

Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY AND CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

2.1 Methodology

A literature study will be carried out on emotional intelligence and its importance as well as its application within society. The methodology will then proceed to include a theological evaluation of emotional intelligence, using the Bible as the source of measurement for this evaluation.

Academic evaluations, criticisms and theoretical deductions will be made with the aid of current academic research on emotional intelligence. I will also consult academic journals, as well as, newspaper reports and book reviews done on some of the books used within my bibliography.

Due to the fact that this study also seeks to clarify the role and application of emotional intelligence in today's society, I will also research various literatures concerning the application of emotional intelligence within companies, educational institutes, health institutions and personal development.

The proposed theory is that emotional intelligence is relevant to and essential for the functioning and the ministry of the church within society. It would thus, be necessary to evaluate it theologically, in order to see whether emotional intelligence is theologically coherent with what the church believes concerning people and God. If it were to be theologically correct, then (due to its importance for the functioning of the church), further research can be taken to state its application and functioning within the church. Due to the nature of this study as a literature study, no practical advances have been made and no interviews were conducted.

The researched literature includes areas of psychology, sociology, business, health institutions, educational institutions and developmental studies. There is to date no theological academic literature available on emotional intelligence. This is also why a theological evaluation is imperative.

However, clarification of specific concepts used within this study is of particular importance. I will give a clear definition of each concept as understood within each particular field, including my own definitions and framework.

2.2 Concept clarification

2.2.1 Emotional intelligence

According to Salovey and Mayer (2001: 158) emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion and to regulate emotion. It is the ability we have to cognitively deal with our emotion before we behave. This definition is known as the ability model (Bar-On and Parker 2000: 10).

(Goleman 1995: 17) sees a more practical application to emotional intelligence and defines it more in terms of behavioural characteristics that are displayed in a given situation concerning our emotions. Thus, an outburst of anger would simply not be emotionally intelligent behaviour. Emotionally intelligent behaviour would include empathy and self-control. This definition is known as the mixed model (Mayer: 2001). I will incorporate both the ability model and mixed model as my definition within a theological framework.

My definition of emotional intelligence is as follows: the cognitive ability (according to Salovey and Mayer) to accurately perceive, assimilate, understand, regulate and express my emotions (within any situation) and then, to effectively behave in such a way, as to produce behaviour beneficial to both my

environment and myself. My definition is based also on a theological approach that presupposes that God created people with this capacity of emotional intelligence. Möller states, “man’s existence, his ability to observe, to think and come to conclusions is only possible because he is a creation of God, the eternal Subject” (Möller 1998: 7).

2.2.2 Intelligence

Intelligence is the mental ability we have to adapt and solve a specific problem effectively. I prefer to understand intelligence according to Sternberg as a “mental activity toward purposive adaptation to, selection and shaping, of real world environments relevant to one’s life” (Sternberg 1985: 45). Intelligent behaviour can be seen as behaviour that is adaptive and that results in this behaviour being beneficial to self and those around us.

2.2.3 Theological evaluation

Theological evaluation refers to an evaluation done using a theological frame of reference. With theological, I mean the study of the relation between God, people and their environment as described in the Bible and interpreted from a Pentecostal perspective. Thus, the relation between God, people and emotional intelligence will be evaluated to see whether this relationship is possible.

2.2.4 Church

When I refer to the church, I am referring to the church as an institution, functioning within society. The church has a specific function, which is primarily to serve the spiritual needs of people within society. The church is the institution within society that teaches people about God and His relationship between them and their environment.

The church is not an institution alone, but also the people who claim to follow God and believe in this relation between humanity and God. The church is both an institution and a 'people'. The church, theologically, has also been called by God to love and serve Him, as well as their fellow human beings and their environment. Theologically the church is called to be God's representative on earth. Thus, it is important for the church to aid in any way possible, in order to produce peace and well being within society.

2.2.5 Clergy or pastor

The pastors or clergy are the ministers who work at the church and who serve the community spiritually. They are called by God to help equip the members of the church and aid others in society spiritually, emotionally and physically.

2.2.6 Society

Society is the environment in which people live and work and interact with others. Society is also filled with difficulties, dangers, stress, heartache, poverty, divorce, abuse and pain etc. This is referred to as the "condition society" is in. It is the current scenario of society in South Africa.

2.3 Definition of emotional intelligence

Weisinger defines emotional intelligence as "the intelligent use of emotions" (1998: xvi). However, what does it mean when someone speaks of "intelligent" behaviour? What constitutes "intelligent" behaviour? How would you behave "intelligently" with your emotions? In order for us to understand what is meant by "emotional intelligence", it is imperative that we understand the meaning of "intelligence" first. It is therefore, important for us to look at the definition given for "intelligence" by those who specialize with this concept.

