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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SMALL BUSINESS LEADERS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:  
EXPLORING PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECT AND VALUE IN THE WORKPLACE

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Steven P. Smith

August, 2015

Kent Rhodes, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

To my wife and best friend Angie,  
for always believing in me and what I could be.

To my children, Stephanie, Sean, Thomas, Hanna, and Hailey;  
the joy in life is showing you how to strive to keep bettering yourself.

I love you all.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Everything starts with a dream, a vision. Mine was to be a doctor since it is the highest level of academic achievement. Through God's grace and all those who have supported me, I have achieved that dream and wish to express my thankfulness.

My first thank you is to Dr. Kay Davis who, upon hearing my first concept of a dissertation topic, enlightened me with the wisdom of "who cares?" This advice led me to Dr. Michelle Rosensitto and the concept of emotional intelligence. Thank you, Dr. Rosensitto, for that path that lead to much learning and intrigue in this area of study. To Dr. Kent Rhodes, the guy who kept believing that this straggling student who seemed to want to get to the end would persist and make it through, thank you. Your words of encouragement kept me engaged to keep getting to the next step. To Dr. Tom Granoff who reached out in a way that allowed me to keep seeking and all the while remained a groovy dude, I am thankful for your mastery of the art of statistics and ability to explain it to people. And I am appreciative for his introduction to my guiding light and coach, Dr. Debra Fisher, who showed me how to complete this daunting task known as a dissertation. I value the wisdom and spirit you have instilled within me.

Thank you Peter Belinsky for introducing me to the Southern California Vistage group who allowed me into their world and access to their members. I appreciate your generosity of time and graciousness while living at the helm of the ship where you pilot the ever turbulent waters of business.

I am thankful for my ever-present friend and cheerleader, Chris Larson. Your voice and spirit are always with me as I strive and get stuck, only to strike out and strive again. Thank you for your ever-present words of encouragement.

To those small business owners who make it happen day in and day out, all the while helping to make America a better place through your efforts, I thank you.

And a special thank you to my wife and best friend Angie... every day is the best when I hear your voice and see your smile... I love you.

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## ABSTRACT

Although they represent 99.7% of all employers in the American domestic workforce, the annual failure rate of small businesses is alarming. Given this high failure rate, research is needed to better understand the characteristics of leaders who create and sustain success in small businesses. The two-part purpose of this sequential, explanatory mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

Following the collection of quantitative data using an online version of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) to measure small business leaders' EI, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the study's 12 survey respondents. The interviews were designed to explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. Analysis of the quantitative survey data showed that 75.0% of the leaders rated in the high EI category for the EI total score, and five correlational tendencies ( $p < .15$ ) were found: higher total EI with having had more leadership positions, self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women and for those with a social sciences background, and older respondents had higher others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion scores. Results from the qualitative analysis suggested that male participants' EI affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of female participants. Additionally, older participants had higher rates of association between EI workplace effect and others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion. Moreover, those participants who held a higher number of small business leadership positions had greater associations between leader value of EI in the workplace and all four WLEIS scales than those who held fewer leadership positions. Recommendations for future

research included comparative studies of different types of professional development programs designed to enhance small business leaders' EI and further research to better understand how gender moderates the relationship between EI and specific performance outcomes that are known to contribute to overall business success.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Small businesses represent a key sector of the overall economy of the United States (U.S. Small Business Association, 2014). They comprise the largest proportion, 99.7%, of all U.S. employers. As for job creation, small businesses accounted for 63% of new jobs created between 1993 and mid-2013, which represented 14.3 million of the 22.9 million net new jobs. Moreover, data suggest that small business creation was not significantly impacted by the recent economic recession. Since the end of the recession (from mid-2009 to mid-2013), 60% of the net new jobs was small businesses (U.S. Small Business Association, 2014).

### **Contextual Background**

Despite generating the greatest number of U.S. jobs, the small business sector survival rate is dismal (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). The U.S. Small Business Administration (2014) reported that survival rates for small businesses have changed little over time; approximately half of all new businesses survive five years or more, while about one-third survive more than 10 years. Moreover, the annual failure rate of small businesses from 2005 to 2009 was 10%, which is significant when considering that this represents a total of 3,082,228 businesses that closed during this five-year period, an average of 616,458 per year (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). Swift (2013) chronicled the increase in annual turnover rate among American companies from an average of four percent during the 1960s and 1970s to eight percent in the 1980s. "In 2005," reported Swift, "nearly three-quarters of the top 100 companies had not existed just 25 years earlier" (p. 2). Based on these statistics, it can be deduced that the U.S. incurs a significant loss in financial capital as well as encountering a high

toll on human capital as a result of low survival rates and high failure rates among small businesses.

In his seminal research, Becker (1964) likened investment in an individual's education and training to business investments in equipment. His research on human capital earned him the 1992 Nobel Prize in Economic Science. Becker (1964) defined human capital in terms of “activities that influence future monetary and psychic income by increasing the resources in people” (p. 11). He named several forms of human capital investment, including schooling, training, and medical care. Given the recent literature on the impact of emotional intelligence in the workplace, one could argue that emotional intelligence is another aspect of human capital that small businesses should invest in to contribute to success as well as to address failures. For example, Shepherd and Wiklund (2006) explored the relationship between human capital and business failures, and Wiklund, Patzelt, and Shepherd (2009) examined the impact of human capital on small business growth.

From their analysis of 413 small businesses, Wiklund et al. (2009) derived a set of propositions suggesting how entrepreneurial orientation, environmental characteristics, firm resources, and managers’ personal attitudes directly and/or indirectly impact small business growth. Drawing from Becker’s (1964, 1975) theory, the authors related human capital to the growth context by referring to the knowledge, skills, and experience that influence successful business growth. Moreover, they explained that human capital knowledge is helpful for identifying growth opportunities as well as specific ways of effectively and efficiently pursuing such opportunities. Based on the results of their analysis of 413 small businesses, Wiklund et al. (2009) discussed their proposition relating resources with growth:



[S]ources of resources that have an indirect positive effect on small business growth extend beyond the organization, and reside in the small business manager (human capital) and the network of the small business manager, and are consistent with those advocating the importance of investigating the resources of the individual in entrepreneurship research (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001). (p. 365)

Although their propositions are significant to the small business growth literature, one shortcoming of Wiklund et al.'s (2009) research has to do with how they limited their operationalization of human capital to include measures of experience and knowledge. Their indicators of knowledge focused on the type and length of education and training; measures of emotional intelligence were not considered as being part of human capital.

Supporting Wiklund et al.'s (2009) resource proposition specific to human capital, Rauch and Rijdsdijk (2013) found that general human capital affects both business growth and failure, while specific human capital was related to business failure. Using a sample of 201 business start-ups, Rauch and Rijdsdijk (2013) assessed growth and failure over a period of 12 years. They utilized Becker's (1964) distinction between general human capital and specific human capital: "General human capital is not directly related to a certain job and includes years of schooling and working experience" (p. 925), while "specific human capital is directly related to the domain of a small-scale business" (p. 926). They further explained that "indicators of specific human capital are industry-specific experience, prior self-employment experience, management experience, and having self-employed parents" (p. 926). Specifically, their findings indicated that business founders' general human capital "was positively related to growth after the first 5 years" and that "both general and specific human capital were negatively related to failure after 12 years" (p. 935). Like Wiklund et al.'s (2009) limited operationalization of human capital, Rauch and Rijdsdijk (2013) did not consider emotional

intelligence in their measurements of human capital. Yet the literature relating emotional intelligence to business leadership is significant.

The research literature has related emotional intelligence to successful leadership in the general business workplace (e.g., Goleman, 1995; 1998a), higher education, government (e.g., Wong & Law, 2002), and the military (Dulewicz, Young, & Dulewicz, 2005) as well as other organizational environments (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013). Although anecdotal accounts of the specific connection of EI to small business leaders are surfacing in the literature, this researcher could not locate any empirical studies on this topic. Emerging research on EI and the phenomenon of entrepreneurialism, however, often includes small business owners in the definition of an entrepreneur (McLaughlin, 2012; Rajah, Song, & Arvey, 2011; Swift, 2013; van Praag & Versloot, 2007). Therefore, this study will draw from recent EI-entrepreneurialism literature, specifically the studies of Swift (2013) and McLaughlin (2012), to inform an investigation of the emotional intelligence of small business leaders and their perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

Swift (2013) explained that research on successful entrepreneurs “leads to a long list of skills that are personal, social, and emotional in nature, whereas traditional economists have looked only at the financial and economic factors related to entrepreneurship, ignoring the individual actor altogether” (p. 5). He further argued that entrepreneurial success “cannot be divorced from the psychology of the individual actor” (p. 5). McLaughlin (2012) described the implications of ability-based emotional intelligence for “entrepreneurial behaviors such as negotiations, obtaining and organizing resources, identifying and exploiting opportunities, obtaining and maintaining customers, leading the organization, and other interpersonal

activities” (p. 157). Based on the empirical findings from her study, McLaughlin concluded that effective entrepreneurs can “use their emotional intelligence not only to manage themselves, but also to effectively manage others, and the venture. Therefore, greater emotional intelligence could help improve financial entrepreneurial success, performance relative to competitors, and perceptions of personal entrepreneurial success” (p. 162). McLaughlin’s findings justify the need for this present study, the purpose of which is to measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders and explore their perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Small businesses represent 99.7% of all employers in the American domestic workforce (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011, 2014). Yet, the annual failure rate of small businesses from 2005 to 2009 was 10%, which is significant when considering that this represents a total of 3,082,228 businesses that closed during this five-year period, an average of 616,458 per year (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). Given this high failure rate, research is needed to better understand the characteristics of leaders who create and sustain success in small business organizations. More specifically, little is known about the emotional intelligence (EI) of small business leaders and how small business leaders perceive EI may or may not affect their workplace. Small business leaders may possess little EI and yet perceive that it positively affects their workplace while having little to no knowledge of or possession of EI. Conversely, the opposite may be true with leaders having higher EI and yet perceiving that it does not positively affect the workplace. This study will aid in understanding small business

leaders' perceptions of the effect of EI in the workplace and any perceived value they place on EI in the workplace.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. Creswell (2009) described a two-phased mixed-methods approach of first collecting and analyzing quantitative data followed by collecting and analyzing qualitative data as a sequential explanatory strategy. In this sequential explanatory strategy, priority was given to the quantitative data—measures of participants EI using the WLEIS (see Appendix B). Emphasizing the quantitative data first can inform the secondary qualitative data collection process, which in the case of this study involved semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C) with all participants who completed the WLEIS. More specifically, by first analyzing quantitative data collected using the WLEIS, the participants' self-appraisal of their EI was made known. This knowledge then informed the second qualitative phase of the study that utilized semi-structured interviews to explore the small business leaders' perceptions of the affect and value of EI in the workplace. It is not known if small business leaders have higher EI as assessed by the WLEIS and whether or not a higher or lower EI affects any perceived effect or value of EI by the leader in the workplace. It is assumed that small business leaders are being successful as leaders of their respective businesses as evidenced by their ongoing business activity.

## **Research Questions**

Both quantitative and qualitative research questions should be developed for a mixed methods study (Creswell, 2009). The stated order of the research questions should align with the study's purpose statement. Creswell explained that in a two-phase study, "the first-phase questions would come first, followed by the second-phase questions so that readers see them in the order in which they will be addressed in the proposed study" (p. 138). As such, four research questions (RQs) provided guidance for this study and are presented in accordance with the two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods approach:

**RQ 1:** What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 2:** What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders' demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 4:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

## **Significance of the Study**

The economic benefits of small businesses are well documented in the literature. Small businesses are major contributors to the U.S. economy; even during economic downturns, small businesses lead the nation in job creation. Between 1993 and mid-2013, small businesses accounted for 63% of the net new jobs added to the U.S. economy, which represents 14.3

million of the 22.9 million net new jobs (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2014). Even since the end of the recent recession, specifically from mid-2009 to mid-2013, 60% of the net new jobs were created by small businesses. Van Praag and Versloot (2008) included small businesses in their definition of entrepreneurs for their investigation of the economic value of entrepreneurship. They reviewed 57 high-quality studies that contained 87 relevant separate analyses of four widely studied measures of entrepreneurs' contributions to the economy: (a) employment generation and dynamics, (b) innovation, (c) productivity and growth, and (d) increasing individuals' utility levels. Based on their review, they concluded that entrepreneurs, including small businesses, "engender relatively much employment creation, productivity growth and produce and commercialize high-quality innovation...entrepreneurial firms produce important spillovers that affect regional employment growth rates of all companies in the region in the long run" (p. "51). Although the literature documents the important function of small businesses in the U.S. economy, their failure and survival rates are dismal (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011, 2014). Therefore, further study of the effectiveness of small business leaders is needed.

The literature suggests that effective leaders possess a high level of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998a; McLaughlin, 2012; Wong & Law, 2002). The relationship between EI and leadership has been well researched in multiple domains (Goleman, 1995, 1998a; Dulewicz et al., 2005; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013; Wong & Law, 2002). However, little is known about small business leaders' emotional intelligence and their perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. This present study holds significance

for the EI-leadership research as well as having practical implications for the small business sector of the U.S. economy.

**Significance to research.** Research continues to expand knowledge about the general characteristics of leaders, yet little is known about the measurement of EI among small business leaders. Findings from this study could contribute to the EI-leadership research specific to the level of EI among small business leaders and how they perceive EI's effect and value in the workplace environment. Despite the publication of empirical studies showing a positive relationship between EI and effective leadership, oppositional criticism continues unabated, and this study's researcher experiences this opposition in the small business sector. This mixed methods study will make contributions to the EI-leadership literature by providing quantitative measures of EI among small business leaders, using the ability-based WLEIS, and qualitative discussion of these leaders' perceptions about the effect and value of EI in the small business setting.

**Practical implications.** This knowledge is positively impacting the development of practice-based educational initiatives aimed at preparing individuals in various domains/sectors for leadership. Because emotions play a significant role in the performance of leaders (Bass, 1999; Rajah et al., 2011; Sternberg, 1997), EI is increasingly being added to leadership educational/training programs. This study could lead to the development of education/training initiatives for small business leaders aimed at employing the use of EI in the workplace to address the problems of failure and survival rates. There are implications of small business leaders' increased EI awareness, education, and training to business outcomes. The literature shows that emotional intelligence influences workplace success through interpersonal

relationships, stress management and workplace conflict strategies, general job performance (Ashkansy & Daus, 2005). Moreover, EI “plays a role in workplace productivity, profitability, and enhancing the overall quality of work and life (e.g., Goleman, 1995, 1998a; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Matthews, Emo, Roberts, & Zeidner, 2006; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009)” (McLaughlin, 2012, p. 35).

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

**Emotion.** Emotion is defined as “the collection of responses [e.g., anger, worry, fear, surprise, disgust, sadness, happiness], many of which are publicly observable” (Damasio, 1994, p. 42). These responses can be observed in terms of physical changes in the body; (e.g., contractions in the muscles of the face, throat, trunk, and limbs). In his seminal work in neuroscience, Damasio related these observable changes to “several neural circuits within the brain itself” (p. 282).

**Emotional intelligence.** Emotional intelligence is “the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.” (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004)

**Emotional labor.** Wong and Law’s (2002) definition of emotional labor is used in this study: “the extent to which the job requires the management of emotions to achieve positive job outcomes” (p. 248).

**Entrepreneur.** In this study, an entrepreneur is defined as including the small business leader. Van Praag and Versloot (2007) specifically addressed a category of small business



leaders when defining the term entrepreneur: “[W]e view individuals who have started up a business or who own a business, i.e., who are self-employed or the owner-manager of an incorporated business, as entrepreneurs too” (p. 354).

**Extra-role behavior.** *Extra-role behavior* and *organizational citizenship behavior* are used interchangeably in the literature (Wong & Law, 2002) and are defined as “workplace attitudes and actions that benefit working relationships and ultimately contribute to an overall positive working climate” (McLaughlin, 2012, p. 48).

**Intelligence.** Gardner (2006) defined intelligence as “a computational capacity—a capacity to process a certain kind of information—that originates in human biology and human psychology” (p. 6).

**Leader.** For the purpose of this study, the term leader is used to denote the head of a small business irrespective of positional title.

**Small business.** The U.S. Small Business Administration (2014) defines a small business as “an independent business having fewer than 500 employees” (p. 1).

**Survival rate.** Business success is measured in terms of survival rate, which is typically measured in years (van Praag, 2005).

### **Key Assumptions**

This study assumed that leader participants would be truthful and accurate in their responses to the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong & Law, 2002). Additionally, it was assumed that participants would respond honestly when being interviewed. It was also assumed that the measures of internal validity (construct validity and criterion-related validity), external validity (relevance), of the WLEIS for the workplace environment, as

provided by prior studies, are accurate. Lastly, it was assumed that the interview questions/prompts that were peer-tested would be clearly understood by the study participants. Where problems of clarity were detected, the interview guide was adjusted as needed to ensure participant understanding.

