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# Exploring the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy in Individuals Who Completed an Offender Intervention Program

Megan Eizabeth Caminos
*Walden University*

# Walden University

College of Allied Health

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Megan Elizabeth Caminos

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
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Review Committee
Dr. Magy Martin, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Brent Robbins, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

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Abstract

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MA, Walden University, 2018

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Psychology

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Abstract

Domestic abuse, which includes physical and sexual assault, stalking, and emotional abuse, presents profound social challenges. Current interventions often overlook how psychological attributes influence outcomes. This study explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in domestic violence offenders after completing intervention programs. It aimed to assess the impact of these psychological dimensions on rehabilitation success and explore how enhancing them might improve intervention strategies. Grounded in the theories of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, which are believed to be crucial for behavior change and rehabilitation success, this research employs a quantitative method. The study had 55 participants and measured emotional intelligence and self-efficacy using the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test and the New General Self-Efficacy Scale. A variance analysis helped identify correlations between these variables and assess gender's role. The findings indicate a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, suggesting that higher emotional intelligence is linked to higher offender self-efficacy. However, gender did not significantly influence these outcomes. This insight is crucial for developing future interventions, highlighting the importance of focusing on emotional and cognitive competencies. By enhancing EI, interventions could improve self-efficacy, leading to more effective management and reduction of domestic violence, ultimately promoting positive social change and broader social well-being.

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to all facilitators, psychologists, and other behavioral health professionals working with offender populations daily to make this world a safer place.  I hope this research contributes to their efforts to work with individuals who need their help the most.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

## Introduction

This study addressed the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy (SE) in individuals who have completed a domestic violence offenders' diversion program (DVODP). The study focused on the gap in the literature focusing on domestic violence (DV) offenders' EI and SE. I sought to provide a better understanding of these interactions through this research to promote social change. Focusing on the relationship of EI with SE of individuals completing DVODP, it may be possible to develop better programs to be more effective in changing behaviors. In this chapter, the background of the problem is reviewed, along with the purpose of the study, research questions addressed, nature of the study, theoretical framework, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance.

## Background of the Problem

One in three women and one in four men will be the victim of some form of DV, including physical or sexual assault, stalking, or emotional abuse (National Domestic Violence Hotline.org, 2020). DVODPs focus on changing behaviors and reducing reoffending by the individuals ordered to attend these programs (Morrison et al., 2021). Current literature and studies focus on victim welfare, resilience, or the batterer intervention program structure. However, very little research has been done on the offenders, their experience with the programs, or personal outcomes from completing a program. Research indicates that men and women perceive their EI differently (Mayer et al., 2014), but that with both genders, an increase in EI can reduce aggressive or violent

behaviors (Garcia et al, 2017). EI can reduce abusive behaviors and support the development of self-regulation and the ability to use input from the environment to determine how to react to given situations (Maddux, 1995). EI in male and female offenders has been researched in previous studies (Bacon et al., 2018). However, these studies have been focused on outside the context of DV (Schutte et al., 2001). Additionally, understanding the difference between men and women and their concept of EI may provide helpful information on more effective ways to address DV (Schutte et al., 2001).

There is a significant gap in current research, including SE as a possible predictor of EI (Bolton et al., 2016). According to Bandura (1977), SE enables individuals to feel more capable of completing tasks, communicating with others, and learning from consequences. Additionally, Wagers et al. (2021) indicated that a lack of feeling able to control oneself or the environment around oneself could lead to abusive behaviors to try to control something or someone. This effort to find a feeling of control is a motivating factor behind DV (Wagers et al., 2021). Therefore, the feeling of being in control of oneself could also be influenced by the ability to understand one's own emotions and make decisions based on both.

Understanding how EI is affected by completing an intervention program could be integral in projecting future behaviors among offenders (Garcia et al., 2017). Suppose the men and women completing the intervention programs could rate their EI in the higher ranges. In that case, this may indicate that they are less likely to engage in abusive behaviors in the future (Gold et al., 2017). Higher EI scores may also predict a higher

sense of SE and, therefore, a reduction in abusive behaviors. This research is essential in understanding the connection between EI and SE and how this can reduce DV.

## Problem Statement

Current research fails to address the problem of DV intervention programs not increasing the EI or SE of the participants (Arias et al., 2020). Despite an increased focus on eradicating domestic abuse and mandated treatment of offenders, programs remain relatively ineffective and widely criticized (Robinson & Clancy, 2021) while shown to be only moderately successful in reducing recidivism (Bucich & MacCann, 2019). Critics of intervention programs cite a lack of individualization and a lack of addressing and increasing EI in participants (Cox & Rivolta, 2021). These programs focus on punitive injunctions against men as the primary offenders and are not generally translatable to women as the offenders (Blázquez-Alonso et al., 2018). Schutte et al. (2001) indicated that EI is an immediate ability to understand oneself and interpret the emotions of others, while cognitive intelligence is a stable knowledge base.

Recent studies have suggested that authoritarian approaches combined with a one-size-fits-all approach could cause lower success rates of these programs (Cox & Rivolta, 2021). In contrast, other research indicates that a client-centered, more personalized approach may be more successful (Romero-Martinez et al., 2021). Although there is research indicating that encouraging participants to buy into the process and participate in self-examination, as well as SE, can increase the participant's understanding of their behaviors and how they affect those around them (Satuf et al., 2020), there is a lack of research examining the relationship between EI and SE. Understanding how EI and SE

affect individuals after completing a DV intervention program is also yet to be researched (Cox & Rivolta, 2021).

## Purpose of the Study

This study examined the relationship between the EI and SE of individuals who have completed a DV intervention program. The independent variables for this research study were gender and EI. These variables were compared with the dependent variable of SE.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

RQ1. Is there a relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ2. Is there a relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ3. Is there a relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was emotional intelligence theory (EIT; Goleman, 2001), which focuses on self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. According to Salovey and Grewal (2005), EI allows individuals to process, use, and manage their emotions in relationships. EI contributes to an increased ability to regulate one's emotions and behaviors, and a lack of EI facilitates abusive behaviors in DV offenders. Therefore, treatment programs should increase this awareness, which could reduce reoffending and perhaps facilitate the end of the cycle of violence. This theory focuses on the ability of individuals to recognize and regulate emotions within themselves and others. It provides a framework for daily life activities and studying intelligence, personality, and academic achievement (Goleman, 2001).

EIT was appropriate for this study because it provided the context for understanding how EI can influence an individual's behaviors in the context of aggressive or abusive behaviors. It showed that individuals with higher EI have a better sense of control over themselves, a better understanding of their emotions, and a better ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors (Goleman, 2001). This theory related to this study's approach and research questions by providing insight into how EI can be increased and whether this can be accomplished through an offender intervention program. Previous

research has focused on the EI of DV offenders, but not after they have completed a DVODP. Chapter 2 will address the different components of the theory and how they directly relate to DV offenders and SE.

## Nature of the Study

This study was a quantitative analysis to provide an objective, structured view. The specific quantitative design for this study was a correlational, nonexperimental design. The design was chosen to examine the relationship between the EI and SE of DV offenders after completing a DVODP. The specific research method to assist in this study was multiple regression. The study variables for this research included gender and EI as independent variables and SE as the dependent variable. The methodology for this study included recruiting participants from current local DVODPs to complete online surveys. I met with program facilitators and provided the information so participants could access the surveys. A minimum sample size of 120 was needed for this study. The instruments used in this study included the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence test (SSEIT) to measure EI and the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSES) as a self-reported measure of SE (Chen et al., 2001).

## Definitions

*Domestic violence (DV)*: DV is any incident or pattern of controlling, coercive, or threatening behavior, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality (Olding et al., 2021).

