpersonal aspects of job performance.

More importantly, the Goleman model of EI may be more accessible to the general populace. The very specific competencies that make up the Goleman model are relatively straight-forward and concrete. Theoretically, the Goleman model is much easier to understand than the Mayer and Salovey model. For example, if a hiring manager was trying to identify EI in a potential employee without the use of tests or measurements, it would likely be easier to identify characteristics such as self-confidence or optimism over an ability to accurately perceive and interpret emotional cues. The primary benefit of the Goleman model is that it's conceptually simpler and primarily concerned with applicability. From a theoretical or academic standpoint, this is not necessarily a good thing. However, from a managerial perspective, conceptually difficult concepts may not be pragmatic.

In response to the growing body of literature on EI and statistical data suggesting his original model was overly expansive, Goleman refined his model of EI in 2001. In this condensed model, self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation became personal competencies, while empathy and social skills were collapsed into social competencies. The following table

illustrates the refined Goleman model which is made up of 20 competencies that form four domains (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

This refined Goleman model is the most conceptually simple and straight-forward model of EI. This makes this model of EI easy to apply and therefore, serves as the foundation of the subsequent research.

	Self **(Personal Competence)**	**Others** **(Social Competence)**
Recognition	**Self-Awareness** • Emotional Self-Awareness • Accurate Self-Assessment • Self-Confidence	**Social Awareness** • Empathy • Service Orientation • Organizational Awareness
Regulation	**Self-Management** • Emotional Self-Control • Trustworthiness • Conscientiousness • Adaptability • Achievement Drive • Initiative	**Relationship Management** • Developing Others • Influence • Communication • Conflict Management • Visionary Leadership • Catalyzing Change • Building Bonds • Teamwork and Collaboration

Note. From *The emotionally intelligent workplace: How to select for, measure, and improve emotional intelligence in individuals, groups, and organizations* p. 28, by C. Cherniss and D. Goleman, 2001, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

According to research conducted in the early 90's by Hunter, Schmidt, and Judiesch, in jobs with a medium level of complexity, average performing individuals were 85% less productive than the highest performing individuals,

and the worst performing individuals were 1200% less productive than top performers. As the complexity of jobs rose, the difference between average individuals and top performers was 127% (as cited in Webb, 2009). Considering the differences that can be made in the performance of an organization based on the effectiveness and productivity of individuals working for an organization, it is easy to see why the concept of EI has become such a hot topic. Businesses are looking for any way to gain a competitive advantage and find new ways to improve performance, effectiveness, and productivity. This is what has allowed the concept of EI to generate such a large body of research and interest despite its relative infancy. Though EI has generated mixed reviews and many question the validity of the concept as a whole, a significant body of research across many disciplines suggests that EI does a play a role in the workplace and that it has both predictive and construct validity even over and above cognitive and personality factors (O'Boyle et al, 2010).

Long before interest in EI skyrocketed, a national U.S. Department of Labor survey demonstrated that a variety of social and emotional skills were of significant importance to employers. The survey, which asked employers to indicate the qualities that they wanted in entry-level employees, listed things such as skill in handling conflict, teamwork, and group and interpersonal effectiveness (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). Similarly, a recent survey of business leaders by the Center for Creative Leadership shows that while technical

mastery was considered the most important competency of young workers 20 years ago, business leaders now see factors such as adaptability, self-motivation, effective communication, and self-awareness as key competencies for young workers (Velsor & Wright, 2012). Note that these are all competencies addressed within Goleman's model of EI.

Throughout extant literature on EI, there is research to support that individuals with higher levels of EI tend to perform better than their low EI counterparts. For example, a study by Boyatzis in 1999 demonstrated that partners of a multinational firm who scored above the median in certain EI competencies were able to collectively deliver as much as $1.2 million in profit over the other partners (as cited in Webb, 2009). In the research findings of Stein and Book, insurance salesmen at a New York firm were able to sell 33% more insurance if they scored higher on EI scales (as cited in Webb, 2009). In another example, a study by Spencer and Spencer of L'oreal sales agents showed that agents hired based on emotional competencies were able to sell an average of $91, 370 more than those individuals hired based on traditional hiring practices (as cited in Khalili, 2012).

If the literature is to be believed, then it stands to reason that EI has the potential to significantly impact organizational effectiveness. As was mentioned previously, there are two avenues through which organizations can become more emotionally intelligent, through the training and development of current employees or through the recruitment and selection of employees

with higher degrees of EI (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001). The primary means of accomplishing this employee selection comes in the form of the job interview. The following research explores various facets of the job interview to determine whether or not EI is present in nonprofit hiring practices.

Methodology

The purpose of this section is to outline the methodology utilized in examining the impact of Emotional Intelligence on hiring practices in nonprofit organizations. This section will begin by discussing the selection of a qualitative research design. The development of research questions and the methods used to conduct interviews will then be explored. The section will end with a discussion of the data analysis techniques utilized in this research.