### **Study Delimitations**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005) stressed the importance of carefully bounding the parameters of a study: "What the researcher intends to do is stated in the problem. What the researcher is not going to do is stated in the delimitations" (p. 55). This study was delimited to those small businesses that have survived five years or more and are not expansion organizations. For the purpose of this study, the U.S. Small Business Administration's (2014) definition of a small business was used: "an independent business having fewer than 500 employees" (p. 1). The sample was delimited to small business leaders in the Southern California region of the United States. Participants included individuals holding a variety of leadership positions in the small business environment in Southern California, including but not limited to owners of small business firms and sole proprietors. The study was delimited to investigating only small business leaders; their followers/subordinates were not involved in the study. Only the EI of these small business leaders was measured using the WLEIS, and they were interviewed about their perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

### **Limitations of the Study**

A potential limitation of this study was researcher bias since the researcher is an executive leader in an organization and does believe in the power of emotional intelligence relative to daily business success. Interview questions developed for this study were reviewed

by a panel of experts to reduce or limit the influence of researcher bias. A second limitation was related to the study sample—small business leaders limited to the geographic area of Southern California. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2008), there are 342,581 small business leaders in the Southern California general population who manage from 1 to 499 employees. Third, the study's sampling process, was a limitation of the study. Gay and Airasian (2003) differentiated between a target population and an accessible (or available) population. A target population is the one to which the researcher would ideally like to generalize the study findings, while an accessible population is the one from which the researcher can realistically select participants. Given that this study used a small purposeful convenience sample, generalizing to a target population is not possible.

### **Summary and Organization of the Study**

In summary, Chapter 1 provided an introduction to the study, including the statement of the problem. The purpose of the study and research questions were stated. The significance of the study was discussed from the perspective of research and practical implications for the small business sector. Definitions were provided for key terms, and key assumptions and limitations of the study were described. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature relevant to emotional intelligence in the general workplace as well as the small business environment. Chapter 3 details the study's research methods, including the population and sampling methods, data collection and data analysis procedures, and the ethical considerations of human subjects. Chapter 4 reports the findings of the study, and Chapter 5 provides a discussion of findings and presents recommendations for future future research.

## **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature**

This proposed study was designed to address the need for research to better understand the emotional intelligence (EI) of small business leaders and how EI may or may not affect their workplace. In order to accomplish this goal, the two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the affect and value of EI in the workplace. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to review the relevant literature on emotional intelligence and small business leadership. First, a historical context is provided that examines entrepreneurialism and small business failure as well as describing EI. Second, EI theoretical perspectives are presented, including EI paradigms and EI models. Third, criticisms of EI in the literature are discussed. Fourth, the literature on EI and the workplace is reviewed, followed by a discussion of EI and small business leadership. Sixth and lastly, a review of the literature on entrepreneurial and small business success is presented.

### **Historical Context**

The historical context of entrepreneurialism and small business failures is important to this study. Additionally, the evolution of emotional intelligence from earlier theoretical frameworks is helpful for situating this study in the EI research stream. Therefore, a brief history is provided that includes William James's (1884) seminal work on the construct of emotion, Thorndike's (1920) distinction of social intelligence, Wechsler's (1958) definition of adult intelligence, Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligences theory that includes two types of personal intelligence, and concludes with Mayer and Salovey's (1997) definition of emotional intelligence, which is used in this present study.

**Entrepreneurialism and small business failures.** The micro- and macro-level contributions of entrepreneurialism are great. Individual entrepreneurs can positively impact their personal finances as well as the “economic welfare of their communities and nations” (Swift, 2013, p. 2). Van Praag and Versloot (2007) examined the extent to which empirical evidence supports claims about the important economic value of entrepreneurship. Based on their review of 57 high-quality studies that spanned 12 years and contained 87 relevant separate analyses, the authors concluded that entrepreneurs have important functions within an economy. The authors defined entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial firms as “small firms, young firms, entrants, or self-employed” (p. 376), differentiating them from their counterparts, which they defined as “bigger firms, older firms, incumbent firms, or wage employees” (p. 376).

When comparing entrepreneurs, which include small business owners, with their counterparts, van Praag and Versloot (2007) found that, relative to their size, entrepreneurs create more employment. Entrepreneurs’ higher net contribution to employment creation, however, was stymied by the finding of a “relatively high job destruction rate, leading to less job security and a more volatile process of employment creation” (p. 377). Despite evidence that entrepreneurs spend less on research and development and produce fewer new products and technologies than their counterparts, Van Praag and Versloot found that entrepreneurs demonstrated greater efficiency in innovation production as well as the commercialization of higher-quality innovations. Additional positive economic functions of entrepreneurs include productivity growth and higher job satisfaction. The high job destruction rate among entrepreneurs/small business owners, however, is well documented in the literature.

The failure rate of small businesses in America is alarmingly high (Swift, 2013). Swift chronicled the increase in annual turnover rate among American companies from an average of four percent during the 1960s and 1970s to eight percent in the 1980s. “In 2005,” reported Swift, “nearly three-quarters of the top 100 companies had not existed just 25 years earlier” (p. 2). Moreover, the U.S. Small Business Administration (2011, 2014) reported that small businesses represent 99.7% of all employers in the American workforce. Yet, the annual failure rate of small businesses from 2005 to 2009 was 10%, which is significant when considering that this represents a total of 3,082,228 businesses that closed during this five-year period, an average of 616,458 per year (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). Although there is abundant literature relating emotional intelligence to the workplace, there is scant research applying EI to the entrepreneur and, more specifically, to small business leaders (McLaughlin, 2012; Swift, 2013) who are the focus of this present study.

**Emotional intelligence.** Wechsler (1958) explained that during the first part of the 20th century, intelligence was believed to be a key determinant of an individual’s success throughout life. He operationally defined intelligence as the “aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and to deal effectively with his environment” (p. 7). Drawing from the concept of complementarity borrowed from quantum mechanics, Wechsler cited Stern’s (1956) argument that intelligence is not merely a sum of quantifiable abilities but rather represents the interactive collective behavior among numerous factors. Moreover, Wechsler described Thorndike’s (1920) distinction of three main types of intelligence: abstract or verbal intelligence, practical intelligence, and social intelligence. Thorndike’s social intelligence was foundational to what would later be termed emotional

intelligence (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005). Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls—to act wisely in human relations” (228). Osofsky (1987) explained that the “distal roots” of EI are in Thorndike’s social intelligence (p. 306). She further described the proximal roots of EI: “Its proximal roots are in Gardner’s (1983) two personal intelligences (*intrapersonal* and *interpersonal*), which concern the ability to understand the emotions and mental states in one’s own self...and in other people, respectfully” (p. 306). Since Thorndike’s seminal work, emotional intelligence research has proliferated, with scholars mostly treating EI as a cognitive function (Wechsler, 1939; Piaget, 1972). It was the later studies of Gardner (1983) and Sternberg (1988) that significantly contributed to the expansion of intelligence research. Before examining Gardner’s work in multiple intelligences, a fuller understanding of the construct of emotion and the related construct of mood is helpful.

Harvard psychologist William James (1884) influenced the study of emotion with his seminal essay, “What Is an Emotion?” that was published in the philosophy journal *Mind* (Kremer, 2012). Since James’s seminal work, research on the construct of emotion proliferated, investigating its origins, whether stemming from a cognitive ability or originating as part of the human makeup as a chemically influenced system (Fischer, Shaver, & Carnochan, 1990; Izard, 1992, 1993). Emotions had largely been studied by the field of industrial and organizational psychology prior to the advent of “emotional intelligence” and subsequent study (Gardner & Stough, 2002).

Like emotions, mood is an aspect of EI and is differentiated from emotion according to severity and duration (George, 2011). Mood is characterized by lesser intensity and a longer

duration of feelings; mood is not tied to specific initiating events (Forgas, 1992; Morris, 1989). For example, an employee can experience a prolonged bad mood, which cannot be attributed to a specific event, and still be able to perform normal work duties. Conversely, an emotion is related to higher levels of more intense feelings. Unlike a lingering mood, an emotion is short-lived and more intense, typically resulting from an initiating event or circumstance (George, 2011). An example of an emotion is anger that is initiated by false accusations of wrongdoing. An emotional event can lead to a mood that is sustained over a longer period of time (George, 2011). Having differentiated emotions from moods, a discussion of Gardner's (1983) multiple intelligence theory will build upon an understanding of emotional intelligence.

Gardner (1983) postulated that two types of personal intelligence—intrapersonal and interpersonal—were among his theory's original seven types of intelligence, which also included verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial-visual, bodily-kinesthetic, and musical intelligences. Later, Gardner (2006) expanded his theory to include two more types of intelligence: naturalistic and existential. It is Gardner's personal intelligences that are related to social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920) and emotional intelligence. Arguing for the inclusion of the personal intelligences in the human intellectual repertoire, Gardner (1983) stressed that intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences should be taken together:

The reason, then, for treating these together is chiefly expositional. In the course of development, these two forms of knowledge are intimately intermingled in any culture, with knowledge of one's own person perennially dependent upon the ability to apply lessons learned from the observation of other people, while knowledge of others draws upon the internal discriminations the individual routinely makes. Our two forms of personal intelligence could, in fact, be described separately; but to do so would involve unnecessary duplication as well as artificial separation. Under ordinary circumstances, neither form of intelligence can develop without the other. (p. 241)



Gardner's tandem personal intelligences were later incorporated into various EI theoretical frameworks, including that of Salovey and Mayer (1990). Salovey and Mayer's application of Gardner's personal intelligences was an important step in the evolution from social intelligence theoretical frameworks to emotional intelligence frameworks.

Payne's (1983) doctoral dissertation marked the first time the term "emotional intelligence" was used in the United States. Focused on the existence of emotions and the external influences created by emotions, Payne's research laid the groundwork for Salovey and Mayer's (1990) work whereby emotional intelligence was first defined and an initial framework was developed that consisted of three categories: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion in solving problems (Carmeli & Josman, 2006). Salovey and Mayer (1990) initially defined emotional intelligence as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). This initial definition, however, evolved to describe emotional intelligence as involving the ability "to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or 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" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 10).

In addition to Mayer and Salovey's (1997) definition of EI, there are multiple definitions that lack uniformity and include a wide variety of constructs (Roberts, MacCann, Matthews, & Zeidner, 2010). Bar-On (1997) offered a definition of EI as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with

environmental demands and pressures” (p. 14). Addressing the lack of a consistent EI definition, Matthews, Roberts, and Zeidner (2004) drew a parallel to centuries of research that have not yielded a precise definition of the construct of intelligence. Yet, Boring (1923) argued that a consensus has been achieved relative to the means of determining if one demonstrates intelligence in the form of intelligent behavior. Goleman (1995) described EI as a key set of characteristics (or observable behaviors) that includes “abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s moods and deep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (p. 34). For the purpose of this present study, Mayer and Salovey’s (1997) EI definition is adopted, which is based on Davies, Stankov, and Roberts (1998) four dimensions: (a) appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself, (b) appraisal and recognition of emotion in others, (c) regulation of emotion in oneself, and (d) use of emotion to facilitate performance.

### **Emotional Intelligence: Theoretical Perspectives**

The theoretical underpinnings of emotional intelligence help explain the nature of this construct. This section includes an overview of the three EI paradigms (or schools of thought): personality trait, mental ability, and mixed model. Second, three EI models are described along with related measurements: Goleman (1995), Bar-On (1997), and Mayer and Salovey (1997). Third, the data collection instrument selected for this present study, Wong and Law’s (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale, is described.

**Emotional intelligence paradigms.** Studies often refer to the two main EI theoretical paradigms (or schools of thought)—the mental ability model and mixed model (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000; Mandell & Pherwani, 2003; McLaughlin, 2012). While the ability model ties

emotion to intelligence the mixed model “combines traits with social behaviors and competencies” (Brown, Bryant, & Reilly, 2005, p. 332). However, Rajah et al. (2011) included a third model—trait EI, which “encompasses behavioral dispositions and self-perceived abilities, and is studied within a personality framework (Bar-On, 1997; Bar-On, Brown, Kirkcald, & Tome, 2000; Petrides & Furnham, 2000, 2001)” (p. 1110). Moreover, Rajah et al. (2011) cited the work of Harms and Credé (2010) regarding the mental ability EI model that “better illuminates the cognitive processes that are involved in understanding and regulating emotions” (p. 1110). Lastly, the mixed model integrates “abilities related to emotional information-processing, personality traits, motivational factors and other concepts (Bar-On, 2001; Goleman, 1998b)” (Rajah et al., 2011, p. 1110). The mental abilities model, however, has gained greater acceptance among researchers and is most often used in studies (Rajah et al., 2011). Given that this present study utilizes the mental ability EI model, it will be explored with greater depth than the other two models.

The mental ability model has its origins in Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) early research that examined how emotional intelligence was comprised of several abilities. These researchers postulated that attending to self-emotions and the emotions of others is a critical ability used in problem-solving and decision-making processes. The mental ability model involves individuals’ use of feelings as a means of influencing others during these processes (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). Mayer and Salovey’s (1997) ability model identifies emotional intelligence as another form of intelligence with four branches: identifying emotions, facilitating emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Moreover, Gardner and Stough (2002) argued that EI is separate from IQ, which is shown as a fixed level of

intelligence that does not change over a lifetime; emotional intelligence is a distinct form of intelligence that can be increased over a person's lifetime through learning and experience. The potential for lifetime increase is significant to this study that aims to explore EI among small business leaders and how it may affect their workplaces. The following section describes several emotional intelligence theoretical models.

**Emotional intelligence models and measurements.** Descriptions of numerous EI models abound in the literature with even more varieties of EI measurement scales (i.e., Bar-On, 1997; Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Friedman, Prince, Riggio, & DiMatteo (1980); Jordon, Ashkanasy, Hartel, & Hooper, 2002; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002; Palmer & Stough, 2001; Patton, Stanford, & Barrett, 1995; Petrides & Furnham, 2003; Scheier & Carver, 1985; Schutte et al., 1998; Taylor, Ryan, & Bagby, 1985; Zung, 1965). The literature is too expansive to cover within the limits of this review. Therefore, this section of the literature review is delimited to descriptions of three EI models and related measurement scales. First, two EI mixed models and related scales are presented, specifically those of Goleman (1995) and Bar-On (1997). Second, Mayer and Salovey's (1997) mental ability model and measurement scale are discussed. Lastly, the measurement scale used in this study is described—the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (Wong & Law, 2002), which is based on Mayer and Salovey's mental ability model.

***Goleman's EI mixed model.*** Goleman's (1995, 1998b) mixed model of emotional intelligence is of particular interest to workplace leaders, managers, and practitioners (Mayer, 2001; McLaughlin, 2012). In his early work, Goleman (1995) focused on differentiating EI from IQ by describing specific characteristics or EI abilities. With his later publication (1998b), he

expanded his work to examine specific EI competencies that, once learned, could contribute to exceptional workplace performance and leadership (Brown & Moshavi, 2005; McLaughlin, 2012). This later work presented his mixed model as including 25 competencies, which were grouped according to five major abilities: (a) self-awareness (emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence); (b) self-regulation (self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, and innovation); (c) motivation (achievement drive, commitment, initiative, and optimism); (d) empathy (understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity, and political awareness); and (e) social skills (influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation, and team capabilities). These initial five groupings were later refined into four EI competency clusters: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness, and (d) relationship management (Boyatzis et al., 2000).

The uniqueness of Goleman's model is that it was designed for the workplace as opposed to the models of Mayer and Salovey (1997) and Bar-On (1997), which were less specific in scope (Gardner & Stough, 2002). However, unlike the Bar-on and Mayer and Salovey models, measurement of EI competencies/abilities was problematic. First, Goleman's definition of EI was broader, lacking the specificity of the other models. Second, constructs varied and, therefore, a wide variety of measurements exist that focus on underlying divergent constructs that do not correlate well (Jenson, Kohn, Rilea, Hannon, & Howells, 2007).

The Emotional and Social Competence Inventory (ESCI) was developed by Boyatzis et al. (2000), replacing a prior instrument created by the authors, the Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI). The ESCI is a 72-item self-report measure that is divided into 12 competencies

that are further divided into four groups, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills. The prior ECI was a 110-item instrument, broken into the same clusters as the ESCI. The ESCI is a measure designed for managers, peers, and subordinates (Jenson et al., 2007). MacCann, Matthews, Zeidner, and Roberts (2003) asserted that although the ESCI and ECI were designed to measure behavioral constructs instead of personality constructs, these instruments share common elements with the hierarchical five-factor model of personality traits. The five-factor model includes the basic personality dimensions of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience (McCrae & Costa, 1987, 1999, 2010). The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i), however, is more strongly correlated with the five-factor model of personality traits (Roberts et al., 2010; McCrae, 2000), which will be discussed in the following section.

***Bar-On's EI mixed model.*** Bar-On's (1997) mixed model of emotional intelligence is based on his definition of EI as "an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures" (Bar-On, 1997, p. 14). Bar-On's model is "grounded in the psychological literature of personality and is based on a wide array of traits and characteristics relating to success in various facets of life" (McLaughlin, 2012, p. 23). The model is based on five dimensions with specific traits and characteristics: (a) intrapersonal skills (self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, and self-actualization); (b) interpersonal skills (empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationships); (c) adaptation (reality-testing, flexibility, and problem-solving); (d) stress management (stress tolerance and impulse control); and general emotion management (optimism and happiness; Bar-On, 2006).