*Domestic violence offender intervention program (DVOIP)*: A DVOIP is an intervention program designed to shift the accountability for violence back to the offender based on the belief that battering is a pattern of actions intended to dominate and control a partner, used for informational purposes only (theduluthmodel.org, 2017).

*Intimate partner violence (IPV)*: IPV is used to refer to all forms of violence committed in the context of an intimate partner relationship (Cotter, 2021).

*Self-efficacy (SE)*: SE is the skill and capability to cope with environmental demands and challenges successfully and plays a vital role in emotional and behavioral regulation (Maddux, 1995).

*Emotional intelligence (EI)*: EI is the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others, including using emotions for reasoning and solving problems (Goleman, 2001).

*Emotional quotient (EQ)*: EQ is the numerical representation of an individual's EI score (Mayer et al.,2014).

**Assumptions**

This study's assumptions focused primarily on the biases associated with the data gathering, the theoretical framework, and the methodology. One fundamental assumption of this study was that DV and abuse are gender-biased and generally male-focused. A second assumption was that the respondents would respond to the surveys honestly. While there was little to guarantee this would happen, the responses from participants had no bearing on any court proceedings, nor would there be penalties or rewards associated with participating. To preserve participants' privacy, the surveys did not ask for any

identifying information, with only sex, age range, or whether they were in a relationship. A final assumption was that the information for participation would only be provided to individuals after the completion of an intervention program and not before. These assumptions were essential in this research because there is no definitive way to ensure honest and forthright participant responses. Assumptions regarding the participants' sex were not necessarily impactful to the research outcome in that it was assumed that there would be fewer female than male participants in the study.

## Scope and Delimitations

The specific aspects of the research problem addressed in this study were the EI of men and women who completed a DVOIP. This area was determined for this study because it is an underresearched aspect of DV offender treatment, contributing to its internal validity. This study was bound by individuals who had completed an intervention program and was restricted from those who were either still in the program or had not attended an intervention group to reduce any threats to external validity. One theory considered was the theory of self-efficacy, or individuals' judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action (Bandura, 1977). However, it was excluded because no information supported its use within the research.

The goal of using the theory of EI was to generalize the results to all offenders who have completed an intervention program. The research timeline was not limited to a designated timeframe, focusing on collecting the necessary amount. The only requirement was that the participants had completed an intervention program. Additionally, the study's boundaries included programs within Tucson, AZ. Programs

outside of Tucson were asked to participate in the study due to a lack of data collected within Tucson.

## Limitations

Internal validity refers to the degree to which a study's design and methods accurately measure what the researcher intends to measure. In contrast, external validity refers to how the results can be generalized to other populations or settings. Limitations to this study were focused primarily on data collection due to the nature of the questionnaires being available online. The identified limitations to this study were the number of former group participants willing to participate, that is, the sample size, access to online forms of data collection, access to surveys, and the ability to direct the responses to the researchers for collection. Additionally, researchers may have encountered selection bias, which could have occurred when the sample of participants was not representative of the population being studied, or experimenter bias, which can occur when the researcher's beliefs and attitudes influence the study's results.

Construct validity refers to the degree to which the measures or tests used in the study measure the concept or construct intended to be measured. Limitations of construct validity include the possibility of inaccurate or incomplete conclusions. Limitations of confounding variables include the difficulty of identifying all relevant factors that may affect the study's outcome and the challenge of controlling for all these factors in the study design. The data collection process was completed electronically, with raw data transferred to interpretation software to reduce the potential for biases to be present in the collection process. Using data interpretation software eliminated the possibility of the

results being interpreted in a way influenced by biases. The sampling was based on respondents willing to participate, while all those completing an intervention program were invited to participate. Multiple providers across the city were asked to provide the survey information to their participants; therefore, I did not influence the sampling of participants.

A final limitation identified was the timeframe for collecting information. This was limited to 6 months. The number of participants willing to complete the online questionnaires within this timeframe may have fallen below the specified sample size, which was counterbalanced by asking all of the providers in the city to offer participation to all those completing an intervention program. Extending the timeframe to obtain the maximum number of participants was not necessary.

**Significance**

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding EI as a predictor of SE in DV offenders. Increasing self-awareness, managing emotions, and using positive-focused behavior instead of anger in difficult or stressful situations would indicate that diversion programs are effective. Based on this knowledge, the implications for social change could impact how DV treatment programs are developed and conducted in the future and possibly work toward reducing abusive behaviors in the community. Another way this study can contribute to the understanding of how an increase in EI can lead to a reduction in DV is by obtaining feedback from participants in the program regarding their understanding of their emotions and how to manage them better (Satuf et al., 2020), as well as decision making and overcoming challenges (Maddux, 1995).

Moreover, this study provides evidence that a higher level of EI in conjunction with high SE and a belief that they can be more in control of themselves makes the individuals less likely to engage in violent or abusive behaviors and could assist in changing policies regarding the treatment of these offenders moving forward.

## Summary

DV and abuse are ongoing social problems in this country that affect individuals, families, and communities. The impact of DV causes physical and emotional damage to everyone associated with the individual and the victim. However, there has been a distinct lack of research to understand the association between SE and EI in individuals who have completed a DVOIP. Much research has focused on victims and offenders before arrest but has given very little attention to their emotional state after treatment. The current study proposed determining the level of SE and EI in both men and women who had completed an intervention program while simultaneously comparing these two groups and measuring for age groups. In Chapter 2, research supporting all aspects of this study is reviewed to support the need for this research and a literature review related to DV, SE, and EI. I also discuss the characteristics included in EI and how this relates to intervention programs. Finally, the theory of EI and the overlap between it and the theories of DV are discussed.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

**Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between EI and SE of individuals who have completed a DVODP. Research has addressed the lack of individualization and the need to increase EI and SE in participants (Bolton et al., 2016). There is a significant amount of research regarding the EI of victims and offenders in general, but there is a lack of research regarding the EI of offenders and SE after they complete a DVODP (Morrison et al., 2021). EI can affect cognitive intelligence, possibly leading to a perpetrator's better understanding of their behaviors' long-term consequences and effects (Blázquez-Alonso et al., 2018). More recent research focuses on solution-based programs for offenders and explores increasing the empathy of DV offenders (Bolton et al., 2016).

In this chapter, I provide the literature search strategy to allow future researchers to understand how the literature search was completed for the study and discuss the scope of the literature. This chapter will also review the literature, the research concepts, and critical variables. The variables related to the literature review and the rationale for choosing and relating them to the present study are reviewed. The theoretical foundation for the research is also provided, and the significant theoretical aspects are discussed as their application to the research. Lastly, a summary of the chapter will be provided.

**Literature Search Strategy**

Multiple search engines were used to conduct a thorough literature search on EI, SE, and DV. Databases included PsycINFO, EBSCO, Science Direct, Open Access,

Education Source, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar. Boolean searches were conducted via the Walden University library and affiliated databases. Although a thorough search was conducted, many resources were older than the 5-year cutoff period. These sources were still included in the study and cited, but it is noted that they do fall outside of the standard 5-year timeframe. Seminal research was also conducted, although it fell outside the preferred 10-year timeframe.

The literature search was conducted using various combinations of search terms until no new or relevant articles appeared. The following search terms and combinations were used to locate relevant material and articles with keywords: *emotional intelligence*; *self-efficacy*, *gender, male, female, domestic violence, offenders/perpetrators, emotional intelligence and domestic violence, self-efficacy and domestic violence, intimate partner violence, emotional intelligence, and gender, self-efficacy, and gender, domestic violence intervention program, intimate partner perpetrator diversion program, emotional intelligence, and domestic violence offender intervention program, self-efficacy*, and *domestic violence offender intervention program*. The other completed search was selected solely based on the theoretical framework of the emotional intelligence theory. The scope of the literature search was originally between 2017 and 2024. However, it was determined to be necessary to expand to the last 10 years of current literature due to the lack of more current research. This literature search also determined that there was no current literature on the study's specific population and variables. It was concluded that future research is needed to address this gap in the literature.