2.3.1 Definition of intelligence

Webster's dictionary defines intelligence as "the ability to learn or understand from experience; the ability to acquire and retain knowledge, mental activity and the ability to respond quickly and successfully to a new situation, the use of the faculty of reason in solving problems" (2001: 5).

The most common measure of intelligence is known as the I.Q test. This test measures what scientists call the 'g' factor – general intelligence of a person. It has been said that each person is born with a certain, genetic-biological, general intelligence. Miller acknowledges this when he states, "the most traditional and widely accepted definition of intelligence, is in terms of the 'g' factor of assumed, general intelligence" (Gardner 1983: 280).

The origin of the IQ test began with Binet, a psychologist in 1900, when the city 'fathers' of Paris asked him to devise some kind of measure that could predict which young men would succeed and which would fail in the grades of the Paris schools. Binet succeeded and the measure he developed was called the "Intelligence Test", known as the I.Q. test.

However, the definition of intelligence began to not merely entail the logical and arithmetical ability of a person in solving academic related problems. (Math sums and science formulas). Jensen says we should look at a person's "reaction time" to define a person's intelligence (Sternberg 1985: 365). Thus, a definition of an intelligent person would be based on how quickly they react to something. Eyernech says, "we should solely look at brain wave activity to measure a person's intelligence" (Sternberg 1985).

Miller (Gardner 1983) emphasizes the fact that intelligence is culturally defined. What may be intelligent behaviour for one culture may not necessarily be intelligent for another. The "problem solving ability" therefore, will become

culturally defined. Thus, for a chess player, it would be how well he solves his problem of being checkmate. Likewise, a businessman will solve problems pertaining to business.

Gardner defines intelligence in terms of “multiple intelligence”. “As the name indicates, I believe that human cognitive competence is better described in terms of a set of abilities, talents or mental skills – which we call intelligences” (1983: 15). Gardner lists 7 intelligences.

Sternberg suggests defining intelligence using a contextual framework. He defines intelligence as “a mental activity toward purposive adaptation to, and selection and shaping, of real world environments relevant to one’s life” (Sternberg 1985: 45). By “mental activity”, Sternberg means the ability to make the most of a specific circumstance, whether positive or negative. Therefore it is not the fact that the person solved the problem that counts, but rather how that person (using his/her mental ability), made the best of the situation. Sternberg identifies intelligence in terms of a person’s behaviour within his/her environment. This behaviour is relevant to one’s life or environment. He also sees intelligence as goal directed – directed at a specific purpose.

Sternberg sees intelligence as adapting. The ability to use the skills needed to adapt to your environment. Intelligence is selecting and shaping your environment: this selecting usually proceeds after adapting and shaping. Intelligence is in part also being able to succeed in context, by adapting, selecting and shaping our environment.

Sternberg says: “Intelligence does not mean ‘I do everything well’, this is the traditional viewpoint of someone having a (high g)”. According to Sternberg and Grugerenko the intelligent person “is one who figures out what his/her strengths are and then capitalizes upon the strengths, while compensating for and remedying the weakness” (Sternberg and Grugerenko 1997: 351).

Therefore the definition of “intelligence” remains the ability to solve problems within any environment, based on competencies relevant to that particular environment and necessary for the survival within that environment. In recent years there has been an increased interest in understanding intelligence in terms of the range of competencies, which enable a successful adaptation to the everyday environment (Gardner 1983: 284).

2.3.2 Intelligent behaviour

Intelligent behaviour therefore, is a culmination of various aspects. These include behaviour that entails:

- 1) Problem solving ability (whether it be confined to a culture demanding the competency of logical, rational, arithmetic, or that of emotional and social to solve the problem).
- 2) The ability to adapt, select and shape one’s environment, using the needed skills and competencies of the environment.

Gordon and Famous say: “Intelligent behaviour, then refers to the cumulative capacity for processing and storing information and for making adaptive responses to familiar and novel circumstances” (Sternberg 1985: 326).

Intelligent behaviour is also defined by what the society deems as “intelligent behaviour”. Therefore, in our South African society, intelligent behaviour might be to lock your car and secure its safety before leaving it because, our environment calls for such behaviour. Whereas, in another society, like Switzerland (in which crime is no threat) this sort of behaviour would be viewed as unintelligent. My behaviour is intelligent because I adapted to my environment by using my mental ability, and solved the problem of potential stealing. However, it could still be stolen, but I adapted and made the most of my problem situation as best I could.