Bar-On's (2000) first instrument for measuring emotional intelligence was a commercially available assessment called the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). This is a 133-item self-report inventory that is comprised of 15 subscales, each containing from seven to eleven items. Bar-On's EQ-i measures the EI attributes of self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, independence, empathy, interpersonal relationships, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, flexibility, stress tolerance, impulse control, happiness and optimism. Although designed as a discriminate measure, MacCann et al. (2003) noted the similarities in this measure to that of the five-factor personality trait model (McCrae & Costa, 1987, 1999, 2010) thus bringing into question discriminant validity. In addition, the strong correlation between the five-factor personality trait model and the EQ-i has led some researchers to question the distinctness of emotional intelligence from known personality traits (McCrae, 2000; Roberts et al., 2010).

Bar-On's (2000) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) has been one of the most widely used of numerous instruments developed to measure emotional intelligence, and studies support the influence of emotional intelligence, as measured by the EQ-i, on measures of outcome (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000). The EQ-i provides an overall emotional intelligence score plus scores on sub-scales of intrapersonal EI, interpersonal EI, adaptability, stress management, and general mood EI (Gardner & Stough, 2002). In 2005, however, Bar-On revised his model, reconceptualizing EI as an emotional-social Intelligence (ESI; McLaughlin, 2012). Bar-On's (2006) new definition of ESI is "a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands" (p.

3). The third EI model described in this review of the literature is Mayer and Salovey's mental ability model.

***Mayer and Salovey's EI mental ability model.*** Unlike Goleman's (1995, 1998b) and Bar-On's (1997) mixed models of emotional intelligence, Mayer and Salovey's (1997) model fits within the mental ability paradigm. As was stated previously, the mental ability model has its origins in Salovey and Mayer's (1990) early research that examined how emotional intelligence was comprised of several abilities. Their early work included investigations of aesthetics, artificial intelligence, brain research, and clinical psychology contributed to their formal theory and measurement of EI (Mayer, 2001). Recognizing that their earlier EI research "connected abilities and feelings, instead of cognition about those feelings" (McLaughlin, 2012, p. 20), Mayer and Salovey (1997) expanded their initial three-branch theoretical framework and redefined EI as "the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in self and others' (p. 401). The four branches of the expanded model included (a) identifying emotions, (b) facilitating emotions, (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions.

The Mayer, Salovey, Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002) is a subsequent measure to the original Multi-factor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000), which is a lengthy 400-item scale that required extensive time to complete. The MSCEIT focuses on four main areas: perception, appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions, and intellectual growth. The MSCEIT is a traditional approach to measuring intelligence, contrary to numerous self-report measures that are performance based. The MSCEIT treats the EI construct as an



intelligence; as such, it measures responses to emotional tasks versus self-reporting of emotional responses (Jenson et al., 2007). It is argued that the MSCEIT is a separate and unique measure as it does not demonstrate significant overlap with the five-factor personality trait model. Therefore, the MSCEIT demonstrates the existence of a sound theoretical base that can support a definition of intelligence (Conte, 2005; MacCann et al., 2003). The MSCEIT is held as one of few EI instruments that measures consistently with standard intelligence assessments (Roberts et al., 2010). Moreover, Mayer and Salovey's (1997) work is considered the baseline for much of the continuing research on emotional intelligence and the measurement thereof (Wong & Law, 2002), including the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS).

**Wong and Law emotional intelligence scale (WLEIS).** Based on the Mayer and *Salovey* (1997) mental ability theoretical framework, the WLEIS (Wong & Law, 2002) is a 16-item self-report measure that includes four subscales: self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others' emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE). Each of the WLEIS subscales includes four items designed to measure the job performance and satisfaction of followers as well as the job satisfaction and leader role behaviors of leaders. The scale was created for organizational research purposes and provides validity for the separation of emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence. Wong and Law designed the WLEIS to separate emotional intelligence from the 80-item five-factor model of personality (McCrae & Costa, 1987) as well as the 60-item NEO personality inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985). This intentional design is consistent with the argument that emotional intelligence is part of existing cognitive measures, not personality measures (Roberts et al., 2010). The WLEIS will be used in this study to collect data from small business leaders located in Southern California.

**Dimensions of emotional intelligence.** In their review of the literature of EI in the workplace, Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2004) compared EI mental ability models and mixed models in terms of competencies. The mental ability model developed by Mayer, Salovey, and colleagues (see Mayer et al., 1999, 2000; Mayer & Salovey, 1997) provides “objective, performance-based indicators of EI” (p. 376). This model is based on four major branches: identification, understanding, usage, and self-regulation of emotions. Because of its apparent performance orientation reputation for being empirically based, this ability model has gained currency (Zeidner et al., 2004). However, the following section includes literature that criticizes the empirically based claims. Unlike ability models, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2013) advocate for a mixed methods model that is based on emotional competencies that are categorized according to four core components: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Within the four components are a broad array of competencies critical for success in specific workplace settings. Zeidner et al. (2004) listed some competencies claimed to be of critical importance in a variety of settings:

- ***Emotional self-awareness.*** This competence includes identification of emotion and understanding how emotions are related to one’s goal, thoughts, behaviors, and accomplishments (Goleman, 1998b; Weisinger, 1998).
- ***Regulation of emotions in the self.*** This competence involves intentionally eliciting and sustaining pleasant and unpleasant emotions when considered appropriate, effectively channeling negative affect, and restraining negative emotional outbursts and impulses (Boyatzis, 1982; Goleman, 1998b).

- ***Social awareness of emotions and empathy.*** [This competence] includes awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns, understanding and sympathizing with others' emotions, and responding to others' unspoken feelings (Goleman, 1998b; Huy, 1999; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Sternberg & Williams, 1998).
- ***Regulating emotions in others.*** This competence incorporates influencing others, effectively communicating with others, and managing conflicts (Weisinger, 1998).
- ***Motivational tendencies.*** [This competence] includes such components as internal strivings, attributions, and need for achievement (Bar-On, 2000; Boyatzis et al., 2000; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, 1998b; Weisinger, 1998).
- ***Character.*** [This competence] includes trust and integrity (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, 1998b; Weisinger, 1998). (Zeidner et al., 2004, p. 378)

This listing of mixed model competencies demonstrates the emphasis on personality characteristics instead of the performance-based competencies of the mental ability mode.

### **Criticisms of Emotional Intelligence**

Despite the expanse of EI research, there remain those who hold contrary positions to EI theory. Detractors generally refer to problems of validity (construct, discriminate, and predictive), the classification of emotion as an actual intelligence, and the existence of instruments that correlate EI with both personality and cognitive measures (Swift, 2013).

Brown et al. (2005) explained, "significant cautions and objections have been raised in regard to epistemological and theory development issues" (p. 334). The absence of a consistent framework leads some researchers to conclude that EI is possibly more of a passing trend than a trait or ability that can be defined, measured, and related to leadership capability (Zaccaro &

Horn, 2003). This problem of theoretical consistency is related the lack of uniformity in definitions of emotional intelligence (Roberts, 2001). Swift (2013) cited problems related to the broad nature of the EI concept and “unsubstantiated claims that have been attributed to the concept” (p. 63).

Anatokis (2003) is a staunch opponent, arguing against the premature trend of perceiving emotional intelligence as a scientific construct and relating it to leadership (Brown et al., 2005). Antaokis’s opposition can be understood by considering Matthew, Zeidner, and Roberts’ (2002) investigation of how myths can lead to scientific study and their claims that the emotional intelligence debate is an example of this notion. In their more recent work, Matthews, Roberts, and Zeidner (2004) identified seven myths associated with emotional intelligence:

1. Myth 1: Definitions of emotional intelligence are conceptually coherent,
2. Myth 2: Measures of emotional intelligence meet standard psychometric criteria,
3. Myth 3: Self-report emotional intelligence is distinct from existing personality constructs,
4. Myth 4: Ability tests for emotional intelligence meet criteria for a cognitive intelligence,
5. Myth 5: Emotional intelligence related to emotion as “Intelligence Quotient” relates to cognition,
6. Myth 6: Emotional intelligence predicts adaptive coping, and
7. Myth 7: Emotional intelligence is critical for real-world success (Matthews et al., 2004).

A brief discussion of each of these myths is helpful for understanding the current status of EI-leadership research.

**Myth 1: EI definitions are conceptually coherent.** Review of the literature shows a lack of consensual definition of emotional intelligence (Matthews et al., 2004). The spectrum of definitions ranges from associating EI with cognitive abilities (Meyers & Salovey, 1997) to non-cognitive capabilities (Bar-On, 1997). This broad array of definitions, however, is best explained by Rajah et al. (2011) who referred to the three models of EI as a mental ability (Harms & Credé, 2010; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1990), EI as a trait (Bar-On, 1997; Bar-On et al., 2000; Petrides & Furnham, 2000, 2001), and the mixed model that integrates cognitive emotional information processing, personality traits, and motivational factors (Bar-On, 2001; Goleman, 1998b). What is important in EI studies is the consistent application of the same model throughout the research process. In the case of this study, Mayer et al.'s (2000) mental ability model applies and the WLEIS instrument (Wong & Law, 2002), which is based on Mayer et al.'s mental ability model, is used to collect data.

**Myth 2: EI measures meet psychometric criteria.** Since EI began appearing in the literature, there has been a "rapid propagation of measures to assess the construct" (Matthews et al., 2004, p. 181). These measurement instruments are basically of two types: self-report and performance-based. Self-report instruments are typical and are based on the mixed-model of EI, which includes a combination of mental ability and personality trait measures. The use of the self-report methodology, however, is plagued by a "number of problems and serious omissions" (Matthews et al., 2004, p. 181). In response to these methodological problems, Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) advocated for the use of performance-based EI measures

(i.e., Multi-factor Emotional Intelligence Scale, MEIS, and its successor, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Scale, MSCEIT), which are similar to those used to measure general intelligence (see Wechsler, 1939, 1958).

Matthews et al. (2004) explained that the “ideal EI test” should minimally satisfy each of the four psychometric criteria of content validity, reliability, predictive validity, and construct validity (p. 182). The content validity criterion “deals with conceptualization issues and the decision regarding qualities [that] should be accepted or excluded as components of EI” (p. 182). Reliability refers to consistency of results that should be achieved when individuals take the same test across varying times. This test-retest reliability criterion determines if the test is adequately measuring the intended construct with valid results achieved each time. Matthews et al. (2004) also emphasized the importance of internal consistency reliability that addresses “the extent to which responses people give on items within the same test correlate with other items on the test” (p. 182). The predictive validity criterion indicates whether a measure can predict an outcome based on the measured construct. A measure is said to be of little to no real value if it cannot actually predict some level of outcome, and it is argued that EI is wrought with utility (Goleman, 1995). Conversely, some scholars argue that study results indicating EI positively affects job performance, for example, are inconclusive (Zeidner et al., 2004). Matthews et al. (2004), however, explained that “ability tests do add to predictive validity for some criteria, but only modestly. Again, it is a limitation that almost all the criteria used in these [EI] studies are based on self-report” (p. 183).

**Myth 3: Self-report EI is distinct from personality constructs.** Self-reporting normally prescribes that the respondents rate themselves on statements of EI, often using a Likert-type

scale. However, research shows that individuals are unable to objectively assess their own emotions or intelligence (Matthews et al., 2004). Moreover, investigations of EI tests that assess general dispositions are measuring personality constructs instead of notions of what constitutes intelligence (i.e., Bar-On's EQ-i). Matthew et al. reported that data related to the EQ-i suggestion that it is "little more than a proxy measure of a composite of Big Five personality constructs" (p. 185). Moreover, they concluded that the EQ-i is "measuring something other than an 'intelligence'" (p. 185).

**Myth 4: EI ability tests meet the criteria for cognitive intelligence.** Emotional intelligence must meet the criteria for a traditional cognitive intelligence to be considered a legitimate scientific construct (Matthews et al., 2004). Proponent researchers report that emotional intelligence meets the necessary scientific criteria to be legitimately referred to as a new form of intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001). However, there is disagreement about claims of EI's legitimacy as a construct of intelligence.

Matthews et al. (2004) asserted that the most important criterion in determining legitimacy claims is that "the intelligence in question be capable of being operationalized as a set of abilities... that have clearly defined performance components" (p. 185). By design, intelligence tests are created with a response that provides a clear correct response. There is, however, a problem with existing EI measures as most provide a somewhat situational prompt that can have an interpretive response. The situation-based prompt can introduce a deviation from the established norm of a concisely correct response. An alternative means for measuring EI is performance-based scoring, which includes three methods: expert scoring, target

judgment, and group consensus. As the name implies, expert scoring takes place when a group of experts determines the correct responses for assessment prompts. Target judgment takes place when the developer of the measure determines the desired response, and group consensus scoring involves the weighting to determine the correctness of a given response. Group consensus scoring is known to have higher levels of statistical error (Matthews et al., 2004) although progress has been made by further development of the statistical technique (McCann, Roberts, Matthews, & Zeidner, 2004). Matthews et al. (2004) concluded that ability tests for EI have yet to meet the criteria for cognitive intelligence:

In sum, although the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso group [has] made significant progress in developing a psychometrically acceptable test, it is premature to conclude that it meets traditional criteria for an intelligence test. Although their most recent test, the MSCEIT, shows good scoring reliability across different methods, it is still uncertain whether the latent construct is truly an intelligence. (p. 187)

**Myth 5: EI relates to emotion as IQ relates to cognition.** In discussion of this myth, as well as myth 6, Matthews et al. (2004) addressed theoretical issues of EI, namely the notion that “a good theory requires both a description of individual differences in processing components supporting EI, as well as an account of the adaptive significance of these individual differences” (p. 187). After an in-depth discussion of the literature, the authors concluded that EI does not rank order individuals in terms of emotional processing similar to how IQ rank orders individuals in terms of cognitive processing. They argued that it is possible for EI to be merely a quality of a broader executive system that influences emotion, cognition, and motivation. Matthews et al. (2004) did, however, acknowledge that this premise of EI as only a quality of a broader system could be altered by cognitive neuroscience studies of emotion that



“will likely play an essential role in mapping the cognitive architecture that supports self-regulation” (p. 188).

**Myth 6: EI as predictor of adaptive coping.** Proponents of EI claim that successful coping with stressful encounters is central to the construct,” explained Matthews et al. (2004). However, earlier research (Zeidner & Matthews, 2000) indicates that “there does not appear to be a single EI process that controls adaptive success” (Matthews et al., 2004, p. 188). The broad nature of emotional and interpersonal situations could make defining EI in terms of adaption problematic. Matthews et al., therefore, concluded that further systematic research is needed before the causal role of any mediating EI-adaptive coping factors can be supported (Matthews et al., 2004).

**Myth 7: EI and real-world success.** The history of the populist literature and mass media’s handling of EI competencies as vital for success in various applied settings has, unfortunately, not been based on empirical evidence (Matthews et al., 2004). However, a small number of empirical studies are generating evidence specific to the impact of EI in the workplace among both leaders and followers. Findings from these studies, including those of Wong and Law (2002), Law, Wong, and Song (2004) and, more recently, McLaughlin (2012) and Swift (2013), are providing evidential support for positive outcomes of the EI-leadership relationship. The most promising area of research involves the mental abilities model of emotional intelligence (Matthews et al., 2004; McLaughlin, 2012; Swift, 2013). Those studies based on Mayer, Solvey, and Caruso’s ability-based approach are moving research beyond the myths articulated by Matthews et al. (2004). The following section examines emotional intelligence in the workplace environment.

## Emotional Intelligence and the Workplace

When examining emotional intelligence in the workplace environment, the literature on job performance and attitudes is reviewed in this section. Attention will be given to the particularly relevant findings from Wong and Law's (2002) exploratory study. Next, the literature on the topic of EI and leadership, in the general sense, is explored.

**EI and job performance and attitudes.** In their research of the effects of leader and follower emotional intelligence, Wong and Law (2002) argued, based on Gross's (1998a, 1988b) emotion regulation model, for the positive effects of EI on job performance and attitudes. Their argument was supported by evidence of the effects of leaders' and followers' EI on job outcomes. More specifically, their results showed that "the EI of followers affects job performance and job satisfaction, while the EI of leaders affects their satisfaction and extra-role behavior" (p. 243).

Wong and Law's (2002) first sample was comprised of 149 supervisor-subordinate dyads at a large Hong Kong university. The 60 middle- and upper-level managers were asked to use various surveys/scales/measures to evaluate the emotional labor—"the extent to which the job requires the management of emotions to achieve positive job outcomes" (p. 248)— job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and job performance of four of their subordinates. After completing their evaluations, the managers distributed the 16-item 7-point Likert-type WLEIS to their subordinates with instructions to assess their personal EI. Results of statistical tests showed that subordinate EI had a significant correlation with job performance ( $r=.21, P<.01$ ) and job satisfaction ( $r=.40, P<.01$ ). Although the followers' EI was

found to be related to job performance and job satisfaction, it was not related to organizational commitment and turnover intention (Wong & Law, 2002).