**Theoretical Foundation**

The theoretical framework used for this study was emotional intelligence theory (EIT; Goleman, 2001). This theory focuses on the ability of individuals to understand their emotions and those of others and make decisions based on this (Goleman, 2001). The theory proposes that EI can be broken down into five domains: emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Goleman, 2001). These are then broken into subscales measuring varying aspects of each domain. Applying these scales to perpetrators of DV should increase their ability to understand their emotions. Research has supported the idea that those who engage in domestically abusive behaviors have lower scores in EI (Winters et al., 2004). This research also focuses on the EI of males, citing that most men who are "batterers" do not know how to communicate their needs and wants effectively, therefore expressing themselves after they have reached the point of no longer being able to contain their emotions, resulting in aggressive outbursts or violent behavior (Winters et al., 2004). A lack of EI has been linked to aggressive behavior and higher rates of relationship dissatisfaction, anger management problems, and even psychiatric issues. One can better understand the nature of DV by focusing on the power of an individual to understand their own emotions and how these emotions affect them and others around them. Many DV offenders focus on their lack of control over their behaviors, externalizing their power base and relying on past maladaptive behaviors to gain control over others (Wagers et al., 2021). Increasing SE can allow batterers to gain control over their actions and manage their efficacy expectations to change their behaviors (Wagers et al., 2021). Gaining a better

understanding of emotions can lead to better management, less use of physical or emotional abuse, and even hostile humor. Additional theories of EI suggest that individuals have an implicit understanding of what intelligence is and whether they believe they are capable of change (Doyle & Thompson, 2021). This idea expands on the original emotional intelligence theory by proposing that most people view intelligence as static throughout their lifetime. However, research supports that it is a form of intelligence that can be developed and improved (Doyle & Thompson, 2021). These studies, however, focus on ego threat and comparisons between men and women outperforming each other in EI scores, as opposed to comparing them across age groups.

A lack of EI or even emotional awareness has been directly related to an inability to inhibit aggressive behaviors such as cruelty, destructiveness, and exploitative behaviors (Sokic & Horvat, 2019). Some researchers have related the lack of EI to psychopathy. While this study did not explore this dynamic, it is essential to note the link between a lack of EI and psychopathy. Studies have suggested that individuals lacking certain levels of EI can also not express their emotions in a healthy, productive way and instead use aggressive and abusive behaviors. This is one of the dimensions studied about DV perpetrators. There is also evidence that traditional measures of intelligence can operate independently of EI (Sokic & Hovat, 2019). An individual can be intelligent by traditional standards without having very high EI. This makes it difficult for them to understand and manage their own emotions, and they find it difficult to read the emotions of others. Commonly associated with higher levels of aggression, many abusive

behaviors found in DV situations have been identified in recent studies in individuals with lower EI.

Behaviors more specific to DV are a lack of empathy and an inability to share experiences and emotions, engage in moral reasoning, and show prosocial behavior. When one cannot show empathy, is unable to understand the emotions of others, or is unable to evaluate a situation based on these aspects, one tends to become frustrated and lash out. As a result, many researchers propose that this is the basis for domestically violent behaviors. These arguments also propose that most DV perpetrators act without thinking about the long-term consequences of their behaviors, further indicating their lack of emotional understanding. Trait EI has been proposed as a personality trait instead of EI being a form of intelligence similar to cognition (Yang et al., 2022). As such, individuals who self-report having trait EI display higher levels of EI (Yang et al., 2022). Despite these arguments, perpetrators have expressed that many abusive behaviors result from an inability to manage anger and other feelings, such as dependence, separation anxiety, and jealousy (Gold et al., 2017). The argument also remains that the primary mode of treating perpetrators does not increase EI but instead focuses on problem-solving behaviors without accurate emotional analysis of a situation (Romero-Martinez et al., 2021). Understanding how offenders view their ability to manage their emotions, specifically anger may also be a valuable measure of their EI after completing an intervention program (Morrison et al., 2021).

It is critical to understand how EI can positively impact whether an offender will continue with their abusive behaviors. Research has shown that increased EI renders an

individual significantly less likely to engage in abusive or aggressive behaviors in the future. This is due to a better understanding of their own emotions and the emotions of others. The inclusion of EI in DV research has focused on the pretreatment of individuals, especially men. The problem studied was that EI in DV offenders has only been studied in pretreatment and primarily in men.

The dynamic nature of EI, its effect on many facets of an individual's behavior, and the understanding an individual gains of their behaviors and how those affect others can influence their future behaviors. Understanding how individuals can increase this understanding is integral to indicating how an increase in EI can reduce aggression toward others. EI is the ability to recognize the meaning of emotions and understand the relationship between emotions and how an individual interprets the world around them (Mayer et al., 2014). Individuals working to increase EI can also gain practical conflict resolution skills, which can reduce aggressive and abusive behaviors. Interpretation of a situation can also be influenced by personality type and stress level at the time (Mohamed & Narmeen, 2020). Coping with stress can be a facet of EI, including rational thinking, imagination, and humor (Mohamed & Narmeen, 2020). It also encompasses an ability to perceive emotions in oneself and others, understand the information these emotions provide, and use that information to problem-solve now (Mayer et al., 2014). Without this ability, many are led to act on their emotions without thinking, without processing the emotion itself, and without attempting to problem-solve, which can be violent and aggressive. Many have proposed that the inability to understand one's own emotions, the lack of understanding of how one's behaviors affect those around them, and the inability

to problem-solve now lead to acts of DV (Schutte et al., 2001). Additionally, having a higher EI increases empathy; something noted as markedly lacking in the cycle of DV (de Lucena et al., 2016).

While offender treatment tends to focus on getting the perpetrators to accept responsibility for their actions, it fails to address the actual cause of the behavior or the root of the problem (Buchbinder & Eisikovits, 2008). Without providing DV perpetrators with the skills to change their ability to interpret a situation and determine an appropriate social response, there is little to support the idea that these individuals will be able to change their overall behaviors. A study of online treatment programs indicated that teaching relationship skills and anger management techniques did reduce reoffending but did not address anything specific to EI (Spencer et al., 2021). Other integrative studies have shown that putting the offender into the victim's position in virtual reality (VR) simulations has enabled the offender to better recognize emotions in the other person (Seinfeld et al., 2018). Additionally, Robinson and Clancy (2021) proposed that identifying the emotional type of the offender may provide a better reference to the interventions provided. For example, suppose an offender is identified as having a borderline emotional dependency. In that case, they display characteristics of being overly dependent on their partner and, therefore, prone to different abusive behaviors than an offender identified as having more antisocial traits (Robinson & Clancy, 2021). These two offenders would respond differently to the same treatment; therefore, more personalized treatment may be more effective.

The treatment of offenders and the study of the results of those treatments is often divided between men and women, and there has been minimal comparison. Most research focuses on changing the perpetrator's view of abusive behaviors through cognitive-behavioral group therapy. Because this treatment is very male-focused, it also tends to focus heavily on the offender's accepting responsibility for their actions without understanding the basis for their behaviors. Consequently, there seems to be very little that teaches perpetrators how to regulate their emotions in each situation better, especially a stress-inducing one or a highly emotionally charged situation, unless the emotional regulation is learned in passing with other lessons in the curriculum (Chen & Wan, 2021). Programs like Alcoholics Anonymous, groups that focus on bringing awareness to the perpetrator's behaviors, their blind spots, and other maladaptive behaviors, also provide them the tools to change these can help improve the SE and self-esteem of the offenders in the program (Gold et al., 2017). Studies on males and EI also focus on mental disorders associated with emotional deficits. One such study indicated that males with bipolar disorder have lower levels of EI and a lack of social cognition (Kuo et al., 2021). While some inferences can be drawn between these studies and the perpetrators of DV, including mental illnesses, it was determined unnecessary. It should be noted, however, that perpetrators with disorders such as bipolar may struggle more with increasing their EI due to the inherent difficulty in emotional management and regulation (Kuo et al., 2021).