Thus, “the expression of intelligence is largely a function of cultural experiences” (Sternberg 1985: 328).

2.3.3 Development of the term: emotional intelligence

Due to the fact that Salovey and Mayer coined the term in 1990 we will begin with their earliest definition of “emotional intelligence”. The definition of emotional intelligence was expanded slightly after its original definition in 1990. This was largely due to the fact that Goleman in 1995 began to move away from the cognitive definition of Salovey and Mayer and defined emotional intelligence as the practical abilities attributed to the behaviour towards others and self.

Salovey and Mayer in 1997 redefined emotional intelligence and emphasized the cognitive aspects related to emotional intelligence. It did not merely consist out of behaviour but first “mental behaviour” as such. This was a clearer, academic definition compared to that of Goleman’s. Goleman’s definition was accepted more within lay circles, probably because it was understandable and easier to apply. This is also why companies and businesses were interested immediately in its application.

However, at that stage the function and importance of emotional intelligence according to Salovey and Mayer was not fully researched academically. But, recent literature has produced valuable applications showing the value of emotional intelligence for institutions within society. This data has been scientifically established. We will now turn our attention to the process of the first definition of emotional intelligence as stated above.

2.3.3.1 Peter Salovey and John Mayer

The first mention of the phrase “emotional intelligence” was conceptualized in 1990 by Peter Salovey and John Mayer. They defined “emotional intelligence” as

“a (cognitive) set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and others; the effective regulation of emotion in self and others and the use of feelings to motivate, plan and achieve in one’s life” (1990: 185).

They view emotional intelligence primarily as a cognitive ability with regard to one’s emotions, which will lead to the expression, regulation of emotions in oneself and others (internal behaviour) and then leading to the use of these emotions to motivate, plan and achieve in one’s life (external behaviour). According to previous definitions of intelligence (adaptation) we see that emotional intelligence entails the mental/cognitive ability to adapt to our environment using our emotions. This also entails the adaptation of our emotions cognitively, before even acting.

With the importance and interest in this topic, it came to be found that the way, in which we interact with others and ourselves, emotionally, very often produced our success. This was further emphasized with more research concerning the way in which our emotions affected our behaviour and thinking. As Forgas in Mayer says, “affect is likely to influence many relationships, group behaviours, organizational decisions, consumer preferences and health related behaviours and emotional intelligence necessarily involves knowing when and how these effects occur” (2001: 63).

Within a working environment, the ability to work with others and deal with our own emotions became essential. This became the recipe for success. This leads us to the next step in emotional intelligence. The person who popularized the term and managed to bring the educational and corporate world in with him – Daniel Goleman.

2.3.3.2 Emotional intelligence defined by Goleman

With the research done by psychologists on intelligence and the coining of the term emotional intelligence by Salovey and Mayer, Goleman decided to investigate this so-called “emotional intelligence” topic.

Goleman, a winner of the Lifetime Achievers’ award from the American Psychological Association and the author of many books, was reporting on science for the New York Times, when in 1993, he came across the paper on emotional intelligence by Mayer and Salovey. Goleman said in an interview “When I saw the phrase I thought, Wow! (Billen 2002).

Because he was a journalist and author he was aware of the scientific study of emotions and the war between reason and emotions. He was also aware of the lax in society and the current state society was in. The emotional state society was in had reached breaking points, with people “loosing it” many times over nothing. Many a time this emotional instability leads to death, rapes and divorce.

Goleman had also noticed that scientifically, there was a mass of new information and understanding about emotional life, especially about the function of the brain. “The last decade despite its bad news, has also seen an unparalleled burst of scientific studies on emotion. Most dramatic are the glimpses of the brain at work, made possible by innovative methods such as new brain imaging technology” (1995: xi).

Goleman saw a link between the need for society to temper its emotional chaos and the current scientific study on emotional life. “This unprecedented clarity on the workings of emotions and their failings brings into focus some fresh remedies for our collective emotional crisis” (1995: xi). With his research, he came to the conviction that emotional intelligence seemed to be the answer to society’s lax emotional state. Further investigation needed to be done in order to find how this

emotional intelligence could be developed and applied, as to equip society once again to live in harmony and civility.

Goleman defines emotional intelligence as being able to “reign in emotional impulse, to read another’s innermost feeling and to handle relationships smoothly” (1995: xiii). So, acting intelligently (adapting appropriately) with our emotions. Goleman sees self-gratification (selfishness) as one of the most hindering effects on society and a fit reason why society is in a mess today.