Wong and Law's (2002) second sample was comprised of 146 middle-level administrators employed by the Hong Kong government. These administrators were asked to use the same 16-item 7-point Likert-type WLEIS to assess their own emotional intelligence and the in-role (job performance) and extra-role (i.e., organizational citizenship) behaviors of one of their subordinates. After completing the assessments, each administrator distributed a short questionnaire to the subordinate assessed; the questionnaire included the 16-item EI and job satisfaction, job characteristics, education level, and tenure questions. "After controlling for the subordinate job perceptions, EI, education level, and tenure with the organization," Wong and Law found that the EI of the supervisors still had "a marginal significant effect on the job satisfaction of subordinates and a significant effect on their extra-role behaviors. However, no effect was found with job performance" (p. 268).

Based on the study results, Wong and Law (2002) concluded that their exploratory study provided "some preliminary evidence for the role of leader and follower EI, and for the interaction effect of employee EI emotional labor on their job performance and attitudes towards their jobs" (p. 270). Their conclusions are supported by the literature on relationship between EI and workplace performance as well as the literature relating EI to positive attitudes.

McLaughlin's (2012) review of the literature addressing the relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace performance yielded evidence that "high levels of emotional intelligence are positively associated with job performance (e. g. Law et al., 2004; O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2010; Rozell et al., 2002; Van Rooy &

Viswesvaran, 2004)” (p. 35). Ashkansy and Daus (2005), for example, found that EI influences workplace success through interpersonal relationships, stress management and workplace conflict strategies, as well as general job performance. Moreover, McLaughlin discovered that EI “plays a role in workplace productivity, profitability, and enhancing the overall quality of work and life (e.g., Goleman, 1995, 1998b; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Matthews et al., 2006; Mayer et al., 2000; Zeidner et al., 2009)” (p. 35). Of particular note is Van Rooy and Viswesvaran’s (2004) meta-analysis of 57 studies that indicated EI is a predictor of effective workplace performance. This meta-analysis “showed that five percent of the variance in workplace performance was indeed attributable to EI” (McLaughlin, 2012, p. 36).

The literature relating EI to workplace attitudes and attitudinal behaviors is growing. There is a developing research stream investigating what is termed *organizational citizenship behaviors* (Carmeli & Josman, 2005; Jordan, Ashkanasy, Hartel, & Hooper, 2002). McLaughlin (2012) defined organizational citizenship behaviors as “workplace attitudes and actions that benefit working relationships and ultimately contribute to an overall positive working climate” (p. 48). Although this literature stream is garnering the attention of researchers, the underlying theoretical assumptions have yet to be tested empirically (Matthews et al., 2006; McLaughlin, 2012). However, empirical studies providing evidence of the relationship between EI and affective/attitudinal outcomes abound in the literature and provide various angles on the topic, including altruistic behavior, career commitment, affective commitment to the organization, interpersonal sensitivity and prosocial tendencies, altruism and compliance, satisfaction with group members and group communication, job dedication, customer orientation, conflict resolution, affective tone in negotiation, and willingness to change (McLaughlin, 2012).

Emotional intelligence-workplace attitude topics are being pursued both from the perspective of leaders and followers (e.g., Law et al., 2004; Wong & Law, 2002). Given that the focus of this present study is on small business leaders' perceptions of EI and its affect in the workplace, the next section will explore the literature relative to EI and leadership, in the general sense.

**EI and leadership.** Scholars reviewing earlier research (Bass, 1990; Lord, Devader, & Alliger, 1986) sought to find a positive relationship between intelligence, largely IQ, and leadership success. While it has been hypothesized that intelligence (IQ) is positively related to leadership effectiveness, analysis of relevant studies published from 1887 to 2002 showed a low correlation of 0.27, which demonstrates a weak relationship between IQ and leadership effectiveness (Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004). The search, therefore, has continued for identifiable traits or abilities that contribute to leader effectiveness.

More recent research, has shifted the focus away from IQ as the dominant determinant of leader success and toward emotional intelligence as a contributing factor (Mandell & Pherwani, 2003). As was previously noted, the distal roots of emotional intelligence are in the study of social intelligence (Legree, 1995; Sternberg & Smith, 1985; Wong, Day, Maxwell, & Meara, 1995). Yet, emotional intelligence has been distinguished from social intelligence by an increased emphasis on effect (Goleman, 1995). Social intelligence was once thought to be a decisive construct, but this hypothesis has not been supported by empirical evidence (Shanley, Walker, & Foley, 1971). Salovey and Mayer's seminal investigations of EI as a possible element of social intelligence influenced the shift away from social intelligence research (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Moreover, theories proffered by House and Aditya (1997) and Sternberg (1997)

relative to social intelligence that encompassed emotional intelligence were influential in the search for practical relevance to management and leadership studies.

Leadership is one of the most researched topics in the organization sciences (George, 2000). The study of leadership has stretched over the greater part of the 20th century (Bryman, 2013). Scholars continue to expand knowledge about what makes a leader and how to develop educational/training initiatives to prepare others to become successful leaders. Emotions play a significant role in the performance of leaders (Bass, 1999; Rajah et al., 2011; Sternberg, 1997). The literature suggests that effective leaders possess a high level of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1998a). Therefore, further research on leader emotional intelligence is warranted to determine the impact of leader EI on organizational/workplace outcomes (Harms, & Credé, 2010; Sternberg, 1997).

Because of the expansive nature of the leadership literature, it is important to delimit what will be included in this section. First, the research stream on the construct of leadership charisma and its relationship to EI is substantial (e.g., Conger, 2011; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Lindholm, 1990; Sashkin, 1988; Waldman, 2013; Wasielewski, 1985). However, since charisma, for the most part, is considered a separate construct within the social intelligence domain that emphasizes personality traits, it will not be pursued in this study that is based on the EI mental ability model. Of second consideration is the research stream connecting EI with transformational leadership frameworks. Although this second stream provides support for the role of emotions in the transformational leadership style (e.g., Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Barbuto & Burbuck, 2006; Barling et al., 2000; Bass, 1999, 2002; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Brown et al., 2005; Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002; Kupers & Weibler, 2006;

Rafferty & Griffin, 2004; Yammarino, Spangler, & Dubinsky, 1998), a lack of coherence and consistency in perceptions about the nature of emotion is problematic for this study that is based on the EI mental ability model. Therefore, literature specific to transformational leadership will not be included here, although there will be some overlap of transformational literature with the EI literature in this section.

When addressing the relationship between EI and leadership, it is helpful to examine the works of Conger (2011), Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991), and Yukl (1998) relative to the abilities of successful leaders. Five abilities of effective leaders were gleaned from the work of these three scholars:

1. ability to set goals and influence success in achieving them,
2. ability to educate about and create buy-in of successful work behaviors,
3. ability to motivate the workforce while fostering the trust required for success,
4. ability to be flexible in decision-making and in the face of ongoing change, and
5. ability to create an organizational identity.

There is a paucity of empirical data on leader EI impact on followers' well-being and performance (Kafetsios, Nezlek, & Vassiou, 2011), although this area of research is growing. For example, Wong and Law's findings relating follower EI to their job performance and job satisfaction and leader EI to followers' satisfaction and extra-role behavior is often cited as a benchmark in the EI leadership literature. Brundin, Patzelt, and Shepherd (2008) found that leaders' display of positive emotions impacted employees' willingness to act entrepreneurially. Likewise, Newcombe and Ashkanasy (2002) found that follower behavior was affected by leaders' display of their emotions. Moreover, literature on labor emotion describes

theoretically how emotion that is displayed in general social interactions can impact follower behavior (Hochschild, 1983).

Research indicates there is a positive relationship between EI employee job satisfaction, which is considered by some to be a measure of well-being (Lopes, Grewal, Kadis, Gall, & Salovey, 2006). Fisher and Edwards (1998) found that leadership behavior positively impacts follower job satisfaction, which is supported by Wong and Law's (2002) findings. Fisher and Edwards' findings relative to the relationship between leader EI and follower job performance, however, were not conclusive; Wong and Law, too, did not find evidence to support this relationship. A workplace behavior related to EI in the research literature is decision making.

There is abundant literature on the relationship of EI to decision-making among leaders and followers. Milkman, Chugh, and Bazerman (2008) stressed the importance of good decision-making in today's knowledge-based economy. Hess and Bacigalupo (2011) concluded that both emotion and logic are strong drivers of decision-making, which is consistent with arguments that human behaviors other than those traditionally associated with pure cognitive function can positively impact effective decision-making among leaders (Stanovich & West, 2000). "Without emotional intelligence," explained Hess and Bacigalupo, "decision makers fail the first and most important decision, which is 'who is the best decision-maker for this decision?'" (p. 714). Determining the most effective decision maker as early in the decision-making process as possible helps avoid bad judgments that can follow rushed decisions (Malhotra & Bazerman, 2008). Moreover, Huy (1999) argued that those with greater emotional intelligence are able to make better decisions by focusing on the impact of the emotional issues that will arise before making the actual decision. In addition to decision making, the EI



literature includes studies that examine the impact of emotion regulation on workplace outcomes.

An element of emotional intelligence, emotion regulation, is a possible positive predictor of employee outcomes (Kafetsios & Zampetakis, 2008; Rajah et al., 2011). Emotion regulation takes place through the identification of one's own emotions, and that self-knowledge enables individuals to modify the outward expression of their emotion toward others (Kafetsios et al., 2011). Kafetsios et al.'s (2011) multi-level analysis showed that leaders' use of emotion created positive results in follower emotions and satisfaction and, surprisingly, the lack of emotion regulation negatively impacted followers. Furthermore, Michie and Gooty (2005) argued that leader emotion regulation is an important factor in the workplace because self-directed emotion can lead to negative follower effectiveness, while others-directed emotion can positively impact follower effectiveness. By purposefully regulating their emotions, leaders can influence the behaviors of their followers (Conger, 2011).

The emotions of leaders, positive and negative, can impact, for good or bad, the emotions of followers (Larsen & Diener, 1992). Followers experience an emotional response to leaders' emotion through what is termed the "emotional contagion" (Hatfield, Caciopps, & Rapson, 1994). For example, enthusiasm and satisfaction are forms of positive emotions displayed by leaders that can be contagious to those around them, while sadness and anger represent negative contagious emotions. Conger and Kanungo (1998), however, showed how negative emotions displayed by leaders, when regulated, can generate positive outcomes among their followers. For instance, a boss's intentional use of anger to motivate employees to act or behave in a desired manner is the classic example of the positive use of negative

emotions. When a leader's anger is expressed in a controlled manner, followers can perceive it as a sign of the leader's positive effectiveness (Bass, 1990). Lewis (2000) contended that expressed emotion is gender specific; the same emotion expressed by men is not perceived the same way when expressed by women. For example, anger expressed by a man is viewed as a sign of strength, while anger expressed by a woman is viewed as a weakness. Perceptions of a leader's effectiveness are also influenced by the regulated expression of other emotions. A leader's expression of sadness, for example, can be perceived by his followers as indicating a lack of self-confidence, which influences the followers' impressions of their leader's effectiveness (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991).

Emotional intelligence becomes more important for success the higher an individual advances in an organization (Goleman et al., 2013). In their study of 261 naval officers and enlisted personnel, Dulewicz, Young, and Dulewicz (2005) found that those in higher-level leadership positions with high levels of emotional intelligence demonstrated better overall performance than those leaders with lower levels of emotional intelligence. This finding provided support for earlier findings by Dulewicz and Higgs (2000) that higher IQ, higher Motivational Quotient (MQ), and higher Emotion Quotient (EQ) contribute to general managers' greater level of advancement within an organization. Goleman (1995) claimed that a person with average cognitive intelligence coupled with higher emotional intelligence is a formula for success. As previously noted, Hess and Bacigalupo (2011) argued that both emotion and logic are strong drivers of decision-making; the leadership literature further shows the connection between emotions and reasoning.

Emotional intelligence is concerned with both “emotions and reasoning” (George, 2000, p. 4). George (2000) explained that feelings impact effective leadership because “feelings are intricately bound up in the ways that people think, behave, and make decisions” (p. 2). Damasio (1994), one of the world’s foremost neurologists, showed how reasoning cannot be disconnected from emotion. One case study centers on an attorney with normal cognitive function prior to undergoing brain surgery to remove a tumor. Once the tumor was removed, because a specific area of the brain was impacted, the attorney struggled in the professional and personal areas of his life, even though assessments of his IQ failed to show cognitive impairment. He experienced the loss of his job and his family and was no longer able to function as he once had. Damasio (1994) concluded that the attorney’s loss of ability to experience normal feelings, resulting from the tumor and surgery, impeded his decision-making ability. As was previously noted, the literature is replete with research demonstrating the relationship between EI and decision-making abilities (e.g., Hess & Bacigalupo, 2011; Huy (1999; Stanovich & West, 2000). Furthermore, studies suggest EI is related to other attributes of successful leaders.

Various attributes involving the use of one’s emotions have been related to effective leadership, including flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention, and motivation (Atwater & Yammarino, 1992). Self-awareness is another attribute of EI that research has positively correlated with leader performance (Moshavi, Brown, & Dodd, 2003). The ability to regulate follower focus is a valuable leader EI skill involving motivating and inspiring followers to move beyond performing normal tasks to reach for greater goals (Moss, Ritossa, & Ngu, 2006). Brockner and Higgins (2001) categorized regulatory focus theory according to two

classes: promotion focus and prevention focus. Promotion focus deals with desired personal achievement and advancement, while prevention focus deals with preservation and safety. Scholars argue that emotional intelligence enables leaders to detect the motives of followers and intentionally direct them toward the attainment of greater outcomes. This ability to redirect focus is evidenced in visionary leaders who tend to utilize emotional expressivity when motivating and inspiring followers.

Emotional expressivity has been positively related to effective leadership (Rajah et al., 2011), particularly among visionary leaders orchestrating organizational change (Groves, 2006). Emotional expressivity takes the form of non-verbal communication. Eye contact, body language, gestures, and voice inflection imbue greater meaning than content-based communication alone (Bass, 2002; Sashkin, 1988). Studies have shown that followers perceive effective leaders as those who demonstrate vision and the ability to motivate others to move the organization towards success (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Conger, 2011; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). Moreover, research indicates visionary leadership impacts increases in margins (Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2001), increases in stock values (Waldman, 2013), and increases in followers' perceptions of the effectiveness of their leaders (Dumdum, Lowe, & Avolio, 2002). All these cited studies attribute emotional expressivity to the role of emotional intelligence in leadership effectiveness.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Small Business Leadership**

Numerous scholars have related emotional intelligence to leadership in the general business workplace (e.g., Goleman, 1995; 1998a), higher education, government (e.g., Wong & Law, 2002), and the military (Dulewicz et al., 2005) as well as other organizational environments

(Goleman et al., 2013). Although anecdotal accounts of the specific connection of EI to small business leaders are surfacing in the literature, this researcher could not locate any empirical studies on this topic. Emerging research on EI and the phenomenon of entrepreneurialism often includes small business owners in the definition of an entrepreneur (McLaughlin, 2012; Rajah et al., 2011; Swift, 2013; van Praag & Versloot, 2007). Therefore, this section will draw from recent EI-entrepreneurialism research, specifically the studies of Swift (2013) and McLaughlin (2012).

In their definition of an entrepreneur, van Praag and Vershoot (2007) included three criteria: (a) employing fewer than 100 employees, (b) being younger than seven years, and (c) having new-entrant status in the marketplace. Moreover, they specifically addressed a category of small business leaders: “[W]e view individuals who have started up a business or who own a business, i.e., who are self-employed or the owner-manager of an incorporated business, as entrepreneurs too” (p. 354). This definition justifies the use of the EI-entrepreneur literature to examine the connection between EI and small business leaders.

When exploring the connection of EI to entrepreneurs/small business leaders, Swift (2013) stressed the importance of considering entrepreneur competencies beyond those traditionally related to financial and economic factors:

Competency research on entrepreneurs leads to a long list of skills that are personal, social, and emotional in nature, whereas traditional economists have looked only at the financial and economic factors related to entrepreneurship, ignoring the individual actor altogether. As many (Drucker, 1986; Schumpeter, 1934, 2000; van Praag & Versloot, 2008) have pointed out, the phenomenon of entrepreneurship cannot be divorced from the psychology of the individual actor. Van Praag (2005) and van Praag and Versloot (2008) both noted that broad research shows human and financial capital are the two main drivers of venture performance. (p. 5)

Swift's (2013) study was one of the first to empirically examine the EI construct as it relates to entrepreneurialism. Specifically, his research examined whether EI scores on the MSCEIT "are predictive of entrepreneurship or success in starting new businesses, business longevity, or business profitability" (Swift, 2013, p. 68). Statistical tests failed to show a significant effect of EI scores on business starts, longevity, or profitability after controlling for age, gender, and education. However, a result of the study was the identification of human capital factors of entrepreneurship that can be used as a framework for further research. These factors were categorized according to the affective domain, behavioral domain, cognitive domain, demographics, and environment. Interestingly, the most prominent affective factor identified by Swift was emotional intelligence, which he failed to attribute to the cognitive domain. This exclusive classification of EI as an affective factor is inconsistent with the EI mental model paradigm that is central to this present study.