According to research, emotion regulation is a critical aspect of EI, which tends to be the most challenging (Bucich & MacCann, 2019). This requires that the individual use

their emotions to prioritize the situation and appraise it based on their emotions (Oliveros & Coleman, 2021). A previously identified driver for abusive behavior is ruminating on negative moods and feelings and using fight-or-flight instincts as aggression (Oliveros & Coleman, 2021). A study conducted by Oliveros and Coleman (2021) focused on the perpetration of DV within the family. However, it did indicate that lower levels of emotional regulation were a significant predictor of interpersonal violence in men, more so than women. This further supports the indication that studying the EI of those who have completed an intervention program is vital to understanding how these behaviors can be avoided when EI is increased. EI has also increased one's ability to perceive abuse. It can be relatively equal between males and females with higher levels of EI (Estevez-Casellas et al., 2021). Additional research relates explicitly to poor impulse control, one aspect of emotional regulation, to DV and sexual violence in intimate partnerships (Garner et al., 2018). This specific study indicated that sexual violence within the context of domestic abuse was related to poor impulse control and regulation and drug use (Garner et al., 2018). While this study focused on sexual violence, drug use, and impulsivity, a direct line can be drawn from the lack of impulse control and emotional regulation to DV and the increased likelihood of domestic abuse in any capacity when the individual has a lowered ability to control their emotions.

The EIT was the most appropriate for the present study based on the different dimensions of EI. Unlike the other theories, it also includes one's ability to understand emotions and identify abusive behaviors (Goleman, 2001). Based on the previous research, this will allow the current study to build on the idea that increasing EI in DV

offenders can help reduce future IPV or DV instances. It may also be possible to build upon current understandings of EI and how it influences abusive behaviors by evaluating the increase in offenders after an intervention program.

<div style="text-align:center"><strong>Literature Review Related to Key Variables</strong></div>

**Emotional Intelligence and Gender**

Aggression is not only a social problem but also an interpersonal one. Individuals who are unable to assess the emotions of others accurately may misinterpret specific emotions and react aggressively (Megias et al., 2018). Comparing male and female offenders is not the subject of a large body of research. The comparisons generally focus on the rate of offending, such as males using more physical violence, whereas women use more psychological abuse (Estevez-Casellas et al., 2021). Some research suggests that the effects of a lack of emotional regulation or EI begin in adolescents and present in violent behaviors, sexual attitudes, and motivation (Estevez-Casellas et al., 2021). This study found that the lower an individual's overall EI score is, the higher the violent incident in any form (Estevez-Casellas et al., 2021). Additional studies have focused on men and their EI regarding aggressive behaviors. These studies have found that men exhibit a lower ability to regulate emotions and recognize emotions in others and that EI can not only work to help them navigate emotionally charged situations but also manipulate the situation through the emotions of others (Jaffe et al., 2015). This research did indicate that while there is some relationship between EI and reduced aggressive behaviors, empathy plays a significant role in the participant's choice to utilize these skills (Jaffe et al., 2015). While this research falls outside the 5-year window for research, it was the

only study that closely resembled the proposed research for this study. Research has not only focused on men but also external factors contributing to DV, such as lack of education, financial stress, and depression (Cannon et al., 2016).

Psychological violence and control are the aspect that relates directly to EI. This form of abuse is prevalent in both males and females, beginning in adolescence, but this is one of the only similarities found in any of the reference's research (Estevez-Casellas et al., 2021). In addition to using abusive behaviors, research has examined the motivation behind using the EI individuals already possess. This has indicated that both men and women can use existing knowledge for bonding or therapeutic purposes (Bucich & MacCann, 2019). When using the belief in one's emotional capabilities for purposes such as social sharing, the self-reported scores are higher in both men and women, but this has been shown to not translate directly to the operational knowledge of emotions and emotional management now (Bucich & MacCann, 2019). That is to say, the motivation behind EI can be simply for social reasons but does not apply directly to the idea of reducing domestically abusive behaviors. In addition to motivational differences, adverse effects must be included when comparing gender differences regarding EI.

One specific study researched the possibility of those with higher EI manipulating those around them. This study found that men with an increased ability to process social information were better able to utilize indirect aggression to exploit others (Bacon et al., 2018). Additionally, this study found that women with higher EI were much more manipulative than men, utilizing emotional manipulation and relational aggression (Bacon et al., 2018). It also found that women who engage in offending behaviors have

lower EI, more serious impulse control difficulties, and difficulties dealing with life stressors (Bacon et al., 2018).

Research into the stability of trait EI indicates that the ability to understand emotions and identify the emotions of others increases with time, but this has been attributed to the gradual maturation seen with aging, not necessarily an exponential growth due to other learning or circumstances (Parker et al., 2021). Comparison across age is another aspect of both EI and SE under research. Research into age and EI differences focused on specific behaviors in different age groups (Blázquez-Alonso et al., 2018). The psychological abuse researched in this study targeted behaviors such as loss of self-esteem, hostility, indifference, intimidation, blaming, and lack of genuine kindness (Blazquez-Alonso et al., 2018). The study found that the ability to regulate and process negative emotions in a given situation is higher in younger individuals (under 17). However, these relationships have a higher rate of physical violence. Conversely, the EI of the group studied over the age of 23 indicated a lower rate of EI used in interpersonal relationships and a higher rate of emotional and psychological abuse (Bucich & MacCann, 2019).

**Self-Efficacy and Gender**

Some of the areas of comparison found in recent research focus on adolescents or young adults, while little research has been found that compares EI and SE. Bandura's theory of SE introduces the idea that self-regulation is the goal of SE, focusing on the ability of an individual to attain and maintain personal goals (Betz, 2013). The research in this area compared SE and EI in young adults but did not use SE as a predictor of EI.

There is a strong indication that higher SE can lead to higher EI (Honmore & Jadhav, 2017). While the proposed study does not include adolescents or young adults, there can be inferences made regarding the evolution of SE from early adulthood into mature adulthood and applying it to DV situations. The Honmore and Jadhav study (2017) indicated that family background is a strong indicator of an individual's level of SE but did not mention DV. There are also indications that men from more supportive families have higher EI than women, along with the indication that this SE translates into a better sense of being able to manage their own emotions, understand the emotions of others, and handle challenging situations (Honmore & Jadhav, (2017).

SE has been shown to influence how individuals adapt to situations and be predicted through trait EI (Yang et al. 2022). Additionally, there may be evidence that higher SE significantly affects one's ability to adapt (Yang et al., 2022). Studies about perpetrators' buy-in to the program they are involved in or their ability to set their own goals for the program can increase positive outcomes (Bolton et al., 2016). While this study does not focus directly on SE, some indications increasing the offender's ability to believe that they can achieve the goals they set for themselves increase their SE in other areas, such as emotional regulation and anger management (Bolton et al., 2016).

Similarly to the belief in one's capabilities in using abusive behaviors, studies of SE in females have focused on substance use and prior exposure to abuse (Saxena et al., 2016). These studies have also focused on SE as the belief that one can successfully use certain behaviors to achieve a desired outcome (Saxena et al., 2016). Women tend to score higher in the components that make up EI and negative affect, while men tend to

use aggression more often (Megias et al., 2018). According to Megias et al. (2018), women report more often having an adverse reaction to a negative state than men, but this does not necessarily indicate that men do not have a similar reaction; they may interpret their reaction or the situation differently. A minor count of research indicates that women are the perpetrators of DV against more passive men, indicating that SE can be associated with successfully using abusive behaviors against their partner (Corvo & Johnson, 2013). In studies focused on SE and drug use, women reported less confidence in resisting the temptation of substance use than men (Saxena et al., 2016). While not specific to DV, this lack of SE could be translated into other behaviors, both negative and positive.