Selection of Research Design

In order to conduct the present research, an exploratory interviews-based qualitative approach was utilized. In this design, exploratory interviews were used to collect qualitative data. Within these interviews, broad ideas were explored with the participants and led to further investigation. Before deciding upon the use of an exploratory interviews-based qualitative study, various methods of research design were considered. The relatively small amount of information regarding how EI realistically plays out in the job interview required the use of an exploratory study. Though the vast majority of extant literature has been conducted quantitatively, the present study is not

confined by strictly defined variables and is better able to explore the richness

of the job interview. The use of a qualitative method over a quantitative

method allowed for context to be explored in some cases. Unlike many

studies that have been conducted in the past, even those which specifically

utilized the interview process for exploration, this study explores the

reasoning behind the emergence of Emotional Intelligence qualities in the

hiring process. Further, the use of a qualitative study allows for probing on

ideas which the study participants may not have outright knowledge of. While

previous literature has established some small degree of information

regarding EI in hiring processes, the present study is able to better explore

how the concept might actually play out in an interview setting and what role

the concept may play in relation to other factors.

Question Development

The interview questions for this research were designed with four key

things in mind. The first set of questions simply sought to establish some

background on the participants and their respective agencies. The second set

of questions was designed to explore how the employer determines how to

approach the employment interview. The primary purpose of including this

question set was to determine the extent to which employer's would be aware

of evolving human resources trends. The third set of questions were designed

to explore candidate qualities that the employer values. The Goleman

conceptualization was instrumental in developing these questions. The last

set of questions explores the employer's knowledge of the EI concept and related concepts and seeks out their opinion on the relevance of EI to their organization. The basic question set is provided in Appendix I.

These questions were derived over a two month period after careful review of previous literature. A pilot interview was conducted in order to determine deficiencies in the questions. The pilot interview was utilized to refine the standardized question set and to ensure that all the bases were covered. In the initial pilot interview, it was discovered that several questions were either irrelevant, too redundant, or slightly confusing conceptually. These questions were either removed or re-written. For example, in the original question set, there was a question about emotional labor in the organization. The pilot interview demonstrated that this question was conceptually confusing for the participant and redundant with another question. As a result, this question was removed completely from the question set. A review of the pilot interview also revealed that some of the interview questions were somewhat leading and not neutral enough. These questions were re-written to avoid influencing the answers of the participants. Finally, it was evident from the pilot interview that not enough background information was collected about the agency and the participant. Additional questions were added to gain adequate supporting information.

Data Collection

A combination purposeful sampling method was utilized to recruit participants for the study (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). In order to recruit participants, the researcher contacted the local Center for Nonprofits and personal references to attain the contact information for various non-profit executives. These efforts yielded the contact information for 11 Chattanooga non-profit executives. A recruitment email was sent to those contacts and four interviews were procured through this process. The first interview of the four was used for the pilot interview. The researcher was able to attain an additional five interviews through snowball sampling. Basic profiles for the participants are provided below and summarized in Appendix II.

Interviews were conducted in the offices of the respective interview participants and lasted between 30 – 45 minutes. Before beginning the interview process, informed consent was reviewed in-depth with each participant. The participants were allowed an opportunity to ask any questions about informed consent and were then asked to sign the form. Participants were also asked if they would consent to being audio recorded and were informed of the measures that would be taken to safeguard those files.

Though each participant was asked a standardized set of questions, the exploratory nature of this study often resulted in further probing and follow-up questions. In many cases, participants were asked to elaborate on answers or to explain why they answered in the manner they did. As a result, each

interview interaction was unique to the participant and their respective answers. This was an important aspect of the data collection process and often yielded more substantive answers to the questions.

Following each interview, the audio files were transcribed using a transcription application to slow speech. At the completion of each audio transcription, the respective audio file was destroyed.

Agency and Participant Profiles

Eight Chattanooga nonprofit leaders participated in this study. Each participant had supervisory roles in their organizations and had substantive influence in hiring decisions. Though the sample for this research was fairly homogenous, it is still a representative sample. For example, though every participant in this study was female, most Chattanooga nonprofits are run by women. In the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce business directory, of the 80 nonprofits included, only 14 have a male executive director. Further, literature suggests that nonprofits typically employ more women than other industries. One article indicated that even in the early 90's, 68 percent of paid nonprofit employees were women. The same study found that females typically outnumbered males in CEO positions in smaller nonprofits (Pynes, 2000). Provided below is a short profile of each participant and their respective agency. In order to protect their confidentiality, pseudonyms were assigned to each participant.

Cindy Flyn is the Executive Director of a local non-profit providing medical services to both children and adults with a particular set of physical impairments. There are currently 13 employees working at her agency. Cindy has a degree in Mass Communications and has a background in marketing and realty. She has been working for her agency for almost six years.

Ellen Cage is the Executive Director of a local non-profit providing social services to homeless women and children in the area. There are currently 15 employees working in her agency. Ellen has worked in social service providing organizations for the entirety of her career and has been working in her current role for almost 10 years.

Tara Ward is the Executive Director of an animal rescue organization specifically focusing on the rescue, training, and adoption of dogs. She has four employees working for her organization. Tara has a background in marketing and has been serving as the Executive Director for her organization for nearly 10 years.