Like Swift (2013), McLaughlin (2012) acknowledged the paucity of empirical research on the relationship between EI and entrepreneur leadership. However, unlike Swift, McLaughlin used the mental ability model paradigm when investigating EI implications for entrepreneurial situations and social interactions. Her aim was to extend research beyond the EI relationship to leadership, negotiation, education, teamwork, decision-making, interpersonal relationships, job satisfaction, and problem solving. Specifically, her intention was to explore ability-based EI in the context of entrepreneurialism. McLaughlin's quantitative study's sample of 609 entrepreneurs was drawn from a target population of U.S. entrepreneurs who were founders of entrepreneurial firms or owners participating in daily business operations. She used Wong and

Law's (2002) WLEIS data collection instrument, which is relevant to this study that will also use the WLEIS.

McLaughlin (2012) analyzed descriptive statistics and psychometric properties of the data to first evaluate relationships between variables and then confirmed the validity and reliability of the measures before analyzing bivariate correlations. Finally, regression analysis was used to determine whether EI influenced three subcategories of success: financial entrepreneurial firm success, relative entrepreneurial firm success, and personal entrepreneurial success. McLaughlin's empirical analysis found positive correlations between emotional intelligence and financial entrepreneurial firm success ( $r=.497$ ,  $p<.01$ ), relative entrepreneurial firm success ( $r=.292$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and personal entrepreneurial success ( $r=.375$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

### **Entrepreneurial/Small Business Success**

"Ability-based emotional intelligence," argued McLaughlin (2012), "has implications for entrepreneurial behaviors such as negotiations, obtaining and organizing resources, identifying and exploiting opportunities, obtaining and maintaining customers, leading the organization, and other interpersonal activities" (p. 157). She used empirical methods to examine the relationship between EI and entrepreneurial success, which she defined according to three subcategories: financial entrepreneurial firm success, relative entrepreneurial firm success, and personal entrepreneurial success. This concluding section of the literature review explores each of these subcategories of success.

**Financial entrepreneurial firm success.** McLaughlin (2012) explained that the literature describes financial entrepreneurial firm success as an objective measurement of indicators “such as growth, profitability, turnover, return on investment, and number of employees (e.g., Honig, 1998; Walker & Brown, 2004)” (p. 59). Moreover, she explained that stock market performance is not able to be analyzed in studies such as hers because “entrepreneurial firms are often studied before going public (Eisenhardt & Schoonhoven, 1996; Frese, Krauss, Keith, Escher, Grabarkiewicz, Luneng, et al., (2007) ” (p. 59). For the purpose of her study, McLaughlin (2012) measured financial entrepreneurial firm success in terms of the broad categories of growth and business volume. Three items were used to measure growth: (a) perceived growth in market share, (b) change in cash flow, and (c) sales growth. To measure business volume, three items were used: (a) earnings, (b) sales, and (c) net worth (McLaughlin, 2012).

**Relative entrepreneurial firm success.** Relative firm success is a subjective performance measure. McLaughlin (2012) described different approaches to obtaining subjective performance measures. The first approach originated in the work of Gupta and Govindarajan (1984) and entails “asking respondents to state the importance and satisfaction with their relative firm on several performance measures” (p. 60). The second approach involves asking business founders/leaders “to compare the performance of their companies with their closest competitors (e.g., Abeelee & Christiaens, 1986; Dess & Robinson, 1984; Sapienza, Smith, & Gannon, 1988)” (p. 60). To measure relative success, McLaughlin used a Likert-type scale to measure respondents’ comparison of their firm’s performance to their closest competitor in the same industry. On a range from “substantially lower” to



“substantially higher,” respondents compared their firms with their competitors in terms of eight items: (a) sales growth, (b) return on sales, (c) cash flow, (d) return on investment, (e) net profits, (f) return on assets, (g) growth in market share, and (h) growth in net worth of the company (McLaughlin, 2012).

**Personal entrepreneurial success.** Like relative firm success, personal entrepreneurial success is treated as a subjective measurement in the research literature (McLaughlin, 2012). In the entrepreneurial literature, personal success is often “a surrogate for objective performance measures” (p. 61) in that it reflects the organization’s success in terms of satisfying the interests of the most important stakeholder in an entrepreneurial venture—the business owner. Subjective personal measures of success include “personal satisfaction, pride in the job, personal achievement, and lifestyle flexibility (Reijonen, 2008)” (p. 61). For the purpose of her study, McLaughlin (2002) asked respondents to assess four dimensions of personal entrepreneurial success using a Likert-type scale that measured (a) personal satisfaction with sales, (b) personal satisfaction with profits, (c) overall personal satisfaction with the entrepreneurial venture, and (d) willingness to start the same business again (McLaughlin, 2012). Based on the empirical findings from her study, McLaughlin concluded that effective entrepreneurs can “use their emotional intelligence not only to manage themselves, but also to effectively manage others, and the venture. Therefore, greater emotional intelligence could help improve financial entrepreneurial success, performance relative to competitors, and perceptions of personal entrepreneurial success” (p. 162). McLaughlin’s findings justify the need for this present study, the purpose of which is to measure the

emotional intelligence of small business leaders and explore their perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

## **Summary**

This review of the literature began by providing a historical context for the study. First, the micro and macro contributions of entrepreneurialism were discussed, and entrepreneurialism was defined and related to small businesses. Second, an overview of the failure rate of American small businesses was provided. Third, literature was reviewed that provided an evolutionary history of emotional intelligence. Lastly, various EI definitions were discussed and the EI definition adopted in this study was identified.

With a historical context established, the literature relevant to the theoretical perspectives of EI was presented. First, the three EI paradigms (or schools of thought) were described. These EI paradigms included personality trait, mental ability, and mixed model. Second, a discussion was presented on three EI models and related measurements: Goleman (1995, 1998b), Bar-On (1997), and Mayer and Salovey (1997), and Wong and Law's (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale, which will be used in this present study, was described. Lastly, an overview of EI dimensions included in the mental ability model and mixed model was presented.

The next section of this chapter provided a review of some criticisms of emotional intelligence discussed in the literature. A brief discussion of problems of validity, EI classification, and the existence of instruments that correlate EI with both personality and cognitive measures was provided. Addressed at greater depth was Matthews et al.'s (2002) investigation of how myths can lead to scientific study and their claims that the emotional

intelligence debate is an example of this notion. Matthews, Roberts, and Zeidner (2004) work on the seven myths associated with emotional intelligence was reviewed.

A more targeted review of the literature relating EI to the workplace was provided. The research literature relating EI to job performance and attitudes was presented. Particular attention was given to Wong and Law's (2002) findings on how leader EI impacts follower job performance and attitudes. This section concluded with an exploration of the literature addressing, in a more general sense, the relationship between EI and effective leadership. The literature on a less studied phenomenon—the relationship of EI to the specific area of small business leadership was discussed.

Lastly, the research literature on entrepreneurial and small business success was reviewed. An entrepreneur definition was provided that included the small business sector, which was important for relating the EI-entrepreneur leadership literature to this present study. An overview of two recent empirical studies (McLaughlin, 2012; Swift, 2013) that investigated the EI-entrepreneur leader relationship was provided. McLaughlin's study, which is based on the mental ability paradigm and utilized the WLEIS for data collection, holds significant relevance to this present study. Chapter three provides a detailed description of this study's research methods.

### **Chapter 3: Research Methods**

Small businesses represent 99.7% of all employers in the American domestic workforce. The annual failure rate of small businesses from 2005 to 2009 was 10%, which is significant when considering that this represents a total of 3,082,228 businesses that closed during this five-year period, an average of 616,458 per year (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). Given this high failure rate, research is needed to better understand the characteristics of leaders who create and sustain success in small business organizations. More specifically, little is known about the emotional intelligence (EI) of small business leaders and their perception of how it may or may not affect their workplace. The two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. Four research questions (RQs) provided guidance for the study:

**RQ 1:** What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 2:** What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders' demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 4:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

This chapter first introduces the study's methodology and research design. Next, the population and sampling methods are discussed. Third, the quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments and procedures are described, which is followed by a discussion of data analysis methods. Lastly, the ethical considerations of human subjects are discussed and a chapter summary is provided.

## **Research Design**

Social science problems are complex, and researchers often find that “the use of quantitative or qualitative approaches by themselves is inadequate to address this complexity” (Creswell, 2009, p. 203). Mixed-methods research that combines quantitative and qualitative methods has become increasingly popular in business and management research (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Bryman and Bell explained how the filling-in-the gaps approach to a mixed-methods design is appropriate when a researcher cannot rely on either quantitative or qualitative methods alone to gather the information required to answer research questions. At the beginning of this study, it was not known what, if any, knowledge small business leaders in Southern California had of the role of emotional intelligence in the workplace. Therefore, it was appropriate to first measure these leaders EI according to Wong and Law's (2002) four domains—(a) self-emotion appraisal, (b) others' emotion appraisal, (c) use of emotion, and (d) regulation of emotion—before conducting interviews with these leaders about their perceptions of EI in the workplace. By first analyzing quantitative data collected using Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; see Appendix B), the participants' EI was made known (RQ 1). Demographic data (see Appendix A) was collected to explore any relationships that may have existed between one or more demographics and leaders' EI as measured by the

WLEIS (RQ2). This quantitative knowledge then informed the second qualitative phase of the study that utilized semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C) to explore the small business leaders' perceptions of the affect (RQ3) and value (RQ4) of EI in the workplace. Creswell referred to this two-phased mixed-methods approach as a sequential explanatory strategy.

In a sequential explanatory strategy, weight (or priority) is typically given to the quantitative data (Creswell, 2009). Emphasizing the quantitative data first can inform the secondary qualitative data collection process, which in the case of this study involved semi-structured interviews with all participants who completed the WLEIS. Before describing the data collection and analysis procedures, the population and sampling methods are described.

### **Population and Sampling Methods**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2008), there are 342,581 small business leaders in the Southern California general population who manage from 1 to 499 employees. Gay and Airasian (2003) differentiated between a target population and an accessible (or available) population. A target population is the one to which the researcher would ideally like to generalize the study findings, while an accessible population is the one from which the researcher can realistically select participants. Given that this study used a small purposeful sample, generalizing to a target population is not possible. Therefore, the accessible sample frame was comprised of small business leaders in Southern California who were either members of Vistage, a peer advisory group comprised of a mix of business leaders/experts with varying professional backgrounds, and/or the researcher's business network. Small businesses are organized with a variety of leadership titles such as president, general manager, chief

executive officer, vice president, and proprietor. The study sample included those serving as their organizations' leaders, irrespective of titles assigned to their leadership role.

This study used a type of purposeful sampling referred to as convenience sampling. When using this method, a researcher selects a sample based on accessibility/availability of research sites and participants, time, money, and location (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Although not as credible as other sampling methods, convenience sampling is appropriate when the intent of the research is to elucidate particular phenomenon as opposed to generalizing information to a larger population (Creswell, 2007). In the case of this study, the aim was to reveal the particular perceptions of small business leaders about EI in the workplace. Therefore, the goal was to obtain a convenience sample of 12-15 small business leaders located in Southern California. The following section describes the data collection instruments and procedures.

### **Data Collection**

The sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design that was utilized for this study involved collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. During the first phase of the study, quantitative data was collected and analyzed. Demographic data was also collected and analyzed for relationships to the quantitative data collected utilizing the WLEIS. In the second phase, qualitative data was collected and analyzed. The data collection instruments are described next, followed by the procedures for collecting the data.

**Quantitative survey instrument.** The quantitative portion of the study was accomplished by administering the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS; Wong and Law, 2002). The WLEIS is a 16-item self-report measure that includes four subscales and is

based upon the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model of emotional intelligence. The WLEIS measures four emotional intelligence constructs: (a) self-emotion appraisal, (b) others' emotion appraisal, (c) use of emotion, and (d) regulation of emotion. The scale was created for organizational research purposes and is one of few instruments that provide validity for separation of emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence (Wong & Law, 2002). The WLEIS uses a seven-point Likert-type scale for scoring of the respondent responses. The scale and subsequent scoring includes 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = undecided, 5 = somewhat disagree, 6 = disagree, to 7 = strongly disagree. Permission to use the WLEIS was granted by Dr. C.S. Wong, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, for the purpose of performing this research study (See Appendix D).

The WLEIS was administered online using the online survey software SurveyMonkey. The use of online surveys enabled rapid dissemination of the instrument and provided a central point for the collection of data (Creswell, 2009). Moreover, SurveyMonkey's use of standard data encryption methods and password-protected access protocols ensured the privacy of data. In addition to the WLEIS items, a section of the online survey collect demographic data (i.e., years of experience, age, positions held, marital status, educational levels and academic discipline) for the purpose of exploring if there were any relationships between participant demographics and EI as measured by the WLEIS.

Law, Wong, and Song (2004) established the construct and criterion validity of the WLEIS. Furthermore, using a series of hierarchical regression analyses, the authors "illustrated the incremental predictive power of others' ratings of EI on psychological and work outcomes, over and above personality dimensions" (p. 483). Although the study of the WLEIS was limited



to data collected in Hong Kong and the People's Republic of China, the authors explained that there is no evidence that EI validity, according to the four-dimensional ability model, should vary across cultures, given the universal nature of the EI construct (Law et al., 2004). Moreover, Wong and Law (2002) reported the reliability of the WLEIS using the Cronbach's alpha statistical procedure (a score of .70 is considered acceptable). The coefficient alphas for each of the four branches of the WLEIS is high: identifying (0.89), facilitating, (0.88), understanding (0.76), and regulating (0.85).

**Qualitative interview guide.** A semi-structured interview guide was developed for conducting the qualitative portion of this mixed-methods study (see Appendix C). The interview questions and prompts were created iteratively through ongoing interaction with the dissertation chair. Validity for the questions was accomplished by distributing the questions to a panel of experts for peer review and feedback on alignment with the study research questions as well as participants' ease of understanding the focus and direction of the interview questions. The panel consisted of five members, all of whom have doctoral degrees and represent a cross section of disciplines.

**Data collection procedures.** Once approval to conduct the study was received from Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), the first phase of quantitative data collection began. First, emails were sent to potential participants (Southern California Visage members and/or the researcher's business network). The emails explained the purpose of the research, offered the assurance of privacy of information, indicated the estimated time to complete the online survey and participate in a one-to-one interview with the researcher, and provided researcher contact information. The email recipients were asked to respond to the

researcher's email with their willingness to participate in the study. Emails were resent one week and two weeks after the start of the survey data collection period to leaders who had not responded.

After receiving small business leaders' emailed responses, the researcher sent a second email to each leader, confirming his/her participation status and providing instructions for completing the online survey and scheduling a one-to-one interview with the researcher. This second email included an embedded hyperlink for participants to access the electronic survey posted on SurveyMonkey's website. The opening webpage of the online survey was dedicated to the participant informed consent procedure. Participants were asked to complete an informed consent form prior to beginning the survey. After completing the consent form, they were instructed to click on a "next" button to advance to the beginning of the survey.

In the first section of the online survey, participants provided demographic data (i.e., years of experience, age, positions held, marital status, educational levels and academic discipline). In the second section, they responded to the WLEIS 16-item self-report measure that used a seven-point Likert-type scale for scoring responses to the four emotional intelligence constructs: (a) self-emotion appraisal, (b) others' emotion appraisal, (c) use of emotion, and (d) regulation of emotion. The final webpage of the online survey included a thank you for participation and instructions for scheduling a one-to-one interview with the researcher.

Once the first phase of quantitative data collection was concluded, the second phase of qualitative data collection began. One-to-one interviews were conducted with 12 small business leaders at a time convenient for them. The interviewees had the option of phone or

face-to-face interviews at a location of their choice. A semi-structured interview guide served as a catalyst for the interview discussions (see Appendix C). The open-ended interview questions/prompts were peer reviewed in order to evaluate their effectiveness in eliciting responses that would meet the goals of this study. Although the researcher used additional probing questions to elicit thick rich data from the interviewees (Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009), the semi-structured interview guide provided overall direction for the discussions. The interviewees were assured that all information will be kept confidential and that their names and other identifying information will not be revealed in the dissertation. Each interviewee was assigned a coded number for data analysis and reporting purposes. Permission was sought to digitally record the interviews, and the researcher took field notes during the interviews. Appendix E provides a timeline of data collection activities. The following section describes the data analysis methods for both phase one (quantitative) and phase two (qualitative) of this mixed methods study.

### **Data Analysis**

Quantitative data collected from the SurveyMonkey website for the WLEIS was scored by using the average of the scores of the 16 items. The result was a ranking with the first third named as low emotional intelligence, the second third named as moderate emotional intelligence, and the last third as high emotional intelligence. The WLEIS data was used to answer the first research question:

**RQ 1:** What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

Additional information was gathered as part of the study to explore the relationship, if any, between leaders' demographic information and EI:

**RQ 2:** What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders' demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

Given the small potential sample size ( $N = 1w$ ), the use of inferential statistics was limited and largely exploratory in nature.