Like EI, SE can significantly impact defensive behaviors and dysfunctional inhibitions (Bandura, 1977). In addition to overcoming challenges, SE can help individuals navigate difficult situations and even overcome phobias (Corvo & Johnson, 2013). Individuals learn how to determine the most appropriate response to a situation through prior behaviors' consequences. This also effectively translates into therapeutic settings for cognitive restructuring (Bandura, 1977).

One is belief in their ability to control their emotions and behaviors; SE has been shown to shift the belief of control from external to internal (Wagers et al., 2021). This means that individuals have a more internal locus of control and can adjust their behaviors based on this while also understanding the motives behind their behaviors (Wagers et al., 2021). Specific to DV, SE can be applied to previously learned behaviors, such as abusive behavior, and being effective in gaining control over others. Therefore, the individual would require restructuring their efficacy expectations towards the abusive

behaviors to learn to utilize something different. This would also indicate that the individual would have to be provided with consequences for the abusive behavior, indicating that the behavior needs to be changed.

Aggression can also be related to a lack of SE through proactive aggression or the acceptance of aggression (Hadley et al., 2017). Regarding Bandura's theory of SE, proactive aggression is used when one believes they can use aggression to gain what they want from others (Hadley et al., 2017). Hadley et al. (2017) went on to examine gender differences in SE, which was the only comparison like this found in the research. The research indicated that goal-directed aggressive behavior was most positively correlated to SE and that both males and females engaged in the behavior (Hadley et al., 2017); however, SE was more of a mediating factor for females than males.

Recent studies in Israel in the form of batterer's self-help groups have shown that providing an environment where perpetrators can gain a better sense of SE and realize they can enact changes within themselves has been very beneficial (Gold et al., 2017). DV is an ongoing social problem in this and many other countries. Studies have shown that DV offenders lack EI, which plays a role in their ability to engage in abusive behaviors and perpetuate the cycle of violence (de Lucena et al., 2016). When one experiences violence in their home and throughout their life, there is a higher likelihood that this abuse will be perpetuated. In addition to physical violence, emotional and psychological abuse are prominent in domestically violent relationships, generally without the individuals learning healthier ways of working through their emotions or even having a healthy relationship. As such, understanding the EI of DV offenders after

completing an intervention program is essential for developing future intervention programs. Integrating current offender treatments with aspects of EI may assist in developing these future programs.

Current research searches did not find specific studies regarding women and SE related to DV perpetrators. Despite many studies regarding men, SE, EI, and DV offenders, there was a remarkable lack of information regarding women. This could be due, in part, to the much higher percentage of male than female offenders in general, but it supports the gap in the literature for this current study. Bates et al. (2019) proposed that much of the disparity between research on male and female offenders is based on stereotypes and implicit biases regarding the perception of DV and victimization. The argument is that DV is typically reported as females being the victims more often than men, as opposed to equal measures of both male and female victims (Bates et al., 2019). Research, reporting, and public knowledge are biased against men as offenders and women as victims. While this study is not based on EI or SE, it illustrates one of the primary reasons there is a lack of information regarding female offenders.

## Summary

Many factors contribute to DV and understanding the underlying causes of abusive behaviors. Research has identified a lack of EI (Goleman, 2001) and SE (Hadley et al., 2017) as significant contributing factors for aggressive and abusive behaviors (Goleman, 2001). Inarguably, previous research has shown that an individual's inability to understand and regulate their own emotions and feeling helpless to do so has led to DV in many instances. What is currently unknown is the level of EI and SE after an

intervention program. While there is a significant amount of research on DV victims' and perpetrators' EI before intervention, there is very little after a DVODP. This study aims to further the understanding of EI and SE once an individual has completed an intervention program and possibly contribute to developing more effective programs.

The proposed research study seeks to address a gap in the research examining the relationship between EI, SE, and offenders after an intervention program has been completed. Previous research conducted by Bolton et al. (2016) indicated a gap in the research and the need for a better understanding of EI (Chen & Wan, 2021) and SE (Betz, 2013) in DV offenders. Current research has not utilized a quantitative study design with the methods described in Chapter 3. An outline of the research methods will be described in Chapter 3, and details of the research design rationale, methods, variables, constructs, and validity will be provided.

Chapter 3: Research Method

**Introduction**

This quantitative study aimed to identify the relationship between EI and SE in individuals who have completed a DV intervention program. The independent variables in this study were gender and EI, and the dependent variable was SE. This study aimed to address the literature gap specific to understanding the relationship between EI and SE in DV perpetrators after an intervention program.

Chapter 3 provides the research design and rationale for this study. It also presents the research methodology for the study. This includes the population the study focused on, the sample participants, and procedures for recruitment. The chapter presents the data collection methods and instruments used to gather the data. The dependent and independent variables and the reliability and validity of the study and instruments are discussed.

**Research Design and Rationale**

This study utilized a correlational, nonexperimental design, with gender divided into men and women. Respondents provided demographic information, including sexual orientation, which is considered a moderating variable for gender, providing insight into the relationship between gender and EI. The dependent variable was SE.

The design was chosen because no variables were manipulated to address research questions evaluating the relationship between EI, SE, and gender in offenders postintervention. The insights gained could inform the development of more effective intervention programs and ultimately reduce DV.

New data were gathered from program participants, and no archival data were used. Variables were compared with surveys to collect self-reported SE and EI measures. Online surveys were employed to expedite data collection, eliminating the need for in-person meetings or scheduling and ensuring efficiency. Notably, this study did not include an intervention component.

## Methodology

### Population

The population targeted for this study was male and female offenders who had completed a mandated DVOIP. These individuals were referred from DV court, criminal court, probation, and the Department of Child Safety. All participants were adults over 18; therefore, gaining consent from parents or concerns about working with minors was not an issue.

### Sampling and Sampling Procedures

I recruited the participants using nonprobability purposive or judgmental sampling. In particular, purposive sampling was used to target the individuals who met the eligibility criteria and the study's purpose (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2016). The study did not include individuals who did not meet the outlined criteria. Additionally, the data from individuals who completed the surveys but did not fit the eligibility criteria were removed from the study. Purposive sampling was appropriate because the study focused on a specific population with specific characteristics.

A power analysis was completed to determine this study's most effective sample size. Appropriate sample size was determined to avoid a type II error of falsely rejecting

the null hypothesis, and the sample size calculator was used through Surveysystem.com. Suppose all the providers in town had approximately 300 clients completing the program yearly because most must complete a 26-week program. In that case, the total should be approximately 1,500 potential population members to sample from. This indicated that there would need to be 306 respondents for the sample effect to be significant enough to be applied to the overall population. The confidence level of 95% and significance level of 0.05 were decided upon due to the self-reported surveys. It was decided that this would produce the desirable minimum effect size for this study.

**Procedures For Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

Recruitment for participants was conducted through the agencies where they had completed the DVOIP. The recruitment process began by securing approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study per the approved standards, policies, and procedures. I explained that the information would only be gathered at treatment completion and that participation would be voluntary. Participants would complete the informed consent form, the demographic questionnaire (Appendix A), and the instruments measuring EI and SE. All results would be sent to me electronically, and measures would be taken to ensure confidentiality, anonymity, and minimal bias in the responses. The demographic questionnaire (Appendix A) and the surveys did not require the participants' names. The participants knew my name and that I was a doctoral student at Walden University conducting the study for my PhD. I informed the participants of their right to decline participation and withdraw from the process at any point via the language on the consent form.