Sam Myers is the Executive Director of the Chattanooga chapter of a national organization which provides direct services to children. Her chapter currently employs 13 people. Sam has a degree in Communications and has previous experience working in a university setting. She has been working for her current agency for almost 11 years and has been working as the Executive Director for almost five.

Rose Greer is the Executive Director of a local organization providing social services to needy residents of the north Chattanooga area. Her organization currently employs 32 individuals, 23 on an hourly basis and nine on salary. Rose received an undergraduate degree in Elementary Education and has been working for her agency since she graduated 15 years ago.

Katie White is the Executive Director of a local nonprofit providing educational services to special needs children. Eight people are currently employed by her organization, with six on salary. Katie received a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and then spent 19 years working as the Vice President of Programming for a public television station. She has been working with her current agency for about 6 years now.

Robyn Hunt is the Director of Social Services of an organization providing crisis assistance and support services to low income and vulnerable populations of the Chattanooga community. Her organization currently employs nearly 100 individuals and she directly supervises 12 employees. Robyn has an undergraduate degree in Vocal Performance and a master's degree in English Literature. Robyn has previously worked in Human Resources and has worked at her current agency for approximately two and a half years.

Tina Gunn is the Lead Treasury Consultant of the Chattanooga department of a large nonprofit organization providing benefits to Tennessee residents. Her organization currently employs thousands of people and she directly supervises seven employees. Tina has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Political Science. She previously worked as a banker and has been working for her current agency for almost seven years.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis techniques utilized in this study are based on the

Corbin and Strauss grounded theory research methodology (as cited in Kelle,

1997). According to Corbin and Strauss, 'underlying patterns' may be

uncovered through the use of a 'constant comparative method', in which the

researcher codes the data by assigning categories of analysis to segments of

text (as cited in Kelle, 1997). Before beginning the coding process, each

transcribed interview was read in-depth to establish a basic sense of the

overall data.

In the second review of the transcribed interviews, the data was coded

solely by referencing the Goleman model specified by referring to Table 3 of

this paper. The concepts presented by the Goleman model served as the

framework for the initial coding pass. This included using all the terms found

in the Goleman table as codes. For instance, adaptability and empathetic

understanding were codes derived specifically from the Goleman model.

Other such codes were communication, conflict management,

trustworthiness, etc. This approach to coding is based on Glaser's idea of

'theoretical codes', in which concepts independent of the data are used to form a skeleton for evaluating the data (as cited in Kelle, 1997). After these codes were assigned to the data, a third review of the interviews was used to explore other relationships and patterns between the texts. Finally, the resulting codes were reviewed, refined, and reduced into major over-arching themes.

Analysis of the collected data was completed through the use of the ATLAS.ti, a computer assisted qualitative analysis software. The use of the ATLAS.ti software provided some advantages over hand-coding the collected data. Primarily, several of the software's features facilitated critical analysis of the data and helped the researcher to make connections that may not have otherwise been evident. In the first coding pass, the researcher used a find and code feature of the software to find all direct indications of the Goleman model in the data. These direct indications were found by looking for all of the terms specifically indicated within the Goleman model. Terms such as adaptability, conflict management, and communication were all codes derived directly from the model. The software was most useful in data analysis after the coding was completed.

One very useful feature of the ATLAS.ti software was the co-occurrence explorer. This feature allowed the researcher to explore potentially related concepts within the data. The feature allows tables to be built that indicate the frequency with which certain selected codes co-occur. This specific
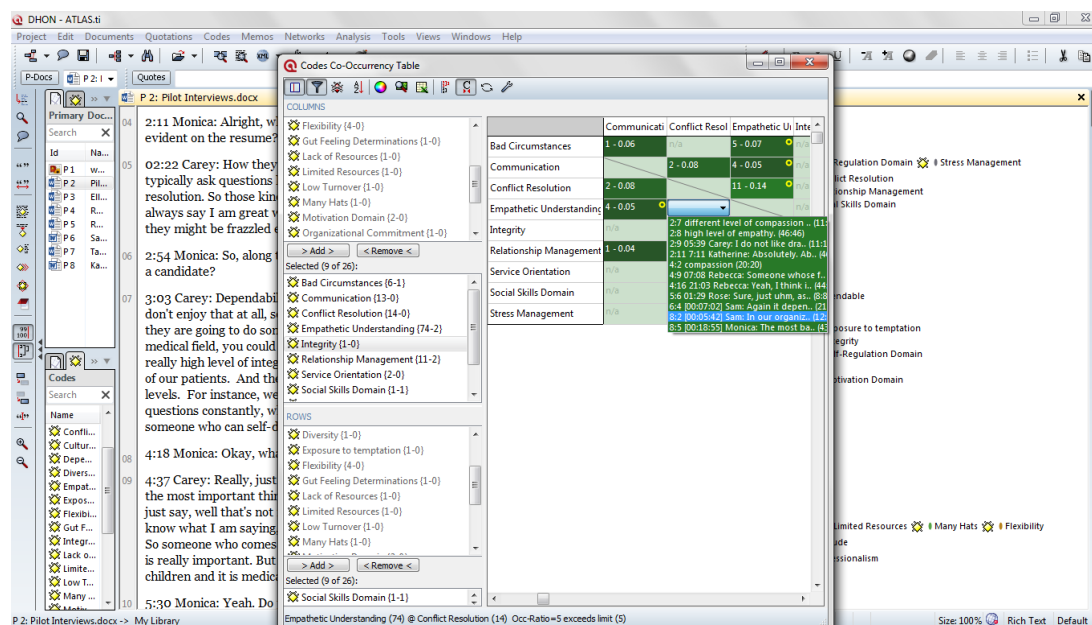
feature of the software was particularly useful in establishing patterns, looking for commonalities, and understanding relationships between the codes. For example, codes such as personal circumstance, relationship building, empathetic understanding, and conflict resolution tended to co-occur, which led the researcher to develop the people orientation theme. Figure 1 below shows an example of a co-occurrence table.