Qualitative data generated from the semi-structured interviews was first prepared for analysis by transcribing the recorded interviews (phone and/or face-to-face) into written form. Next, the transcribed data was prepared for analysis through the process of encoding the data according to themes. When preparing the data for analysis, Boyatzis's (1998) thematic analysis and code development procedures were followed.

Thematic analysis is not a research method; rather it is a process for analyzing data that has been collected using qualitative methods (Boyatzis, 1998) such as individual interviews and focus groups. The analysis process involves first assigning codes to the data and then identifying themes (or patterns) found within the coded data. These themes can either describe and organize observations or provide interpretations of aspects of the phenomenon being investigated. "The themes," explained Boyatzis, "may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research" (p. 4).

In the case of this study, the thematic codes were generated deductively from Mayer and Salovey's (1997) emotional intelligence mental abilities model that is comprised of four branches: (a) identifying emotions, (b) facilitating emotions, (c) understanding emotions, and

(d) managing emotions. Specifically, the codes were consistent with this theoretical model as applied in the WLEIS (Wong & Law, 2002), which was used to collect quantitative data with the use of SurveyMonkey prior to the interviews. The WLEIS measures the four emotional intelligence constructs of self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others' emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE). Two additional deductive codes were developed: "leaders' EI affects workplace" and "leaders value EI in workplace."

When using a theory-driven approach to thematic coding and analysis, Boyatzis (1998) stressed the importance of the proper alignment of the study's sample and research design with the theory, which has been achieved in this study. The WLEIS's four EI thematic codes were used in this present study because the aim was to extend the research of Wong and Law (2002) by specifically examining the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California. Furthermore, Boyatzis (1998) explained that the existing code must be used exactly as it appears in the theory developed from earlier research. Therefore, the existing four thematic codes used in this proposed study—self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others' emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE)—were operationalized according to the WLEIS. Saldana (2013) stressed the importance of compiling the codes into a separate file as a codebook to guide analysis of the data. Table 1 served as the codebook for the study. The coded interview data was analyzed to answer the third and fourth research questions:

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Table 1

*WLEIS Thematic Codes and Indications of Presence in Interview Data*

WLEIS Code	Description	Indications of Code in Data	
		WLEIS Scale Item	Description
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA)	“This relates to the individual’s ability to understand their deep emotions and be able to express these emotions naturally. People who have great ability in this area will sense and acknowledge their emotions well before most people” (Wong & Law, 2002, p. 246).	SEA-1	Interviewee has good sense of why he/she has feelings.
		SEA-2	Interviewee has good understanding of his/her own emotions.
		SEA-3	Interviewee really understands what he/she feels.
		SEA-4	Interviewee knows whether or not he/she is happy.
Others’ Emotion Appraisal (OEA)	“This relates to peoples’ ability to perceive and understand the emotions of those people around them. People who are high in this ability will be much more sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others as well as reading their minds” (Wong & Law, 2002, p. 246).	OEA-5	Interviewee knows employees’ emotions from their behaviors.
		OEA-6	Interviewee is a good observer of employees’ emotions.
		OEA-7	Interviewee is sensitive to the feelings and emotions of employees.
		OEA-8	Interviewee has good understanding of the emotions of employees.
Use of Emotion (UOE)	“This relates to the ability of individuals to make use of their emotions by directing them towards constructive activities and personal performance” (Wong & Law, 2002, p. 246).	UOE-9	Interviewee sets goals for self and tries best to achieve them.
		UOE-10	Interviewee tells self he/she is a competent person.
		UOE-11	Interviewee is a self-motivated person.
		UOE-12	Interviewee encourages self to try best.
Regulation of Emotion (ROE)	“This relates to the ability of people to regulate their emotions, which will enable a more rapid recovery from	ROE-13	Interviewee is able to control temper and handle difficulties rationally.
		ROE-14	Interviewee is capable of controlling own emotions.

psychological distress” (Wong & Law, 2002, p. 246).	ROE-15	Interviewee can calm down quickly when very angry.
	ROE-16	Interviewee has good control of own emotions.

### **Ethical Considerations of Human Subjects**

Consideration of ethical issues were considered when designing this study, specifically in the areas of protecting human subjects from harm, obtaining informed consent, and ensuring privacy and honesty (Creswell, 2009). The researcher obtained approval from the Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board before beginning data collection. This study did not place participants at risk of personal harm or retribution from employers or network member associations as their identity was protected.

Participants reviewed and accepted an informed consent form before beginning the online survey. Upon reading the consent form webpage and agreeing to the terms, the participants were instructed to select “I agree” before being linked to the survey. If they chose not to participate, the participant were offered the option to select “I do not agree” and be exited from the secure website. The form included information about the research purpose as well as any potential benefits and risks to participating in the study. Participants were also informed of the voluntary nature of the study and their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

The researcher ensured the security of information by using passwords to protect electronic data stored on his computer and keeping printed documents locked in his home office file cabinet. Only the researcher has access to the files. SurveyMonkey’s use of standard

data encryption methods and password-protected access protocols further ensured the privacy of data.

## **Summary**

An introduction to chapter three included a restatement of the research problem, purpose statement, and research questions that provided guidance for the study. The study's sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design was described and a rationale provided. The accessible sample frame was identified—small business leaders in Southern California who are either members of Vistage, a peer advisory group of business leaders, and/or the researcher's business network. The study's purposeful, convenience sample was described as including those serving as their organizations' leaders, irrespective of titles assigned to their leadership role. The quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments and procedures were described, and data analysis methods presented. Lastly, the ethical considerations of human research subjects were discussed. The study results are presented in Chapter 4 in accordance with the four research questions. Chapter five includes a discussion of the findings and recommendations for future research.



## **Chapter 4: Results**

The two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. Twelve respondents individually participated in both a quantitative survey as well as a qualitative interview. This chapter presents the results of the study. First, a description of the sample is presented, followed by a description of the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale items. Research questions one and two are answered by drawing from the quantitative phase data. Research questions three and four are then answered using the qualitative phase data. The chapter concludes with a summary of selected findings.

### **Description of the Sample**

Table 2 displays the frequency counts for selected variables. There were twice as many males than females in the sample. All participants were married. All but one (91.7%) participant had earned at least a bachelor's degree, while eight individuals had also earned at least one graduate degree. For their primary field of study, 58.3% of the participants were in the social sciences field, while the other 41.7% were in the physical sciences.

The descriptive statistics for selected variables are shown in Table 3. These variables include the participants' years of experience ( $M = 18.92$ ) and their age ( $M = 54.17$ ). In addition, the number of small business leadership positions participants have held is presented ( $M = 1.92$ ).

Table 2

*Frequency Counts for Selected Variables (N = 12)*

Variable	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Sex			
	Female	4	33.3
	Male	8	66.7
Marital Status			
	Married	11	91.7
	Divorced and remarried	1	8.3
Education Level			
	Some college but no degree	1	8.3
	Bachelor degree	3	25.0
	Graduate degree	8	66.7
Field of Study			
	Social Sciences	7	58.3
	Physical Sciences	5	41.7

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics for Selected Variables (N = 12)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High
Years of Experience as Leader	18.92	9.22	8.00	33.00
Age	54.17	7.63	42.00	64.00
Positions Held as Leader	1.92	1.00	1.00	4.00

## Description of the WLEIS EI Items

Table 4 displays the descriptive statistics for the 16 individual EI items sorted by the highest mean. The items were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. Three EI items were given the highest mean rating ( $M = 6.75$ ): “I have good understanding of my own emotions,” “I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time,” and “I always know whether or not I am happy.” Two items were given the lowest mean rating ( $M = 5.58$ ): “I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry,” and “I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.”

Table 4

### *Descriptive Statistics for the Individual EI Items Sorted by Highest Mean (N = 12)*

WLEIS EI Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
I have good understanding of my own emotions.	6.75	0.45
I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.	6.75	0.45
I always know whether or not I am happy.	6.75	0.62
I would always encourage myself to try my best.	6.67	0.65
I am a self-motivated person.	6.58	0.67
I really understand what I feel.	6.58	0.67
I always tell myself I am a competent person.	6.33	1.16
I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.	6.33	0.89
I have good control of my own emotions.	6.17	0.58
I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.	6.17	0.72
I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.	6.17	0.58
<i>Continued</i>		

WLEIS EI Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.	5.92	1.00
I am a good observer of others' emotions.	5.75	0.62
I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.	5.67	0.65
I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	5.58	1.17
I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.	5.58	0.79

*Note.* Scales based on a seven-point metric: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

### Quantitative Phase Results

The quantitative phase of the study was designed to answer the first two research questions. Research question one was “What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?” This question was answered based on the EI scale scores (see Table 5) as well as the EI category scores (see Table 6).

Table 5 displays the psychometric characteristics for the aggregated EI scale scores. The scales were rated on a seven-point Likert-type scale: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. The total EI score had a mean of  $M = 6.23$  ( $SD = 0.40$ ). Among the four EI subscale scores, the highest mean was for Self-Emotion Appraisal ( $M = 6.71$ ), while the lowest mean score was for Others-Emotion Appraisal ( $M = 5.73$ ). The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged in size from  $\alpha = .73$  to  $\alpha = .88$ , with the median sized coefficient being  $\alpha = .79$ . This finding suggested that all scales had acceptable levels of internal reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Creswell, 2009).

Table 5

*Psychometric Characteristics for the Aggregated Scale Scores (N = 12)*

Score	Number of Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Low	High	$\alpha$
Total Emotional Intelligence	16	6.23	0.40	5.50	7.00	.83
Self-Emotion Appraisal	4	6.71	0.44	6.00	7.00	.79
Others -Emotion Appraisal	4	5.73	0.58	4.75	7.00	.73
Use of Emotion	4	6.48	0.74	4.75	7.00	.88
Regulation of Emotion	4	6.02	0.63	5.00	7.00	.79

*Note.* Scales based on a seven-point metric: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

Table 6 displays the EI category scores. The categories were defined by the author as “*Low* (1 or 2 points),” “*Medium* (3, 4, or 5 points),” and “*High* (6 or 7 points).” For the total EI score, 9 of 12 (75.0%) respondents had high category scores, while the other three respondents (25.0%) were in the medium category.

Table 6

*Emotional Intelligence Category Scores (N = 12)*

Score	Category	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total Emotional Intelligence				6.23	0.40
	Low	0	0.0		
	Medium	3	25.0		
	High	9	75.0		
Self-Emotion Appraisal				6.71	0.44

*Continued*

Score	Category	<i>n</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Others -Emotion Appraisal	Low	0	0.0	5.73	0.58
	Medium	0	0.0		
	High	12	100.0		
Use of Emotion	Low	0	0.0	6.48	0.74
	Medium	8	66.7		
	High	4	33.3		
Regulation of Emotion	Low	0	0.0	6.02	0.63
	Medium	3	25.0		
	High	9	75.0		
	Low	0	0.0		
	Medium	5	41.7		
	High	7	58.3		

*Note.* Scales based on a seven-point metric: 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.  
EI category scores were defined as “*Low* (1 or 2 points),” “*Medium* (3, 4, or 5 points),”  
and “*High* (6 or 7 points).”

Research question two was “What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders’ demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?” To answer this question, Spearman rank-ordered correlations were used to compare the five EI scale scores with six

demographic variables (see Table 7). Due to the small sample size ( $N = 12$ ) and the exploratory nature of this study, findings that were significant at the  $p < .15$  level were noted to suggest possible avenues for future research (Bryman & Bell, 2007; Creswell, 2009). For the resulting 30 correlations, five were significant at the  $p < .15$  level. Specifically, total EI was related to having had more leadership positions ( $r_s = .50, p < .10$ ). The self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women ( $r_s = -.49, p < .15$ ) and for those with a social sciences background ( $r_s = -.53, p < .10$ ). In addition, older respondents had higher scores for others-emotion appraisal ( $r_s = .44, p < .15$ ) and regulation of emotion ( $r_s = .47, p < .15$ ).

Table 7

*Correlations for Emotional Intelligence Scales with Selected Variables (N = 12)*

WLEIS Variables	Sex <sup>a</sup>	Experience	Age	Leader Position	Education	Field of Study <sup>b</sup>
Total EI	-.13	.16	.13	.50 **	.23	-.20
SEA	-.49 *	-.12	-.19	.08	.18	-.53 **
OEA	-.42	.00	.44 *	.08	-.33	-.03
UOE	.26	.09	-.05	.30	.34	-.17
ROE	-.23	.39	.47 *	.43	.22	-.35

\*  $p < .15$ . \*\*  $p < .10$ .

<sup>a</sup> Sex: 1 = *Female* 2 = *Male*.

<sup>b</sup> Field of Study: 1 = *Social Sciences* 2 = *Physical Sciences*.

The quantitative phase of this study answered the first two research questions. Results for Research Question 1 (level of EI) showed 75.0% of the leaders rated in the high EI category for the EI total score. Research Question 2 (level of EI and demographics) results showed five

correlational tendencies ( $p < .15$ ): total EI score was higher among participants who had more leadership positions (2-4), self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women and for those with a social sciences background, and older respondents (56-64 years of age) had higher others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion scores. In keeping with the sequential mixed-methods design, the following qualitative phase section will further explore the correlational tendencies found in the quantitative phase.

### **Qualitative Phase Results**

The qualitative phase was designed to answer the last two research questions providing guidance for the study:

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 4:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

To answer these two research questions, the 12 participants' transcribed and coded interviews were analyzed using ATLAS.ti, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software program. Utilizing the ATLAS.ti co-occurrence analysis tool, spatial associations between the 16 WLEIS codes and the two codes "Leaders' EI Affects Workplace" and "Leaders Value EI in Workplace" were examined (total of 18 codes). The co-occurrence analysis produced a cross-tabulation of codes (similar to a correlational matrix generated by statistical software programs), showing frequency counts of co-occurrence events in the transcribed interviews. A single co-occurrence event is defined as an interview passage (interviewee quotation) that is coded by two codes. For example, the co-occurrence analysis showed the frequency count for



the code “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and the code “Others’ Emotion Appraisal 7 (OEA-7),” which measures the leader’s sensitivity to the feelings and emotions of employees. The association between these two codes (indicated by co-occurrence frequency counts), was examined across all 12 participant interviews and averages (means) were calculated. Additionally, filters were applied to examine the frequency of co-occurrence events according to sex (male/female), number of small business leadership positions, field of study (social sciences/physical sciences), and age.

Deductive coding methods were used in the preliminary analysis of the transcribed interviews. Deductive coding is a technique for assigning codes to qualitative data in which the researcher starts with specific codes already in mind that are based on prior research and/or theoretical frameworks (Boyatzis, 1998). In the case of this study, 16 WLEIS codes were generated deductively from Mayer and Salovey’s (1997) emotional intelligence mental abilities model that is comprised of four branches: (a) identifying emotions, (b) facilitating emotions, (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions. Specifically, the codes were consistent with this theoretical model as applied in the WLEIS (Wong & Law, 2002), which was used to collect quantitative data with the use of SurveyMonkey prior to the participant interviews. The WLEIS measures the four emotional intelligence constructs of self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others’ emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE). Two additional codes were based on prior research that was addressed in Research Question 3 (Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace) and Research Question 4 (Leaders Value EI in the Workplace).

The transcribed interview data from all 12 participants were first deductively coded according to the 16 WLEIS scale items: Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4), Others’ Emotion

Appraisal (OEA items 5-8), Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12), and Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16). Second, the transcribed interview data were deductively coded according to “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” in order to examine participants’ descriptions of how their emotional intelligence affects their workplace. Third, the transcribed interview data were deductively coded according to “Leaders Value EI in Workplace” in order to examine participants’ descriptions of how they value EI in the workplace. Fourth, the ATLAS.ti co-occurrence tool was used to cross-tabulate all 18 codes to show frequency counts of co-occurrence events in the transcribed interviews. The results of the analyses are reported in the following sections.

**Leaders’ emotional intelligence affects their workplace.** The study’s third guiding research question was “To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders’ emotional intelligence affect their workplace?” Utilizing the ATLAS.ti co-occurrence analysis tool, spatial associations between the 16 WLEIS codes and the code “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” were examined (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: All Participants (N = 12)*

WLEIS Subscales	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	127	10.58
Others’ Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	224	18.67
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	56	4.67
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	159	13.25

Results of the “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and WLEIS items analysis showed the highest co-occurrences for each of the four WLEIS subscales. For the SEA scale, three participants had the highest frequency of co-occurrences (P1 = 21, P8 = 20, and P12 = 24). These individual participants’ frequencies of co-occurrence were noticeably higher than the mean of 10.58 for the SEA scale.

For Participant 1 (P1), self-emotion appraisal (SEA) co-occurred with the code “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” relevant to his relationships with both employees and clients. For example, he described the strategy of rescheduling phone/Skype meetings with his virtual employees when sensing that his emotions may negatively impact their interactions. He provided examples of situations that can impact his consistency, dependability, and ability to remain calm:

If something falls apart, like things just do...I try to get a sense of [the reasons]...maybe I’m just not ready for them or maybe I’m just in a real lousy mood, [or I’ve] been on the phone with six or seven clients or something, and...I just don’t have much else to give.  
(P1 interview)

Participant 1 emphasized the importance of appraising his emotions and using the rescheduling strategy with employee retention in mind. The nature of his business entails the generating of technical reports, which requires a lot of employee training. “There are [only] very unique people who can do the type of technical work that I have,” P1 explained during his interview, “so I try real hard to keep them [employees] happy.”