**Informed Consent**

When participants used the link to complete the survey, an electronic consent form was added that they needed to read and agree to to continue. In researching how to set this electronic consent form up, I determined that participants would click on a box indicating consent instead of providing their electronic initials, which could be considered identifying information. The consent form also requested that participants provide honest and accurate answers to the research. They were reminded that there were neither negative nor positive responses to the information they provided in the surveys, as they had already completed treatment. The information was not provided to any agency's participants who completed treatment or to the courts; I only used it for this study. The study did not require a follow-up procedure; there was no need for repeated observation because the participants provided the data and submitted the surveys. I formatted the data on a spreadsheet and uploaded the file to SPSS for analysis after completing the data collection. In addition, I downloaded the collected data on a password-protected personal computer and saved the file on a hard drive and Microsoft OneDrive cloud storage. I will retain study data and files for 5 years and then destroy them.

<center>**Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs**</center>

**Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test**

The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) was the most appropriate measure for this study. In seeking to measure how participants self-report their performance potential or their ability to use the skills they learned during their treatment program, this measure provides a better assessment of that potential. Initially, it

was determined that the EQi-S would be the most appropriate measure for EI. However, this instrument is no longer being used and was unavailable for this study. The SSEIT measured four broad EI dimensions: expression of one's emotions, understanding of others' emotions, regulation of emotions, and utilization of emotions (Musonda et al., 2019). The SSEIT measures total EI instead of only a cross-section of the measurement (Musonda et al., 2019).

When administered, the SSEIT takes approximately 5–10 minutes to complete. It consists of 33 questions. Participants were instructed to complete the survey when they were linked to it. Questions were answered using a 5-point scale, including 1—*strongly disagree*, 2—*disagree*, 3—*neither agree nor disagree*, 4—*agree*, and 5—*strongly agree* (Musonda et al., 2019). Participants were asked to answer the questions based on their feelings after completing the DVOIP, not before the program. Once the survey was completed, the results were scored to determine the participant's overall EI, with higher scores indicating stronger EI and lower scores indicating weaker EI (Musonda et al., 2019).

**Reliability and Validity of the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test**

This measurement was based on the original measurement created by Myers and Salovey and had been normalized across ages, genders, and nationalities, showing few discrepancies across all variables (Schutte et al., 1998). The SSEIT began with a 62-item test but was eventually reduced to the now 33-item test based on the loading information from the testing results indicating that four specific categories scored highest (Schutte et al., 1998). The final test was normalized against 346 participants, 218 women and 111

men. All participants were recruited from the Southern United States and were college students and individuals from the surrounding communities (Schutte et al., 1998). Internal consistency values for the SSEIT showed a Cronbach's alpha of .90, indicating that the items within the test do not contradict each other (Musonda et al., 2019). Correlational validity between the SSEIT, the Toronto Alexithymia Scale, and the Trait subscale of the Trait Meta Mood Scale was measured with scores between -0.65 and 0.63 (Schutte et al., 1998). The correlational validity between it and other tests indicates that the construct validity is consistent between similarly designed measures (Schutte et al., 1997). Each dimension of the SSEIT was comparatively measured against a standardized test specific to that dimension and found to be consistent. Due to the moderate to high validity and reliability scores and the fact that the measure has been normed against similar populations in the current study, I was interested in researching the SSEIT, which was determined to be the most appropriate for this study. The study samples were assumed to include men and women aged 18–80 in Arizona from various cultural backgrounds.

**New General Self-Efficacy Scale**

Initially developed, Chen et al. (2001) created a more reliable form for measuring general SE after criticisms of measures indicated no distinct difference between self-esteem and SE. The New General Self-Efficacy Scale (NGSE) is an eight-item scale designed to measure whether people believe they can achieve their goals despite difficulties (Chen et al., 2001). The NGSE provides scores that can assist in predicting motivation and performance in various settings (Chen et al., 2001).

Historically, SE measurement has focused on determining work performance and attitudes (Chen et al., 2001). The NGSE consists of eight questions that are answered using a 5-point Likert scale design. Answers include 1—*strongly disagree*, 2—*disagree*, 3—*neither agree nor disagree or neutral*, 4—*agree*, and 5—*strongly agree*. The overall score is taken once all answers have been completed, and an average of all scores is used. The higher the score, the higher the individual's sense of SE.

**Reliability and Validity of New General Self-Efficacy Scale**

The NGSE was developed based on measures of self-esteem but designed to capture more information directly related to SE rather than self-esteem (Chen et al., 2001). This new measurement was normed against 316 undergraduate students at a large mid-Atlantic university, with approximately 78% of those being female, and the average age was 24 years old (Chen et al., 2001). The test was given three separate times throughout the quarter. Initially, 14 questions were included in the survey. However, based on the validity testing results, it was determined that only eight of the questions directly correlated to the study of SE. The discarded questions were determined to artificially inflate the internal consistency reliability estimate (Chen et al., 2001). The test-retest reliability research had already been completed, yielding Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .87, .88, and .85, respectively (Chen et al., 2001).

**Operationalization of Variables**

Table 1 provides the operational information for the variables measured in this study. Each variable is defined within the table. How each variable was measured is also detailed, along with the method of inquiry.

**Table 1**

*Operationalization of Variables*

| Variable | Definition | How it is measured | Method |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emotional intelligence | The ability to understand one's emotions and those of others and make decisions based on those emotions | Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) | Quantitatively via survey |
| Self-efficacy | Belief in one's abilities as they pertain to particular situations | New General Self-Efficacy Scale | Quantitatively via survey |
| Gender | Characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed | Demographic Questionnaire | Quantitatively via survey |

I developed a demographic questionnaire based on the research indicating specific dimensions within DV for offender programs (Appendix A). This questionnaire included five dimensions: ethnicity, gender identification, age, education level, and relationship status. These dimensions were used to account for any confounding influences and will be represented in the descriptive analysis of the final data. All data were translated from the surveys as categorical and represented as nominal or ordinal.

## Data Analysis Plan

The research questions and hypotheses for this study were the following:

RQ1. Is there a relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ2. Is there a relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ3. Is there a relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

*H*2: There is no significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

Data analysis for this study was completed using Statistical Package for Social Services (SPSS) version 27. To ensure that the data being used were accurate and able to be used, several methods were used to clean the data before inputting them into the software for analysis. The raw data were filtered and preprocessed to ensure no missing data or invalid answers (Uher et al., 2022). The data were reviewed, and any duplicate or irrelevant information was removed (Uher et al., 2022). Due to the nature of the surveys

and data collection, there was not anticipated to be duplicate or irrelevant information. However, all responses were reviewed to ensure that these data pieces were removed before analysis. Missing demographic information or answers provided, such as "n/a," "not applicable," or "prefer not to answer," were filtered according to the question. Outliers were identified this way and determined whether or not they were relevant to the research. Outliers were identified regardless, and an explanation of their inclusion or exclusion was also provided. Missing data were addressed based on the survey restrictions. If responses contain too many missing answers, they were discarded.

The data analysis plan for this study required the comparison of one distinct variable of gender (male and female) against their SE and EI scores. A standard multiple regression analysis would provide the most comprehensive data analysis. The data were entered into a correlational study. Then, the data were analyzed with an ANOVA. This analysis examined the relationship between gender, SE, and EI.

Additionally, McNemar's chi-squared test was conducted to determine the marginal homogeneity between the variables. The confidence interval for this data analysis was set at 95%. This allowed the study to indicate that only 5% of the population surveyed might not fall within the specified limits. Once the data were analyzed, the mean and standard deviation were determined.