One key difference between the ATLAS.ti vs. hand-coding was that it was never necessary to choose one direction of thought over another.

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher used the memo feature of the software to create free-standing memos with different observations and avenues for exploration. The researcher then attempted to link each memo with relevant evidence. For example, a memo was created that questioned whether the empathetic understanding and the relationship building codes were related. The researcher then linked all the relevant codes to the memo. This allowed the researcher to consider a variety of ways to reduce the data. The researcher was able to review numerous possible themes for codes and select those which were most strongly supported by the data. Each code served as evidence for multiple memos, and only those memos which were strongly supported by evidence were kept. Further, in the process of hand-coding it would eventually have become necessary to reduce the data by segmenting relevant text. Doing so would have removed the selected segments of text from the overall context of the data, potentially narrowing the analysis pre-maturely. However, the use of the ATLAS.ti allowed all potential directions to be considered throughout the process. The use of the retrieve function allowed the researcher to review relevant coded text segments and the overall text simultaneously. Figure 2 below depicts the retrieve function of the ATLAS.ti.

Findings

Research Questions

This study was primarily guided by one central research question and
two sub-questions. The primary research question was: Does Emotional
Intelligence play a role in the hiring practices of nonprofit organizations and if
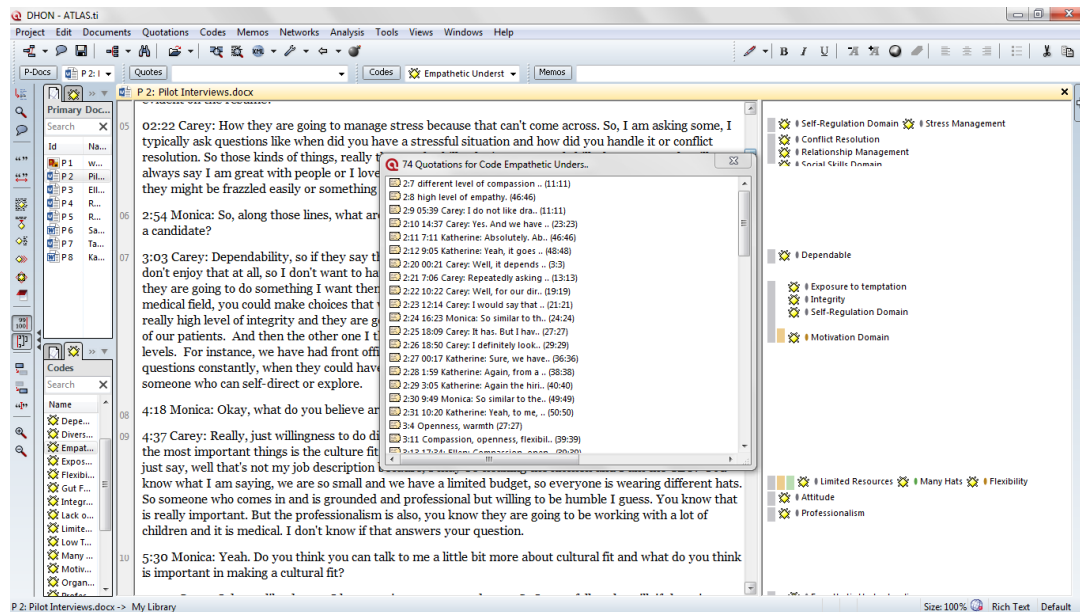
so, how is this evident? The two following sub-questions will form the
foundation of an answer to the central question. 1. Do employers seek out
qualities associated with emotional intelligence in potential employees? 2.
How do organizational leaders perceive the concept of EI with respect to their
organization?

Themes

In the following section, the primary over-arching themes that arose
from the data will be identified. Quotations from the interviews will be
provided as evidential support of the presence of these themes. The
relationship of these themes to the Goleman model of EI will be briefly
identified and will be further explored in the subsequent discussion.

Theme: People Orientation.