Participant 1 also described the importance of being aware of his emotions for the purpose of maintaining pleasant interactions with clients:

“I want them [clients] to feel comfortable that they can ask beginners’ questions. These are very talented people; they just have a different subject matter of expertise. So, I try to be positive and upbeat. My general mantra is I want my hour with them to be the

best hour of their day...So I do try to hide my feelings. I don't think they need to hear that, you know, it's a crummy day cause of XY and Z. I want to be calm. I want to be confident. I want to be... capable. I want them to enjoy [their time with me]. So it's all about making it a good situation for them. (P1 interview)

Participant 8 contrasted her business with a company in which she was previously employed. In her former place of employment, emotions were negatively attributed to women. However, in her current business, which has only female employees, she described the positive impact of emotions in establishing a stable workplace environment characterized by loyalty.

I'd say we have less turn-over and more commitment because they [employees] feel like they can really be themselves. They don't have to hide anything, and I think they feel like they know me better because I'm not a removed person...They can see that I go through the same kinds of emotions that they have...anger, sadness, stress, you know, whatever, happiness...I think the women here are very loyal to me and to the firm more so because they can be real about what they're experiencing. (P8 interview)

The mean co-occurrence frequency for the OEA scale was 18.67. However, coding of four participants' interviews revealed a noticeably higher co-occurrence between "Leaders' EI Affects Workplace" and the OEA scale (P1 = 29, P8 = 28, P9 = 35, and P10 = 29). Participant 9's appraisal of others' emotions was not as positive as that of P8. He explained the need to control emotions in the workplace because they can hinder team dynamics. His employees are instructed to not bring their problems to the company: "You have to control yourself. You have to manage your problem first" (P9 interview). Participant 9 attributed his company's emotion control management policies to low employee turnover. "So we have been doing this for the past 30 years and, therefore, we are very happy to say that our company has...many long-term employees. The longest one has stayed since the beginning of the company in 1985" (P9 interview). He and his management team are committed to modeling emotion-control

behaviors for employees and explained how the approach of suppressing emotions contributes to a stable and satisfactory workplace environment, resulting in high employee retention.

For the UOE scale, the mean co-occurrence frequency was 4.67, and three participants' frequencies were noticeably higher (P1 = 14, P5 = 16, and P6 = 12). Participant 5 related the use of emotions to his current management practices. His management practices entail spending extensive time with employees in different offices, "making sure they're engaged, making sure they're heard, making sure that I've got an open-door policy" (P5 interview). He characterized his employee management style in terms of leverage that contributes to the company's success: "If I get more people engaged and they're doing things and feeling good about it, then I am leveraging myself or I am multiplying the effect I can have because there's only one of me and there's only so much I can do" (P5 interview). Moreover, P5 encourages his employees to bring their positive and negative emotions to him. "I think that if they feel like no matter what it is, if they can bring it to me and I can help them turn it around," P5 explained, "I become more a part of their success. They're more attached to what we're trying to accomplish" (P5 interview). Like Participant 8, P5 attributed the open expression of emotions to engendering employee loyalty to him and his company.

Lastly, results of the analysis of co-occurrence between "Leaders' EI Affects Workplace" and the ROE scale showed the mean frequency count of 13.25, while four participants' had noticeably higher co-occurrences (P1 = 23, P2 = 23, P5 = 22, and P9 = 34). Participant 2 described himself as being "calm by nature" and explained how that helps him deal with interactions between employees and customers within his service business.

Sometimes a customer gets mad; they can be totally out of line, but they're mad and you have to deal with it...And sometimes they [customers] are entirely right to be mad

and that affects the employee, too. So you have all these things going on all the time, and I think that's where my being pretty even keel helps out. (P2 interview)

Because of his ability to “step back from a threatening or challenging situation and kind of get a grip on things,” P2 explained how he can first deal with his own emotions before engaging people involved in the situation. Drawing from others’ comments through the years, P2 provided examples of how the ability to regulate his emotions has affected his workplace:

I’ve had, you know, a lot of people comment on that over the years. It’s like, “Man I was ready to choke that guy and you were so calm about that.” You know, that sort of thing. Or we’ve got this employee who’s a drama queen, you know and, um, and it really gets on other people’s nerves but somehow you seem to be able to deal with it.” (P2 interview)

Having reviewed, from the perspectives of some of the participants, how the code “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and the WLEIS codes (SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE) are associated, the next level of co-occurrence analysis examined the demographic variables found to have correlational tendencies in the quantitative phase of the study: sex, number of leadership positions, field of study, and age of the study participants. First, the subset of male and female participants was analyzed for co-occurrence among the two code sets.

Based on a comparison of the subsets of male and female participants, the mean rating of male participants’ associations between “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales were higher than that of the female participants (see Table 9). This finding suggests that male participants’ EI, across all four WLEIS subscales (SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE), affects—positively or negatively—the workplace to a greater extent than that of the female participants.

Table 9

*Leaders' EI Affects Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Male/Female*

WLEIS Scales	Male ( $n = 8$ )		Female ( $n = 4$ )	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	90	11.25	37	9.25
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	153	19.13	71	17.75
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	48	6.0	8	2.00
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	119	14.88	40	10.00

When comparing participants according to those who held more leadership positions ( $n = 7$ ) and those who held fewer leadership positions ( $n = 5$ ), the associations between “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales were mixed (see Table 10).

Table 10

*Leaders' EI Affects Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Number of Leadership Positions*

WLEIS Scales	Higher No. Leadership Positions ( $n = 7$ )		Lower No. Leadership Positions ( $n = 5$ )	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	62	8.86	65	13.00
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	132	18.86	92	18.40
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	32	4.57	24	4.80
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	89	12.71	70	14.00

When comparing participants according to fields of study—social sciences ( $n = 7$ ) and physical sciences ( $n = 5$ ), the associations between “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales were mixed (see Table 11).

Table 11

*Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Field of Study*

WLEIS Scales	Social Sciences ( $n = 7$ )		Physical Sciences ( $N = 5$ )	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA 1-4)	67	9.57	60	12
Others’ Emotion Appraisal (OEA 5-8)	137	19.57	87	17.4
Use of Emotion (UOE 9-12)	22	3.14	34	6.8
Regulation of Emotion (ROE 13-16)	66	9.43	93	18.6

When comparing participants according to age—higher (56-64 years;  $n = 6$ ) and lower 42-55 years;  $n = 6$ ), the associations between “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales were mixed (see Table 12). Specific to the OEA scale, the association is consistent with the finding from the quantitative phase of the study that older respondents had higher others’ emotion appraisal. Moreover, this result suggests that there is also a greater association between the “Leaders’ EI Affects Workplace” code and the WLEIS regulation of emotion (ROE) subscale among older participants.



Table 12

*Leaders' EI Affects Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Age of Participants*

WLEIS Scales	Higher: 56-64 Years ( <i>n</i> = 6)		Lower: 42-55 Years ( <i>n</i> = 6)	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	60	10.0	67	11.17
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	137	22.83	87	14.5
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	34	5.67	22	3.67
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	130	21.67	29	4.83

**Leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace.** The study's fourth guiding research question was "To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?" Utilizing the ATLAS.ti co-occurrence analysis tool, spatial associations between the 16 WLEIS deductive codes and the deductive code "Leaders Value EI in the Workplace" were examined (see Table 13).

Table 13

*Leaders Value EI in Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: All Participants (N = 12)*

WLEIS Scales	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	96	8.00
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	235	19.58
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	96	8.00
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	104	8.67

Results of the “Leaders Value EI in Workplace” and the WLEIS scales analysis showed the highest co-occurrences for each of the four WLEIS subscales. For the SEA scale, three participants had the highest frequency of co-occurrences (P5 = 17, P8 = 23, and P12 = 18). These individual participants’ frequencies of co-occurrence were noticeably higher than the mean of 8.0 for the SEA scale.

Participant 8 recounted a particular incident in the workplace that involved the sharing of her emotions with employees. Several employees had reported on problems they had been experiencing with a particular client. These experiences had built to the point of an internal consensus that the client was not a good fit for the company. As the leader of the company, P8 met with the client to facilitate the parting of ways, explaining that “it’s not a fit for us to work together.” She described her feelings following the meeting as a “combination of anger and sadness.” She talked about those feelings during a debrief session with some of her employees and then second-guessed her decision to share her feelings. “I wonder, as I’m the boss, am I supposed to be...is this [sharing my feelings] hurting my relationship with my employees or their view of me?” She concluded, “in the long run, I don’t think it does. I think it helps them to see what I have to experience” as their boss (P8 interview). In the recounting of this scenario, P8 recognized a particular value of EI in the workplace—engendering understanding and empathy between the leader and her employee team.

The mean co-occurrence frequency for the OEA scale was 19.58. However, coding of four participants’ interviews revealed a noticeably higher co-occurrence between the coding sets of “Leaders Value EI in Workplace” and the OEA scale (P8 = 38, P9 = 29, P11 = 32, and P12 = 33). Participant 12 described himself as a “one-on-one relationship guy” who believes in

creating safe places for his employees to express their emotions. While acknowledging that managing employee emotions can be time-consuming and frustrating, P12 explained that he does not want to avoid the process because of the value of human emotions in the workspace.

We are not robots. If people can feel like there's a safe space at work where their leaders and employees care about them, we're gonna get further together. And we're gonna develop the right sense of belonging between each other and in the corporation. And so I enjoy making [emotional] space. (P12 interview)

As a small business leader who embraces the "concept of employee emotions matter," P12 expanded upon the value of creating a safe space wherein employees can talk through matters of importance, resolve issues, and engage in genuine communication. The "added benefits" include a more engaged workforce (P12 interview).

For the UOE scale, the mean co-occurrence frequency was 8.00, and three participants' frequencies were noticeably higher (P2 = 16, P3 = 28, and P5 = 16). Participant 5 related the use of emotions to his goals for the company. He described the value of modeling positive emotions that can spur greater passion and excitement among employees:

I want more excitement about what we do. I know that we handle our business and I know we do it professionally and I know people feel satisfied with accomplishing things, but I want a little more passion and excitement, and I think that starts with me. One of my goals this year is to try to get people more excited about the business and what they're doing and pump them up a little bit. (P5 interview)

Lastly, results of the analysis of co-occurrence between "Leaders Value EI in Workplace" and the ROE scale showed the mean frequency count of 8.67, while two participants' had noticeably higher co-occurrences for these two coding sets (P2 = 16 and P9 = 37). Participant 9 referred to his background in the military when describing the need to implement policies of "emotion control management" in his company. He stressed the critical importance of teamwork to surviving on the battlefield: "So we would cover each other otherwise we all die"

(P9 interview). Participant 9's comments, when considered in a general sense, could be interpreted as representing his position that emotions are not valued in the workplace. However, from the perspective of the WLEIS ROE scale, his comments support the value of learning how to regulate human emotions in the workplace. For him, regulating emotions is paramount to achieving a peaceful and happy culture in which teamwork thrives rather than an abusive environment in which individuals become enemies and negatively impact the morale of a department or "contaminate the entire organization." "Emotion control management is certainly a positive thing to the company," explained P9.

When comparing the subset of male ( $n = 8$ ) and female ( $n = 4$ ) participants, the associations between "Leaders Value EI in Workplace" and all four WLEIS scales were mixed (see Table 14). Of particular note was the higher code association for UOE and ROE among male participants ( $M = 10.75$  and  $M = 10.5$ ) over female participants ( $M = 2.5$  and  $M = 5.0$ ).

Table 14

*Leaders Value EI in Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Male/Female*

WLEIS Scales	Male ( $n = 8$ )		Female ( $n = 4$ )	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	59	7.38	37	9.25
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	167	20.88	68	17.00
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	86	10.75	10	2.50
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	84	10.50	20	5.00

When comparing participants according to the number of leadership positions, those who held a higher number of leadership positions had more associations between “Leader Value EI in Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales than those who held fewer leadership positions (see Table 15). This finding is consistent with the quantitative phase correlational tendency that related participants with more leadership positions with a higher total EI score. This qualitative finding also suggests that those who have had more small business leadership positions value EI in the workplace to a greater extent than those who have had fewer leadership positions. Of particular note is the difference for OEA associations among those with higher leadership positions ( $M = 22.57$ ) and those with lower leadership positions ( $M = 15.4$ ).

Table 15

*Leaders Value EI in Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Number of Leadership Positions*

WLEIS Scales	Higher No. Leadership Positions ( $n = 7$ )		Lower No. Leadership Positions ( $n = 5$ )	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	$M$
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	51	7.29	45	9.0
Others’ Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	158	22.57	77	15.4
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	70	10.00	26	5.2
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	69	9.86	35	7.0

When comparing participants according to fields of study—social sciences ( $n = 7$ ) and physical sciences ( $n = 5$ ), the associations between “Leaders Value EI in Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales were mixed (see Table 16).

Table 16

*Leaders Value EI in Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Field of Study*

WLEIS Scales	Social Sciences ( <i>n</i> = 7)		Physical Sciences ( <i>n</i> = 5)	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	51	7.29	45	9.0
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	131	18.71	104	20.8
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	38	5.43	58	11.6
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	31	4.43	73	14.6

When comparing participants according to age—higher (56-64 years; *n* = 6) and lower 42-55 years; *n* = 6), the associations between “Leaders Value in Workplace” and three of the WLEIS scales (SEA, OEA, and UOE) were higher for the younger participants (see Table 17). The finding that older participants had a greater association with ROE is similar to the quantitative correlational tendency of older respondents to have higher ROE scores.

Table 17

*Leaders Value EI in Workplace and WLEIS Scale Co-Occurrences: Age of Participants*

WLEIS Scales	Higher: 56-64 Years ( <i>n</i> = 6)		Lower: 42-55 Years ( <i>n</i> = 6)	
	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>	Co-Occurrence Frequency Total	<i>M</i>
Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA items 1-4)	29	4.83	67.0	11.17
Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA items 5-8)	102	17.0	133.0	22.17
Use of Emotion (UOE items 9-12)	34	5.67	62.0	10.33
Regulation of Emotion (ROE items 13-16)	73.0	12.17	31.0	5.17

**Summary**

In summary, this study used the survey and interview responses from 12 small business leaders to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. Quantitative techniques were utilized to answer the first two research questions. Research Question 1 (level of EI) data showed that 75.0% of the leaders rate in the high EI category for the EI total score. Research Question 2 (level of EI and demographics) data revealed five correlational tendencies ( $p < .15$ ): higher total EI with having had more leadership positions, self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women and for those with a social sciences background, and older respondents had higher others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion scores.

Qualitative techniques were utilized to answer the last two research questions.

Research Question 3 (leaders' EI affects workplace) results suggest that male participants' EI, across all four WLEIS subscales, affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of the female participants. Moreover, the association between leaders' EI effect in the workplace and the OEA and ROE scales seems consistent with the finding from the quantitative phase that older respondents had higher rates on others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion. Research Question 4 (leaders value EI in the workplace) results indicate that those participants who held a higher number of small business leadership positions had more associations between "Leader Value EI in Workplace" and all four WLEIS scales than those who held fewer leadership positions. This result is consistent with the quantitative phase finding that participants with more leadership positions had a higher total EI score. In the final chapter, these findings will be compared to the literature, implications will be drawn, and recommendations for future research will be presented.



## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Recommendations**

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were used to answer the study's four research questions. First, the study's research questions are restated. Next, a discussion of quantitative findings is presented, followed by discussion of qualitative findings. Implications of the findings for small business leaders are presented as well as recommendations for future research. The chapter concludes with a final summary.

### **Restatement of Research Questions**

Four research questions (RQs) provided guidance for this study and are presented in accordance with the two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods approach:

**RQ 1:** What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 2:** What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders' demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 4:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Select results related to each of the research questions are discussed according to the two phases of the study. First, the quantitative results are presented (RQ1 and RQ2), followed by the qualitative results (RQ3 and RQ4).

## Quantitative Results Discussion

Quantitative analysis of the survey responses showed that 75.0% of the leaders rated in the high EI category for the EI total score (RQ1). Data related to RQ2 (level of EI and demographics) revealed five correlational tendencies ( $p < .15$ ): higher total EI with having had more leadership positions, self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women and for those with a social sciences background, and older respondents had higher others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion scores. The following discussion provides context for the findings by relating them to the research literature.

