

Chapter one

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the concept

Emotional intelligence has been a recent topic of concise evaluation, definition and redefinition within the fields of psychology, sociology, developmental studies and business. According to Mayer, “the field of emotional intelligence began as a topic of study within academic psychology. From there educators, psychiatrists, human resource specialists and others became interested and the field grew” (2001: 3).

In 1990 emotional intelligence was defined by Salovey and Mayer, as a cognitive ability which entailed, “a type of emotional information processing that includes accurate appraisal of emotions in oneself and others, appropriate expression of emotion and adaptive regulation of emotion in such a way as to enhance living” (1990: 185).

In 1995 Goleman, a journalist at the time, read articles of Salovey and Mayer on emotional intelligence. Goleman immediately saw emotional intelligence as a solution to the inability of humanity to control their emotions and thus, a solution to their destructive behaviour. Goleman popularized his opinion soon afterwards, by writing some best selling books such as, “Emotional intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ” (1995: 1) and “Primal Leadership” (2002: 1).

This was met with great approval by other institutions within society. Pfeiffer makes the following statement in this regard. “There is a growing interest in the concept of emotional intelligence, as a result of a new *zeitgeist* that embraces non-traditional views of intelligence and a belief promulgated in the popular press that emotional intelligence holds promise for solving many of society’s most

pressing problems” (2001: 138). This led to businesses (Kemper 1999, Goleman 2001), companies (Weisinger 1998, Pfeiffer 2001), medical fields, educational fields and correctional services (Bar-On and Parker 2000, Salovey and Sluyter 1997, Matthews 2004) wanting to incorporate this emotional intelligence due to its proposed value within these fields.

Salovey and Mayer in 1997 redefined emotional intelligence to emphasize the cognitive processes involved. They 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” (Salovey and Sluyter 1997: 10).

Within the 1990’s much research has gone into the concept of emotional intelligence from a scientific point of view. The two basic definitions could be noted as the:

- Ability model by Salovey and Mayer (cognitive ability)
- Mixed model by Goleman (mixture of ability, character and behaviour)

Within my evaluation of emotional intelligence I have researched both these models, in order to obtain a clear definition and picture of emotional intelligence. Although the application of emotional intelligence was popularized by Goleman, the value and importance of Salovey and Mayer’s cognitive definition is the foundation of the success of emotional intelligence (Mayer 2001, Matthews 2004). Although in lay circles emotional intelligence (according to a mixed model) has surfaced as popular, the grounded work laid by Salovey and Mayer is really what makes it relevant and important to all areas of life. I have undertaken to show this in chapter three, with the application and importance of emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability within all fields of study and institutions.

1.2 Problem statement

The church and clergy have an important part to play in the education and aid of society, including emotional and behavioural aspects of the person at hand (Möller 1998). However, there seems to be a lack of interest and a clear evaluation of emotional intelligence within the church, while its application is abundant in other institutions within society. Or, is the church (as an institution) unaware of the importance of the role emotional intelligence plays in their lives and in those of the surrounding community? A theological evaluation of emotional intelligence is needed to make the church aware of its importance and to provide a clear evaluation of emotional intelligence, in order to see whether emotional intelligence is:

- a valuable aid and could enhance the effectiveness of the ministry of the church within society and
- whether it is in accordance with what the church believes concerning people and their behaviour within society.

With the application and value of emotional intelligence, I have recognized that most of the institutions (because of the importance emotional intelligence can have on the effectiveness of these institutions, concerned with people's functioning), have addressed or attempted to research and apply emotional intelligence, except for the church. This seems strange due to the fact that the church also concerns itself with the functioning of people, like other institutions within society.

The church's ministry also involves counselling (emotionally and spiritually) its members and people within society and so also needs to be equipped within this area. Many church members are spiritually equipped, but emotionally are still unable to deal with and manage their emotions effectively. The church also consists of a place of interaction with people and is also a workplace. If other institutions have a workplace, an aspect of counsel and social development for

the community and have evaluated emotional intelligence as being essential for the effectiveness of these particular areas, then it is time for the church to do so too. Surely, this will enable the church to provide effective ministry within these areas and likewise within society?

The reason for the church's silence could be due to its purpose and functioning as institution. Note that the only way emotional intelligence or any other phenomenon would be of interest to the church (or any other institution), is if it were to enhance the effectiveness of the church's mission and purpose (as with the other institutions within society). One aspect of this mission and purpose is to minister to everyone in the most effective way possible. "The church is interested in the people of this world", Möller says, "their redemption, upliftment and growth in the grace of God is its task" (1998: 114). Thus, if emotional intelligence were important for the functioning of the church's ministry and its effectiveness, then only will emotional intelligence be of value.

1.3 Research aim and justification

As the church is also concerned with the upliftment and well being of people, it is essential that it, in the least, investigate the possibility of the importance of emotional intelligence within its functioning and effectiveness for its ministry. The aim of the study therefore would be to see whether emotional intelligence could play a role and aid within the functioning of the church's ministry, as it does in other institutions, thus enhancing its effectiveness.

Within every area of functioning the church deals with the emotional aspect of a person, whether it be the counselling session, community development or the workplace of the church. It is thus, of necessity that the church be equipped or in the least, become aware of the emotional regulation of a person and its effect on a person's behaviour and development.

A theological evaluation of emotional intelligence is needed to make the church aware of its importance and to provide a clear evaluation of emotional intelligence, in order to see whether emotional intelligence is:

- a valuable aid and could enhance the effectiveness of the ministry of the church
- in accordance (theologically) with what the church believes concerning people and their behaviour in society

Within this theological evaluation I will use the Bible from a Pentecostal perspective (Clark and Lederle 1989) as the source of evaluation. As a Pentecostal Theologian, I see the Bible, as relevant and useful for the effective functioning of people today. My view is not that of dispensationalism. I also see the Holy Spirit, as being active within people's lives. The Holy Spirit provides them with the guidance necessary for selfless living and in so doing empowers them to live for God and not themselves. My exposition of the Bible within my evaluation is not purely exegetical. It is read on a more literal basis, viewed as applicable and relevant for people's lives.

1.4 Proposed structure of study

I will state my aim and justification for research within this chapter. I will then proceed to define and research the development of emotional intelligence within chapter two. In chapter three the importance and application of emotional intelligence within society will be evaluated and also its possible importance and application within the church. In chapter four, after proving the importance of emotional intelligence for the effective functioning of the church, I will evaluate emotional intelligence from a theological perspective. This will enable me to evaluate emotional intelligence according to the Bible, so as to see whether it is in accordance with what the church believes concerning God and humanity. Chapter 5 will be a conclusion of my findings, the limitations and also recommendations for further study.