Throughout the data analysis process, the most common theme to every interview was the idea that the interpersonal aspects of the job were essential to the success of both the potential employee and the organization. More specifically, every participant indicated that one of the organization's top priorities was either the ability to build relationships or to demonstrate a high level of empathetic understanding. For some of the organizations, these two abilities went hand and hand. Both of these abilities are identified as social competencies in Goleman's model, with empathy falling under social awareness and relationship building under relationship management.

Throughout the research, a high regard for these strengths was often tied to the level of crisis of the agency clients. For example, Robyn discusses how the situations their clients often find themselves in makes empathetic understanding one of the most important attributes of a potential candidate.

A lot of people come in here and the reason they're here is because they are in crisis. They're in here because, maybe their rent hasn't gotten paid in 2 months and they are about to be evicted and they don't know what they are going to do. And they are upset about that. Or they don't know if they're going to have lights on when they get home or whatever. And so, being able to approach them with an understanding of that and not coming up and like, well you're being short with me. Understand why they are being short with you. You're going to go home with lights today, they're not. They're freaking out. They don't know what they are going to do. So you've got to approach them from a place where you understand where they are and you can be sympathetic and you can be kind and you can be a calming force instead of getting them all riled up.

Similarly, Sam discusses how the real crises of the organization's clients requires employees to demonstrate a very real and genuine degree of empathy for the situations the clients find themselves in.

The families and kids that have come through here are really dealing with some heavy stuff and they need to be able to relate in a way, and be personal with that family so that family feels comfortable. They can't just necessarily be "Suzy Sunshine". They have to be able to be very authentic and genuine with that family.

In these examples, empathy serves as the foundation of the relationship building process. Many of the participants suggested that building relationships with clients was critical to really helping the client. For many of these organizations, success is often not measured in easily quantifiable ways. These organizations are trying to make a difference in the lives of the clients they serve. Robyn explains it as the difference between being a transactional employee who does the job satisfactorily and being a transformational employee who actually builds a relationship with the client and really helps them make a change in their life.

In several cases, the participants indicated that these were among some of the first things they tried to determine about a candidate during the interview process. Rose even identifies relationship building as one of the core business practices of her organization. Ellen also identifies an ability to navigate interpersonal interactions and build relationships as the first thing she wants to determine outside the resume.

They have to get along with people because it is so critical that we build relationships with our clients and not just serve our clients. They come in. They were wounded. They need to feel safe. So, it's more about building relationships with women and if they have trouble getting along with others, that's not going to show up in a resume.

In some cases, these people-oriented abilities took precedence over other factors. In explaining her interview process, Cindy explains that "if they have the degree, if they have the certifications, then you know that they have the qualifications, it's more of a cultural match". She goes on to explain that it is important they make an emotional connection and as long as someone meets the requirements of the job, their personal qualities will make a much bigger impact on her decision. Further, Cindy states that "if you can't connect with people, you are not going to be successful working here. Period". Similarly, Tara identifies people skills as the most important attribute of a potential hire and further indicates that she would rather train someone with less knowledge than hire someone without strong people skills.

Their people skills. We're willing to train somebody, that's more important to us. We would train somebody if they're more able to work with the team, but may not quite know everything important about the job versus somebody that really knows everything about the job, but is not good with people. That's really on the top of our list.

Theme: Soft Skills are the Hard Skills

In today's workforce, the term soft skills is often thrown around as if its meaning is common knowledge. There are thousands of commercial articles on the importance of various soft skills and a Google search for the term 'soft

skills' yields 44,100,000 results. Throughout existing literature on EI, EI is

often equated with the term soft skills as a means of clarification of the

concept. This suggests an assumption about a general understanding of the

term. However, the present research suggests that 'soft skills' are not

necessarily a matter of common knowledge.

Throughout the collected data, there was a common theme of

confusion when it came to the question, "Do soft skills play a role in the hiring

decisions you make". In fact, several of the study participants asked for

clarification on the meaning of the term during the interview. Those that did

ask for clarification were prompted to first explain their understanding of the

term before being provided a definition. Throughout the research, it was clear

that many of the participant's had a very different understanding of the term

than what might be considered standard. When executive director Tara was

asked what her understanding of the term soft skills meant, she said:

>*...we did look to hire a new person recently and we skipped that. We basically skipped some of those things that you'd assume people know in today's job market and it turned out that person didn't know how to open an email and went to open an email like, didn't even know where to put the cursor to start typing.*

There was a similar understanding of the concept amongst several of

the other study participants. These participants regarded soft skills as an

ability to properly dress for work, compose emails, write memos, and to

answer phones. Their perception of the concept equated soft skills with basic

skills. This was most clearly evidenced by executive director Katie in her

responses that:

> *Soft skills? The ability to answer the phone, put together communication without a lot of formal training, is that right? I don't know. We don't use soft skills here.*

When prompted with a definition of the term and examples, she responded:

> *Interpersonal is big...See now, I wouldn't consider those soft skills because those are major skills for our organization, and that's just the way that we are setup and what we are able to do to the community, so those are super important skills. That is huge for us because we can't function without those as a major quality.*

For many of these agencies, intangible "soft skills" were so essential to

the functioning of their organizations that they regarded them as "hard skills".