Goleman’s model of emotional intelligence is different to that of Mayer and Salovey, in terms of its emphasis on external behaviour and in viewing it as the cure for society's ills (self-gratification). According to Salovey and Mayer, emotional intelligence was a “skill hypothesized to”...produce internal behaviour (cognitive), which would produce certain external behaviour concerning our emotions and that of others. Goleman however, immediately equated the external behaviour concerning our emotions (self-control) with emotional intelligence. Thus, overlooking the fact that emotional intelligence was rather “the skill hypothesized to” produce the behaviour (self-control) Goleman referred to as emotional intelligence.

(Goleman 1995: 43) bases his concept of emotional intelligence on 4 components:

- Self awareness
- Self management
- Social awareness
- Relationship management

Goleman identifies the importance of emotional intelligence in the workplace and for the survival and success we desire within our working environment. This has

resulted in companies and institutions becoming more emotionally intelligent centered in their approach to life and work.

2.3.3.3 Redefinition by Salovey and Mayer

After Goleman's definition of emotional intelligence much "fuss" was made because it provided lay circles and institutions with a practical example of emotional intelligence. People could now behave in an emotional intelligent manner with both themselves and others. This produced many far-reaching results within companies and workplaces.

However, it seemed as though society had just simply gone on a tangent, thinking that emotional intelligence (self-control or empathy) was the answer to their problems. All they needed was to practice being intelligent (self-controlled) with their emotions. This concerned Salovey and Mayer, because they felt that the original definition of emotional intelligence encompassed much more than just "reigning in an emotional impulse". It involved a cognitive ability (which was the skill that would produce the behaviour). Emotional intelligence was more than 4 components that Goleman proposed. This cognitive ability was not clearly stated within their first definition in 1990 and this gave Goleman the initiative to expand the topic to other characteristics associated with competencies rather than the cognitive emotional intelligence.

As Mayer clearly states, "thus there emerged two lines of definitions:

- The original approach that defined emotional intelligence as an intelligence involving emotion and
- The popularized, mixed approaches that blended emotional intelligence with other skills and characteristics such as well-being, motivation, and capacities to engage in relationships" (2001: 9).

In 1997, (amongst all the popularity of their own concept), Mayer and Salovey felt a need to redefine and emphasize the cognitive aspect of emotional intelligence. In so doing they hoped to achieve a clearer definition for further scientific study and to calm the over popularity of the topic Goleman so avidly advertised. They therefore defined emotional intelligence as “the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion; the ability to access and generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (2001:13). This explained the “skill” of their first definition clearly. Clearly, it entails internal cognitive behaviour and external behaviour.

For Mayer and Salovey, emotional intelligence is the capacity to perceive emotion, integrate, understand and manage” in oneself and in others (2001: 140). These 4 abilities also develop at different stages within our human development and by our adolescent years all these abilities are present in some manner. However, the more they are practiced the easier they are to apply when we are adults.

It is not just performing a particular external behaviour or competency (as in 2.3.3.2), but thinking and identifying emotions within your cognitive processes (mind). A person can develop their emotional intelligence by simply applying the cognitive abilities and then eventually this will lead to practical abilities and behaviour, which would produce intelligent (adaptive) behaviour in terms of our emotions.

Emotional intelligence is applied cognitively, to produce appropriate intelligent behaviour with our emotions. All the above first happen within our thought and cognitive processes and then are filtered out to produce our behaviour. This is what Goleman failed to identify within his definition and application of emotional intelligence.

2.4 Conclusion

Now, that we understand what is meant by intelligence and intelligent behaviour, we can understand what it means to behave “emotionally intelligently” (cognitive ability). Coupled with the meaning of intelligence, emotional intelligent behaviour is the cognitive behaviour, which entails the identification, understanding and regulation of our emotions, so as to also produce intelligent behaviour externally.

This seems to produce the ability to solve, deal with and adapt to our degrading, increasing immoral society using our emotions, which produces intelligent behaviour. Mayer emphasizes this when he says, “emotional intelligence is not stress, it is not adaptation, and it is not mental health, relationship quality, work success or physical health. Rather emotional intelligence may be something that helps us to understand and predict these aspects of life” (2001: 27).

Much research has been done on emotional intelligence over recent years (1997-2004) and scientific study (Mayer 2001, Bar-On and Parker 2000, Matthews 2004) has gone into the importance of emotional intelligence and its true application within society as defined by Salovey and Mayer. For many, it is a remedy. Top companies, educational institutions and scientists, are viewing its importance as helpful for our effective functioning. Is emotional intelligence effective? In the next chapter we will evaluate its value and importance to society.