<div align="center">

**Threats to Validity**

</div>

**External Validity**

This study had few threats to external validity as this researcher was not directly involved in recruiting test participants. Instead, current facilitators of the DV for

offenders' groups were asked to invite those completing the program to participate in the research. Testing reactivity was not a concern with this research as it was a post-treatment survey, not a pre-and post-test study. Potential external threats to validity were accounted for based on measurements from already established and tested tools and the process outlined for duplication. External threats to validity are a lack of transparency or questionable measurement practices.

**Internal Validity**

Ensuring the research addressed any threats to construct validity required comparing the intended information gathered to the research questions and determining whether the measurement tool chosen would collect that information. Slocum et al. (2022) refer to internal validity threats as external factors that could be inferred as alternative explanations for the occurrence of the study. Threats to internal validity surrounded the history and maturation of individuals asked to participate. This researcher requested that treatment participants currently completing be asked to participate, as well as anyone who had completed the program within the last 12 months. Additional threats would have been selection bias by the treatment facilitator not requesting all individuals in the groups but selecting participants without the researcher being advised. Single-group threats may have been a consideration for internal validity, but this was addressed by requesting more than one treatment provider throughout the city.

**Construct Validity**

This research study did not focus on the direct treatment of any participants. It was a study focusing on collecting data regarding treatment already rendered. All

participants in the research were debriefed on the purpose of the study via a consent form and advised that all information gathered would only be used for research purposes and had no bearing on the status of their treatment. HIPAA laws protect individuals' behavioral health providers; therefore, their information is confidential. As such, this is why the researcher did not interact directly with the participants but gathered the information via the treatment facilitator. No identifying information in the demographic survey would enable the researcher or anyone else to identify any participants positively. All participation was voluntary, so participants could choose whether to complete the survey or not and could drop out at any time without pressure to continue. The researcher gathered all information and kept it confidential, stored either in the cloud or their Walden University email, which requires a sign-in to access.

**Ethical Procedures**

Before the study began, permission was obtained from the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB). The participants for the study were given a contact letter inviting them to participate, wherein the study's purpose was also explained. Explanations of the voluntary research are included in the letter, and the minimal risk for participation is outlined. As previously stated, participants signed the informed consent before completing the online survey. The participants were also reminded that there were no negative ramifications should they opt out of participating at any time. A demographic survey was provided to gather the necessary information (Appendix A). The researcher's contact information was also provided to the participants should they have additional questions or require clarification for any point of the research or survey process.

Confidentiality was avoided by coding collected information into numbers when analyzing the data. Additionally, no information was identified in the demographic survey other than age range and gender. There were no conflicts of interest or power differentials as the researcher does not work for any of the agencies providing the DVODP services. All data will be collected electronically and only accessible by the researcher. Any information that must remain stored is password protected for confidentiality reasons and stored for three years before discarding. The study's results are accessible to the websites and participating groups. The Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) was requested to complete the research. Approval was obtained, and this researcher recruited participants by visiting with DVODP locally.

## Summary

The quantitative multiple regression research design examined the relationship between EI and SE in individuals who complete a DVOIP. This research design was chosen because of its ability to identify possible relationships between the stated variables. The population for this study includes a minimum of 100 participants who have completed a DVODP in Tucson, AZ. The sampling strategy included random sampling based on participants who had completed a local program. There were also specific procedures for collecting the data. Two instruments were used in this study. EI was measured using the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (Musonda et al., 2019), and SE was measured using the New General Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen et al., 2001). The reliability and validity of the instruments used were outlined. Ethical procedures and considerations reviewed the importance of ensuring this study adhered to

the highest ethical standards. Chapter 4 provided information on the data collection,

presented the results from the study and analyzed the data once the research was

completed.

Chapter 4: Results

**Introduction**

This quantitative comparative study aimed to explore the relationship between EI and SE in individuals who have completed a DVOIP. Additionally, I was interested in whether gender significantly predicted EI or SE within the sample. The following research questions for this study were developed because of a review of current literature regarding EI, DV, and offender treatment programs:

RQ1: Does SE predict emotional intelligence in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

RQ2: What is the relationship between gender, SE, and EI in adults who have completed a DV offender intervention program?

RQ3: What is the relationship between age and EI in adults who have completed a DVOIP?

This chapter describes the research methods used to collect the data and the procedures used to analyze the data to address the research questions and hypotheses. The analysis will also describe the composition of the participants, demographic characteristics, and critical findings from the data analysis. The discussion is organized into the following sections: methods of collecting data, the timeframes and characteristics of the sample targeted for this study, and how representative the participants were of the overall population based on the sample size compared to the overall population of DV offenders. The results of the data analysis will be reviewed, including any statistical

assumptions and results based on the data collected. Finally, the analysis will be reviewed regarding each research question and hypothesis.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions this study was guided by, and the null and alternative hypotheses were as follows:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

> $H$1: There is a significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

> $H$2: There is no significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ2. Is there a relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

> $H$1: There is a significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

> $H$2: There is no significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ3: Is there a relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

> H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

H2:    There is no significant relationship between gender and SE in DV

offenders who have completed an intervention program.

Statistical significance in quantitative research can refer to either the *test's p-value*

*or the test's practical significance* (Wasserstein et al., 2019). When a study is focused on

the predefined threshold of $p < .05$, the data analysis indicates a "statistically significant"

relationship. Conversely, practical significance focuses more on the usefulness of the

results in the real world and how they can be applied practically. This study was focused

on the statistically significant relationship between the variables.

**Data Collection**

Data were collected from 55 participants via an anonymous survey through

Qualtrics. I also utilized the SSEIT, comprising 33 questions about an individual's ability

to identify and cope with emotions. The SSEIT measures four factors about an

individual's emotions: perception of emotions, managing their own emotions, social

skills or the ability to manage the emotions of others, and utilizing emotions. The

questions and scoring information were available online. However, I did obtain

authorization from the developer to utilize the scale for this study. The NGSES was also

included in the survey, which has eight questions focusing on measuring an individual's

feelings of being able to work through challenges and overcome obstacles. The NGSES

was available online with scoring directions and did not require authorization from the

developer for its use in this study. The scores for both scales were totaled and used with

demographic information to complete the analysis. All demographic questions, 33

questions from the SSEIT, and eight questions from the NGSES were put into a survey

developed via the survey-based website Qualtrics. As directed by both evaluations, I

created a Likert-based survey and grouped the 33 questions from the SSEIT and the eight

questions from the NGSES together. The anonymous link for the survey was then

provided to the participants on the recruitment flyer. The participants were asked to click

on the "I agree" button in the first question, providing consent for their participation in

the survey. This affirmation then populated the demographic, SSEIT, and NGSES

questions. The link did not collect IP information; therefore, no follow-up was conducted,

and survey responses were completely anonymous.

The survey through Qualtrics was left open from October 2, 2023, through

February 29, 2024, at which point the required number of surveys was obtained. The

survey link was then shut down, and no additional surveys were recorded. Participants

were recruited through agencies providing DV offenders' intervention counseling. Due to

a lack of responses in the immediate Tucson area, this was expanded statewide through

contact with probation departments and the provided contacts for additional agencies

outside of Tucson. Incoming responses were prolonged, at a rate of approximately two

per week initially, which necessitated the expansion beyond Tucson. In addition to

probation referrals to agencies, contacts were made within the Department of Child

Safety, which was also able to provide potential participants with flyers for the survey.

This was not initially identified as an avenue to pool participants as it was unknown to

me then.

Additionally, the data collected were initially projected to need a sample size of

100 participants but were determined to be sufficient at 62 when the analysis was

conducted. As such, the existing sample size for this study may be used to provide insight into the EQ and SE of individuals who have completed a DV intervention program but may not be indicative of the population as a whole. Due to me not being present when participants were provided the information for completing the survey, it is not easy to know what these individuals were told outside of the recruitment flyer.