Basically, these agency leaders perceived hard skills as the essential and

important skills they needed in their employees and soft skills as the mostly

unimportant basics. Among those skills considered essential were flexibility,

confidence, and interpersonal relationship skills, all competencies identified

in the Goleman model.

Theme: Wearing Many Hats.

Another major theme that was evident across the data was the

importance of flexibility and adaptability in employees. Flexibility or

adaptability was discussed as a key applicant quality by every single study

participant. This theme also relates back to the Goleman model. Adaptability

is a key competency of the self-management domain of Goleman's model.

Underpinning the value placed on these specific qualities was the idea that

there may oftentimes be very little consistency in the day to day duties of any

employee. Some of the study participants indicated that this variance in job

duties could be attributed to the significant differences between the situations

of each client. More of the participants suggested that the variance could be

attributed to the fact that the organizations structure often requires

employees to assist in areas not pertaining to their specific job. The common

idiom of wearing many hats was brought up in multiple interviews to explain

this fact. Executive directors Cindy and Rose both explain how even in their

supervisory roles, they may sometimes have to perform janitorial tasks and

need to hire individuals who will have the same attitude.

> *We are the type of office that you can't just say, well that's not my job description because, I may be cleaning the kitchen and I am the CEO. You know what I'm saying, we are so small and we have a limited budget, so everyone is wearing different hats.*

> *We are a smaller agency, so it is necessary for people to wear many hats. And, as far from a leadership perspective, one thing that I am very passionate about is that there is nothing around this place that I am not going to do, including unstopping toilets, taking out the trash. And so we really have to have people that have that same mentality, because on any given day, if our receptionist isn't here, you might have to be on phone duty.*

Similarly, executive directors Sam and Katie both explain that people

working in smaller nonprofit organizations are often going to have to assist in

areas that don't relate to their specialized job duties.

> *One, people who are willing to step outside of their own personal role and responsibility when needed. When you're a small nonprofit organization, you wear many hats and it is very typical that folks are going*

to end up having to help out in an area that they might not have been hired for. So that is key.

I think that our difference is that normally a for profit business, you are hired for a specific job and that's it. If you are the receptionist, you are the receptionist. And you answer the telephones, and you do some letters for this particular person. In a non-profit world you may be hired as receptionist but you will also be doing fund raising, you are going to be calling, you are going to be doing letters, you are going to be doing mailing, and a lot of other aspects they cross into other departments.

Discussion

Summary of Findings

Three primary over-arching themes were identified within the research. These themes include

1) People Orientation – Relationship building and empathetic understanding are essential qualities of successful employees

2) Hard Skills as Soft Skills – Interpersonal, communication, and other soft skills are considered hard skills because they are so vital to the organization

3) Wearing Many Hats – Flexibility and adaptability are necessary qualities because of the highly variable nature of nonprofit work

Answering Research Questions

Research Question 1: Do nonprofit employers seek out qualities associated with emotional intelligence in potential employees?

Though only two participants had any prior knowledge of Emotional

Intelligence, all four domains of Goleman's refined EI model were evidenced

within the research. Amongst all the participants, social competencies were

the most heavily mentioned. Primarily the social awareness competencies of

empathy and service orientation and the relationship management

competency of building bonds were considered essential qualities of potential

employees.

Five of the study participants indicated that empathy was a crucial

quality of the work being performed at their agency. Among these

participants, those whose respective organizations provide social services to

vulnerable, homeless, or abused populations, were especially focused on

empathy. In particular, Robyn and Ellen constantly revisited the notion of

empathetic understanding in their responses. They both indicated that the

horrible circumstances of most of their clients necessitated exceptionally high

levels of empathetic understanding in their employees. Further, they

indicated that these client crises often lead to highly emotionally charged

situations, which employees must be able to navigate with empathy and a cool

head. This is best illustrated by Robyn's description of a typical client-

employee interaction:

A lot of people come in here and the reason they're here is because
they are in crisis. They're in here because, maybe their rent hasn't gotten
paid in 2 months and they are about to be evicted and they don't know what
they are going to do. And they are upset about that. Or they don't know if

they're going to have lights on when they get home or whatever. And so, being able to approach them with an understanding of that and not coming up and like, well you're being short with me. Understand why they are being short with you. You're going to go home with lights today, they're not. They're freaking out. They don't know what they are going to do. So you've got to approach them from a place where you understand where they are and you can be sympathetic and you can be kind and you can be a calming force instead of getting them all riled up.

Expanding upon this, empathetic understanding also serves as the foundation for building bonds and relationships for many of the participants. Six of the study participants cited the ability to build relationships as a vital quality of current and potential employees. Many of these agency leaders suggested that in order to help their clients, employees must be able to leverage their relationships with their clients to help them become more self-sufficient. In order to do this, employees must be able to first gain the trust of their client and then build a bond with them. As a result, hiring employees that are competent in making connections and building relationships is a central focus of the hiring process for these organizations. In fact, relationships are considered the core business practice of Rose's agency.