**Research Question 1.** RQ1 inquired about the level of the study participants' emotional intelligence as measured by the WLEIS (Wong & Law, 2002). Data showed that 75.0% of the small business leaders who participated in this study rated in the high EI category for the EI total score. A review of Wong and Law's descriptions of each of the WLEIS subscales provides helpful context for this and other findings:

- **Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA).** SEA relates "to the individual's ability to understand their deep emotions and be able to express these emotions naturally. People who have great ability in this area will sense and acknowledge their emotions well before most people." (p. 246)
- **Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA).** OEA relates "to peoples' ability to perceive and understand the emotions of those people around them. People who are high in this ability will be much more sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others as well as reading their minds." (p. 246)

- **Use of Emotion (UOE).** UOE relates “to the ability of individuals to make use of their emotions by directing them towards constructive activities and personal performance.” (p. 246)
- **Regulation of Emotion (ROE).** ROE relates “to the ability of people to regulate their emotions, which will enable a more rapid recovery from psychological distress.” (p. 246)

**Research Question 2.** Two quantitative findings related to research question two (relationship between leaders’ demographic information and EI) are worth noting because qualitative results supported these findings among the study participants. Those who reported having had more small business leadership positions had a higher total EI score than those with fewer leadership positions. Also, both quantitative and qualitative data showed that older participants had higher OEA and ROE scores. These results are consistent with the research literature that has established the relationship between emotional intelligence and age and experience; specifically, EI develops with age and experience and is, therefore, learnable (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Goleman, 2004; Mayer, Roberts, & Barsade, 2008; Mayer et al., 2008).

### **Qualitative Results Discussion**

Qualitative analysis of the participant interviews showed that male participants’ EI, across all four WLEIS subscales, affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of the female participants. Moreover, the association between leaders’ EI effect in the workplace and the OEA and ROE scales seems consistent with the finding from the quantitative phase that older respondents had higher rates on others’ emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion.

Additionally, those participants who held a higher number of small business leadership positions had more associations between “Leader Value EI in Workplace” and all four WLEIS scales than those who held fewer leadership positions. This result is consistent with the quantitative phase finding that participants with more leadership positions had a higher total EI score. The following discussion provides context for the findings by relating them to the research literature.

**Research Question 3.** Two results were especially relevant to the question “To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders’ emotional intelligence affect their workplace? First, results suggested that male participants’ emotional intelligence, across all four WLEIS subscales (SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE) affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of female participants. Mayor et al., (2004) defined emotional intelligence as “the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking” (p. 197). This definition sheds light on Participant 5’s explanation that aspects of his emotional capacity enable him to “be the voice of reason” in his company. When discussing how their emotional intelligence affects their workplace environment, the male participants’ responses, for the most part, were related, directly or indirectly, to performance outcomes. Examples of applications of leaders’ EI that contribute to positive leader, employee, and business performance outcomes included employee retention, delegation of responsibilities to employees, employee learning/training, employee loyalty to leader and company, employee sense of accomplishment/success, project management, hiring decisions, customer satisfaction/positive experiences, growing the company, redirecting company operations, and leveraging employee emotions for company success. To better understand how this finding

applies to the study sample—leaders of small businesses, some recent literature on entrepreneurial/small business leadership is helpful.

The literature on the emotional intelligence of small business leaders is sparse. However, emerging research on EI and the phenomenon of entrepreneurialism often includes small business owners in the definition of an entrepreneur (McLaughlin, 2012; Rajah et al., 2011; Swift, 2013; van Praag & Versloot, 2007). Therefore, findings from a recent study on EI and entrepreneurial performance are relevant to this discussion of the extent and nature of the effect of small business leaders' EI in the workplace.

Ingram, Peake, Stewart, and Watson (2014) conducted a study to test a novel partial mediation model of emotional intelligence, interpersonal processes, and venture performance among a sample of 595 entrepreneurs involved in the day-to-day operations of their companies, all of which had fewer than 500 employees. Like this present study, Ingram et al. (2014) used Wong and Law's (2002) WLEIS to measure the emotional intelligence of participants. Of particular relevance to this present study is Ingram et al.'s finding that EI had a positive direct influence on venture performance, which was defined in terms of seven areas of performance: sales growth, cash flows, market share growth, return on sales, return on investments, return on assets and profit growth. Moreover, findings showed that gender moderated the relationship between EI and venture performance, with males reporting higher levels of performance while women reported higher levels of EI. Overall, the literature consistently shows that women rate higher in EI, but little attention has been given to the effects of EI on behavior and venture performance (Ingram et al., 2014). Although limited by a

small sample size, this study's finding that suggests the EI of male participants was related, directly or indirectly, to performance outcomes is consistent with Ingram et al.'s (2014) results.

Second, data from the Atlas.ti co-occurrence analysis indicated that older participants had higher rates of association between "Leaders' EI Affects Workplace" and the WLEIS (Wong & Law, 2002) subscales of others' emotion appraisal (OEA) and regulation of emotion (ROE). This finding is consistent with the quantitative analysis that showed older survey respondents had higher scores in OEA and ROE. Moreover, as stated previously, the research literature has established that emotional intelligence develops with age and experience and is, therefore, learnable (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Goleman, 2004; Mayer et al., 2008; Mayer et al., 2008).

**Research Question 4.** Of particular importance to the EI small business literature is the finding that those participants who held a higher number of small business leadership positions had a greater association between "Leader Value EI in Workplace" and all four WLEIS subscales (SEA, OEA, UOE, and ROE) than those who held fewer leadership positions. This finding was consistent with the quantitative phase finding that survey respondents who held more small business leadership positions had a higher total EI score than those with fewer leadership positions. This finding, too, is supported by the research literature on how emotional intelligence develops with age and experience and is, therefore, learnable. This finding and others have implications for small business leaders (Brackett et al., 2011; Goleman, 2004; Mayer et al., 2008a; Mayer et al., 2008b).

## **Implications for Small Business Leaders**

The emotional intelligence literature has established the positive relationship between EI and age and experience. Both age and experience contribute to the development of EI. As such, EI is learnable (Brackett et al., 2011; Goleman, 2004; Mayer et al., 2008; Mayer et al., 2008). Both quantitative and qualitative results of this study showed that older participants and those who have held more small business leadership positions rated higher in the EI subscales of others' emotion appraisal (OEA) and regulation of emotion (ROE).

An implication for small business leaders concerns how professional development and employee training in EI can contribute to the business' success. However, drawing from brain-based research, Goleman (2004) cautioned leaders on the failure of training programs because approaches focus on the wrong part of the brain:

Emotional intelligence is born largely in the neurotransmitters of the brain's limbic system, which governs feelings, impulses, and drives. Research indicates that the limbic system learns best through motivation, extended practice, and feedback. Compare this with the kind of learning that goes on in the neocortex, which governs analytical and technical ability. The neocortex grasps concepts and logic. It is the part of the brain that figures out how to use a computer or make a sales call by reading a book. Not surprisingly—but mistakenly—it is also the part of the brain targeted by most training programs aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence. (p. 4)

Goleman recommended that business leaders who have a sincere desire to increase their EI and are willing to make the necessary concerted effort ought to enlist the help of a coach to increase specific aspects of EI through practice and feedback.

Another implication of this study to small business leaders concerns how male participants' emotional intelligence, across all four WLEIS subscales, affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of female participants. When discussing how their EI affects their workplace environment, the male participants referred to issues that contribute to

performance outcomes, including employee retention, delegation of responsibilities to employees, employee learning/training, employee loyalty to leader and company, project management, hiring decisions, customer satisfaction/positive experiences, growing the company, redirecting company operations, and leveraging employee emotions for company success. Based on their study of 595 entrepreneurs from small companies, Ingram et al. (2014) found that EI had a positive direct influence on the venture performance of these business leaders. Moreover, the researchers found that gender moderated the relationship between EI and venture performance, with males reporting higher levels of performance while women reported higher levels of EI. Overall, the literature consistently shows that women rate higher in EI, but little attention has been given to the effects of EI on behavior and venture performance (Ingram et al., 2014). Based on the findings from this present study and that of Ingram et al., small business professional organizations ought to consider leadership development programs that intentionally create collaborations between men and women for the purpose of enhancing the EI strengths of both.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The research literature provides evidence that high levels of emotional intelligence are positively associated with job performance (Law et al., 2004; O'Boyle et al., 2010; Rozell et al., 2002; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004) and business success (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Ingram et al., 2014; McLaughlin, 2012). As such, two recommendations for future research are put forth for business leaders' performance and overall business success. First, future research should focus on professional development opportunities designed to enhance business leaders' EI. Comparatively speaking, are these professional development initiatives designed to target



the brain's limbic system (evidenced by a focus on motivation, extended practice, and feedback) or are they designed to target the brain's neocortex as are "most training programs aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence" (Goleman, 2004, p. 4)? Second, results from this present study, as well as the findings from Ingram et al.'s (2014) study, warrant further research on how gender moderates the relationship between EI and specific performance outcomes that are known to contribute to overall business success.

### **Final Summary**

Although small businesses represent 99.7% of all employers in the American domestic workforce (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011, 2014), the annual failure rate of small businesses from 2005 to 2009 was 10%. This failure rate represents a total of 3,082,228 businesses that closed during this five-year period, an average of 616,458 per year (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2011). Given this high failure rate, research is needed to better understand the characteristics of leaders who create and sustain success in small business organizations. More specifically, little is known about the emotional intelligence (EI) of small business leaders and how small business leaders perceive EI may or may not affect their workplace.

The two-part purpose of this sequential, mixed-methods study was to (a) measure the emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California and (b) explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace. In this sequential explanatory strategy, priority was given to the quantitative data—measures of participants' EI using the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Survey (WLEIS). Following the collection of quantitative data using an online version of the WLEIS to measure the EI of the small

business leaders, qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with the study's 12 survey respondents. The semi-structured interviews were designed to explore the leaders' perceptions of the effect and value of EI in the workplace.

Four research questions (RQs) provided guidance for this study:

**RQ 1:** What level of emotional intelligence do Southern California small business leaders possess as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 2:** What relationship, if any, exists between Southern California small business leaders' demographic information and their emotional intelligence as measured by the Wong and Law (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale?

**RQ 3:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

**RQ 4:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Quantitative techniques were utilized to answer the first two research questions. Research Question 1 data showed that 75.0% of the leaders rated in the high EI category for the EI total score. Research Question 2 data revealed five correlational tendencies ( $p < .15$ ): higher total EI with having had more leadership positions, self-emotion appraisal score was higher for women and for those with a social sciences background, and older respondents had higher others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion scores.

Qualitative techniques were utilized to answer the last two research questions.

Research Question 3 results suggested that male participants' EI, across all four WLEIS subscales, affects the workplace to a greater extent than that of the female participants.

Moreover, the association between leaders' EI effect in the workplace and the OEA and ROE scales seems consistent with the finding from the quantitative phase that older respondents had higher rates on others' emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion. Research Question 4 results indicated that those participants who held a higher number of small business leadership positions had more associations between "Leader Value EI in Workplace" and all four WLEIS scales than those who held fewer leadership positions. This result is consistent with the quantitative phase finding that participants with more leadership positions had a higher total EI score.

Two implications can be drawn from the study results. First, small business leaders and professional organizations should consider how professional development and employee training in EI can contribute to business success. Second, small business leaders need an awareness of how men's EI may affect the workplace differently than women's EI. For example, Ingram et al. (2014) found that EI had a positive direct influence on the venture performance of business leaders. Moreover, the researchers found that gender moderated the relationship between EI and venture performance, with males reporting higher levels of performance while women reported higher levels of EI. Overall, the literature consistently shows that women rate higher in EI, but little attention has been given to the effects of EI on behavior and venture performance (Ingram et al., 2014).

Since evidence shows that higher levels of EI are positively associated with job performance (Law et al., 2004; O'Boyle et al., 2010; Rozell et al., 2002; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004) and business success (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Ingram et al., 2014; McLaughlin, 2012), two recommendations for future research were put forth. First,

investigations should be designed to compare different types of brain-based professional development programs designed to enhance business leaders EI and related measures of failure/success. Second, further research is needed to better understand how gender moderates the relationship between EI and specific performance outcomes that are known to contribute to overall business success.

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## APPENDIX A

### Demographic Data Request

Please provide some basic information about yourself:

1. How many years of experience do you have leading a small business?
2. What is your age?
3. How many positions have you held as a leader of a small business?
4. What is your marital status (single, married, divorced, divorced and remarried)?
5. What is your educational level and in what field(s)?

## APPENDIX B

### Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (2002)

#### **Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA)**

1. I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.
2. I have good understanding of my own emotions.
3. I really understand what I feel.
4. I always know whether or not I am happy.

#### **Others' Emotion Appraisal (OEA)**

5. I always know my friends' emotions from their behavior.
6. I am a good observer of others' emotions.
7. I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.
8. I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.

#### **Use of Emotion (UOE)**

9. I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.
10. I always tell myself I am a competent person.
11. I am a self-motivated person.
12. I would always encourage myself to try my best.

#### **Regulation of Emotion (ROE)**

13. I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.
14. I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.
15. I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.
16. I have good control of my own emotions.

## APPENDIX C

### Study semi-structured Interview Guide

**Study Research Question #2:** To what extent, if any, and in what ways do Southern California small business leaders' emotional intelligence affect their workplace?

#### Interview Questions

1. How is your management style with employees affected when your employees show their emotions (i.e., anger, sadness, high level of stress, etc.)?
  - a. I avoid them until the emotion seems to have passed
  - b. I engage them and just ignore the emotional part
  - c. I engage and indicate that we can get more work done without the emotions brought to the workplace
  - d. I engage their emotions first to try to get on the same page as them emotionally and empathize with where they are
  - e. Tell me a story about a specific situation in which you responded in this way.
2. How do you adjust your management style when you personally experience emotions at work (i.e., anger, sadness, high level of stress, etc.)?
  - a. I stay out of view until my emotions have passed
  - b. I engage others and outwardly let them know of the difficulty I am having
  - c. I engage others and try to mask what I am experiencing
  - d. I engage others and end up taking out on them what I am experiencing
  - e. Tell me a story about a specific situation in which you responded in this way.

**Study Research Question #3:** To what extent, if any, do Southern California small business leaders value emotional intelligence in the workplace?

#### Interview Questions

1. What impact, if any, does managing employee emotions have on your business? What does that look like? Is it a positive impact or a negative impact?
2. On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most, how much time and energy, on average, do you spend managing employee emotional behavior in the workplace? What does that look like? How does it make you feel?
3. In your business, do you think it is better for you to hide your actual feelings when acting and speaking with people? Why? What about your employees, is it better for them to hide their actual feelings when acting and speaking with people? Why?

## APPENDIX D

### Permission to Use Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS)

Email requesting permission for use of Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale and response from Dr. Wong

From: **Wong Chi Sum (MGT)**

Sent: Sun 5/19/13 7:58 PM

To: Steven Smith

2 attachments (total 294.8 KB)



Wong-Law(2002)-Leadership-Quarterly.pdf



Law-Wong-Song(2004)-JAP.pdf

Dear Steven,

So far as you are using it for non-profit making research projects, feel free to use the scale. Attached are the two papers reporting its development and validation. The items are in the appendix. As the response format is Likert-type scale, the average (or sum) of all the 16 items is used as the indicator of the emotional intelligence level of the respondents.

Good luck to your study.

Regards,

C.S. Wong

Dept. of Management

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

**From:** Steven Smith

**Sent:** Monday, May 20, 2013 4:16 AM

**To:** Wong Chi Sum (MGT)

**Cc:** Steven Smith

**Subject:** Dr. Wong Chi Sum

Hello Dr. Wong,

I am a doctoral student at Pepperdine University in California, USA and am beginning my creation of the methods chapter for my dissertation, which focuses on emotional intelligence of small business leaders in Southern California.

I am interested in administering the WLEIS for my study and am requesting your permission to use the instrument for my study.

If the instrument is available to me, is there a specific website or venue to locate the instrument and scoring key?

Thank you in advance for your time,

Steven Smith

Doctoral Student

Pepperdine University

## APPENDIX E

### Study Data Collection Timeline

Date	Activity
10/10/2014	Develop online survey on SurveyMonkey website
10/13/2014	Begin participant recruitment process
10/20/2014	Send confirmation emails to participating leaders with instructions for completing the survey and scheduling one-to-one interviews with the researcher; a link will be embedded in the email for gaining access to the secure online SurveyMonkey survey
10/27/2014	Send reminder emails to participants who have not completed the online survey; begin scheduling interviews with participants (phone or face-to-face)
11/3/2014	Surveys completed; import data to statistical software application; complete scheduling interviews with participants (phone or face-to-face)
11/3/2014	Begin conducting interviews and record with FreeConferenceCall.com for phone interviews or with a hand-held digital recorder for face-to-face interviews
12/15/2014	Prepare for data-coding analysis by transcribing the interviews



## APPENDIX F

### Pepperdine IRB Approval Letter

# PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

## Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

December 3, 2014

Steven Smith  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Protocol #: E1014D01

Project Title: Southern California Small Business Leaders and Emotional Intelligence: Exploring Perceptions of Effect and Value in the Workplace

Dear Mr. Smith,

Thank you for submitting your application, *Southern California Small Business Leaders and Emotional Intelligence: Exploring Perceptions of Effect and Value in the Workplace*, for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. Kent Rhodes, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - <http://www.nihtraining.com/ohsrsite/guidelines/45cfr46.html>) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

(b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:

**Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, California 90045 ■ 310-568-5600

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at <http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact Kevin Collins, Manager of GPS IRB at [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu). On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Thema Bryant-Davis".

Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.  
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives  
Ms. Alexandra Roosa, Director Research and Sponsored Programs  
Dr. Kent Rhodes, Faculty Chair