On the personal competency side of Goleman's model, the self-management competency of adaptability also had a substantive presence in the research. Seven of the study participants indicated that being flexible and adaptable were important personal qualities. Though all of the participants touted the importance of adaptability because of their perception of variability in the workplace, the supporting reasoning was different amongst some of the

agencies. For some of the agencies, variability in the workplace occurred because of the size of the organization. These participants identified with the "many hats" idiom that suggests employees in these small nonprofits will often need to serve cross-functional duties that they were not hired for. For other agencies, variability in the workplace occurred because of the uniqueness of each client's situation. In this regard, potential employees need to be able to adapt to the unique needs of each client. Regardless of the specific reasoning, this quality of EI was one of the most coveted amongst the study participants.

While the other competencies presented by Goleman's model were not as significantly present in the research, only four of the 20 competencies were completely absent, to include emotional awareness, transformational leadership, change catalyst, and influence. Other competencies that were frequently mentioned within the research were communication, conflict management, teamwork and self-confidence. It is clear from these findings that certain qualities of EI are of clear interest to nonprofit employers.

Research Question 2: How do organizational leaders perceive the concept of EI with respect to their organization?

Despite the growing popularity of the concept of EI, which has flooded commercial literature, only two of the study participants even had a passing knowledge of EI. However, when the concept was explained, every

participant felt that the concept was immensely pertinent to their

organization. Most of the study participants indicated that EI was exactly

what they were looking for in job candidates. To Tara, the concept of

Emotional Intelligence: "...pretty much nailed what it is we're looking for.

That's our employment priority". For Tina, who actually had basic knowledge

of the concept:

> *Emotional intelligence is something everyone needs. You'll find that a lot of people may not be skill set, the best, but they promote very quickly because they know how to handle situations. Your skills are only as good as your ability to push them forward and get people to understand and help with it.*

Similarly, Ellen also had a very supportive perspective of EI.

> *That's huge. That's what we do all day. What I've not figured out is how to necessarily hire people, based on that. That's something that we have quarterly staff retreats, and every one of those has a piece about team building, relationship building, and conflict resolution. If I knew the magic bullet of how to find that in a candidate in a hiring process that would just be a homerun. But that's a very hard thing to judge in a short term interview process.*

Considering the widespread support of the concept from the

participants, but their lack of knowledge on the topic, it would seem that the

popularization of EI has not yet extended into the nonprofit sector. Evidence

within the research may explain why this is.

Throughout the data, there is evidence to suggest that hiring practices

were of seemingly secondary concern to the study participants. Despite being

the primary decision makers in hiring decisions, most of the agency leaders

indicated that they did not keep up to date with evolving interview practices or HR trends. Some agencies were even using basic interview questions developed years prior to the time they took on their roles. For example, Rose indicated that being a smaller agency meant they were typically unable to hire individuals with HR knowledge. As a result, they were using the same basic question set that was developed by an employee with an HR background almost a decade earlier.

Within the data, there appears to be two basic reasons why human resources functions are given so little attention. First, for many of these agencies, new employees are seldom hired. Several of the study participants indicate that their agencies have exceptionally low turn-over rates. This was the case for Ellen, who struggled to remember how the hiring process for her agency was even conducted. In some of these agencies, the little room for vertical movement and low turn-over rates have caused some employees to spend most of their lives working in the same position. As a result, many of these agency leaders rarely need to think about their hiring practices and would therefore not be exposed to or concerned with evolving hiring practices.

Second, many of these agency leaders lack the resources, both time and money, to pursue new practices. Many of these agency directors are constantly being pulled in different directions. They are not only responsible for managing their organizations, but are also often expected to spend considerable amounts of time fundraising for and marketing the organization.

These organizations also generally lack the financial means to spend money

unnecessarily. Ellen identifies this lack of resources as the primary difference

between nonprofit and for-profit hiring practices.

We don't have the resources for personality tests and we don't have
an HR manager, but I would say we just don't really have the same type of
resources that for-profit businesses do in the way we hire and select
qualified candidates.

Implications

The findings of this study indicate that EI does inadvertently play a role

in the hiring practices of nonprofit organizations. Further, the findings

suggest that certain competencies of EI are particularly relevant to nonprofit

organizations. Specifically, the research may indicate that the emotionally

charged nature of certain types of nonprofit work makes EI more pertinent to

nonprofit organizations. However, the research also indicates that nonprofit

organizations have very little capacity to pursue an understanding of the

concept. The incongruence between these two findings has various

managerial implications.

From a managerial perspective, agency leaders who are aware that

many of the qualities they value in employees are also EI competencies may

have an opportunity to refine their hiring practices. As a highly popular

concept, there is an ever growing body of research on EI which could provide

agency leaders with more effective strategies for assessing job candidates. In

fact, some of the present literature on EI is specifically focused on how to

asses EI in the interview process (Lynn, 2008). Many of these nonprofit organizations are relying on archaic interview and employment practices, which some of the participants indicated were harmful to their organization. As many of these organizations will see numerous employees retiring in the coming years, it is essential that these organizations give attention to their hiring practices. In order for these organizational leaders to do this, they will need support from their respective Boards of Directors in pursuing more effective hiring practices.

Future Research

The findings of the present study added to existing literature on EI by examining the concept within a relatively neglected sector of the workplace. This research provided a description of the competencies valued by nonprofit organizations along with reasoning for emergence of those competencies. This study shows that EI is absolutely relevant to nonprofit organizations. Considering the minimal amount of research on EI in nonprofit organizations, the nonprofit organization may provide a rich and mostly uncharted avenue for further exploration of the Emotional Intelligence concept.

One avenue for further research is the difference between EI in for-profit vs nonprofit organizations. Though for-profit and nonprofit organizations do operate in some similar ways, the present research suggests that there may be some competencies of EI that are more relevant to service providing nonprofit organization than to for-profit organizations. It might

also be pertinent to conduct research on how EI influences success in nonprofit organizations. Since success is sometimes defined differently in non-profit organizations, this research may present interesting differences if compared to existing literature on EI in workplace success.

Limitations

The present qualitative research has major limitations to be taken into consideration. Many of these limitations revolve around the sample utilized in this research. The purposeful and snowball sampling methods used to procure study participants may have led to a fairly homogenous sample. All of the participants in this study were middle-aged white females working in supervisory roles at various nonprofit organizations. Though the sample was still fairly representative of the nonprofit sector, this homogeneity may have limited the extent to which comparisons could be made between the study participants. Similarly, the relatively small sample size of this study also limited comparison. Further, the small sample size coupled with the exploratory qualitative design of this study prevents the findings from being generalizable.

Conclusion

Interest in the concept of Emotional Intelligence has grown considerably in recent years. Despite growing interest, there are still huge gaps in the literature, and the concept is a long way from legitimacy. This research sought to begin closing considerable gaps within the literature with

regards to EI in nonprofits and to further explore the reasoning for the desirability of the concept. The results of this study suggest that there is still a lot to be learned.

This research began with a considerable literature review. In order to conduct the study, it was necessary to establish what conceptualization of the concept would be utilized. It was determined that the refined Goleman model was the most practical and applicable in this situation. This model served as the framework for all subsequent data analysis.

The findings of this research suggest that within nonprofit organizations, Emotional Intelligence is unintentionally sought out by hiring managers. Specifically, hiring managers are predominantly interested in three qualities that are identified within the Goleman model of EI. These qualities include empathy, bond building, and adaptability. Despite interest in EI, most agency leaders lack the resources to pursue a deeper understanding of the concept. This contradiction suggests that alternative means of injecting EI into nonprofit organizations must be considered. In order for this to happen, it is necessary for nonprofit leaders to recognize the importance of human resources for organizational success.

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Appendix I

1. How would you classify your organization? (i.e. social services, medical, etc)

2. How long have you worked for this organization?

3. Can you give me a little information about your background?

4. What role do you play in making hiring decisions?

5. What is your background prior to coming to this organization?

6. Approximately how many people work for your organization?

7. Could you tell me a little bit about your interview process?

8. How do you determine the best interview practices?

    a. Do you ever conduct research on evolving interview practices?

9. How do you think your hiring process compares to a for-profit business?

10. How do you determine which questions to ask job candidates that are being interviewed?

11. What format of interview questions do you typically employ? (i.e. situational, behavioral, etc).

12. What do you hope to determine about an individual in the interview process that was not evident on the resume?

13. What do you believe are some of the most important factors about a candidate that influence your hiring decisions?

    a. P: Why do you think (stated factor) is important?

14. Aside from meeting the basic job requirements, what must a candidate do to stand out from other candidates?

15. What are some of the personal qualities or attributes that are important in a candidate?

    a. P: What do you mean by (stated quality)?

16. What differentiates an average hire from an outstanding hire?

17. Do soft skills play a role in the hiring decisions that you make?

    a. P: Which soft skills are most important or most pertinent?

18. What is your familiarity with the term Emotional Intelligence?

19. Listen to this description of Emotional Intelligence. (EI is the level of ability to identify, understand, asses, and control the emotions of oneself, others, and groups) Based on this description, do you think this concept of Emotional Intelligence is or is not pertinent to your organization and the hiring decisions you make?

    a. P: Why or why not? Do you see this concept applying to your organization?

Appendix II

Agency and Participant Profiles

Pseudonym	Job Title	# Employed	Agency Type	Populations
Cindy Flyn	Executive Director	13	Medical Services	Children and adults with physical impairments
Ellen Cage	Executive Director	15	Social Services	Homeless women and children
Tara Ward	Executive Director	4	Animal Rescue	Stray dogs and new owners
Sam Myers	Executive Director	13	Social Services	Abused children
Rose Greer	Executive Director	32 (9 Salary)	Social Services	Needy residents of north Chattanooga
Katie White	Executive Director	8 (6 Salary)	Educational Services	Special needs children
Robyn Hunt	Director of Social Services	12	Social Services	Low income individuals and families
Tina Gunn	Lead Treasury Consultant	7	Benefits Provider	All Tennesseans