## Descriptive Analysis of Sample

The online survey collected demographic information about gender, age, and race only. Both the SSEIT and the NGSES were scored on a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores for both reflecting a higher rate of EI or SE.

There was a total of $N = 60$ participants in this study. All participants were over 18 years old, as required by the initial proposal of the study. The reported racial backgrounds of the participants were Caucasian (48.3%), Latino/Latina (29.3%), and African American (8.6%). The independent variable for this study was gender, as reported. Of the recorded 60 surveys, three did not complete questions other than the consent form, so 58 respondents recorded a gender of male, female, nonbinary, or prefer not to say. Additionally, the primary reported gender of the respondents was female at 58.6%, while male respondents were 34.5% (Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Demographic Variables*

| Variable | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Gender | | |
|   Female | 34 | 58.6 |
|   Male | 20 | 34.5 |
|   Nonbinary | 1 | 1.7 |
|   Prefer not to say | 2 | 3.4 |
| | | |
| Ethnicity | | |
|   Caucasian | 28 | 48.3 |
|   African American | 5 | 8.6 |
|   Latino/Latina | 17 | 29.3 |
|   Other | 6 | 10.3 |
| | | |
| Age | | |
|   45–55 | 20 | 34.5 |
|   35–45 | 15 | 25.9 |
|   25–35 | 13 | 22.4 |
|   18–25 | 6 | 10.3 |
|   65+ | 3 | 5.2 |
| | | |
| Education Level | | |
|   High school graduate | 17 | 29.3 |
|   Some college | 14 | 24.1 |
|   Graduate school + | 14 | 24.1 |
|   4-year degree | 9 | 15.5 |
|   Less than high school | 3 | 5.2 |
| | | |
| Relationship Status | | |
|   Married | 27 | 46.6 |
|   Single | 22 | 37.9 |
|   Divorced | 6 | 10.3 |
|   Separated | 2 | 3.4 |

**Data Analysis**

**Chi-Squared Tests**

Drawing from the methodological literature review outlined in Chapter 3, $x^2$ tests were deemed appropriate for investigating the three research questions or testing the hypotheses, as explained below. Initially, despite the empirical data being gathered through independent random samplings, which were not imperative for inference, the significance of the *p*-values was pivotal in discerning whether the associations strayed from those anticipated by random chance. Once the data were collected, it was determined that the data were stable and represented the population of individuals who have completed a DV for offenders' intervention program. The chi-squared test was supported because this study focused on posttreatment self-reports rather than a pre- and posttreatment comparison. Finally, the dependent variable (DV) and the independent variables (IVs) were clearly defined in the research questions and hypotheses, suggesting an examination of the association between them. Hence, the outcomes hold significance as the chi-square test gauges disparities between the observed and anticipated data. Consequently, the chi-squared test was apt for addressing the research questions and hypotheses.

Chi-squared tests were performed to evaluate the relationship between EI and gender. The test statistics were determined not to be statistically significant ($p < .001$) (Table 3), which failed to reject the following null hypothesis:

*H1*:    There is a significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

**Table 3**

*Emotional Intelligence and Gender*

|  | Value | df | Asymptotic significance (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson chi-square | 113.896 [a] | 102 | .198 |
| Likelihood ratio | 61.424 | 102 | 1.000 |
| Linear-by-linear association | 1.020 | 1 | .312 |
| *N* of valid cases | 49 |  |  |

[a] 140 cells (100.0%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

A chi-squared test was conducted to evaluate the association between gender and SE. This test also found no statistically significant relationship between gender and SE, with $x^2$ - .010, $p > .001$ (Table 4). Although the association is stronger than the relationship between gender and EI, it fails to support the hypothesis of a statistically significant relationship. This failed to reject the second null hypothesis:

*H*1:  There is a significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

**Table 4**

*Self-Efficacy and Gender*

|  | Value | *df* | Asymptotic significance (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson chi-square | 77.492 [a] | 51 | .010 |
| Likelihood ratio | 37.406 | 51 | .922 |
| Linear-by-linear association | 2.433 | 1 | .119 |
| *N* of valid cases | 54 |  |  |

a 71 cells (98.6%) have an expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is

.02.

**Standard Multiple Regression Model**

A standard multiple regression model assessed the relationship between EI and

SE, with SE as the dependent variable and EI as the independent variable. Due to both

measurements being nominal scales, it was determined that this was the most beneficial

analysis model compared to a linear regression. Both variables were measured via

instruments directed at the self-reported perception of respondents. The measures were

calculated using the total score of both instruments, respectively. As this study did not

focus on each dimension of the SSEIT individually (appraisal and expression of emotion,

regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion), the overall score was calculated. Three

of the questions from the SSEIT required reverse coding, which was also completed

before calculating the overall score. The overall scores on the NGSES were calculated

based on the cumulative total, as directed by the instrument developer.

First, a multiple linear regression was conducted to compare EI and SE scale

variables. The resulting $F$-ratio indicates that the regression model fits the data

satisfactorily). Table 5 shows that EI statistically predicts SE, with $F(1,46) = 28.036$, $p <$

.001.

**Table 5**

*Multiple Regression Model to Predict Self-Efficacy*

| Model | | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 313.424 | 1 | 313.424 | 28.036 | < .001 [b] |
| | Residual | 514.243 | 46 | 11.179 | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total | 827.667 | 47 |

a Dependent variable: Self-efficacy. b Predictors: (Constant), emotional intelligence.

Additionally, as seen in Table 6, the coefficients are statistically significant from 0, with $t = 5.295$ and $p < .001$. Therefore, the regression and ANOVA indicate that EI can be considered a predictor of SE.

**Table 6**

*Multiple Regression Model to Predict Self-Efficacy (B)*

| Model | | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | Beta | $t$ | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 8.800 | 4.424 | | 1.989 | .053 |
| | Emotional intelligence | .185 | .035 | .615 | 5.295 | $< .001$ |

a Dependent variable: self-efficacy.

A final regression was conducted to assess the probability of gender and EI to predict SE. As depicted in Table 7, the analysis rendered results explaining that EI is statistically significant about SE with $t = 5.039$, $p < .001$. However, the analysis does not support the hypothesis that gender can be considered a statistically significant predictor of SE with $t = -1.234$, $p = .224$.

**Table 7**

*Emotional Intelligence and Gender as Predictors of Self-Efficacy*

| Model | | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. error | Beta | $t$ | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 11.735 | 5.001 | | 2.346 | .023 |
| | Emotional intelligence | .177 | .035 | .591 | 5.039 | $< .001$ |

| | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sex | -.817 | .663 | -.145 | -1.234 | .224 |

[a] Dependent variable: self-efficacy.

## Summary

This study examined the relationship between EI, gender, and SE. There were three research questions and hypotheses addressed:

RQ1:   Is there a relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

H1: There is a significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

H2: There is no significant relationship between EI and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ 2. Is there a relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

H2: There is no significant relationship between gender and EI in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

RQ 3: Is there a relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program?

H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

H2: There is no significant relationship between gender and SE in DV offenders who have completed an intervention program.

Multiple linear regressions and chi-squared tests were conducted to test each of these null hypotheses. Regarding the first hypothesis, a multiple linear regression provided statistical support (p<.001), indicating a statistically significant relationship between the two variables. The analysis further indicated that $B_1$=.185, meaning that for every increase in EI, there is a corresponding increase in SE.

A chi-squared test addressed the second hypothesis, which resulted in results indicating that gender is not a significant predictor of EI. This test also found no statistically significant relationship between gender and EI, with $x^2$-.198, *p*>.001. The results from this test failed to reject the null hypothesis for this research question, indicating no statistically significant relationship between gender and EI.

The final research question was addressed using a second chi-squared test. This test also indicated no statistical relationship between gender and SE, with x2=.010. p> .001. Considering the results from both chi-squared tests, there is a statistically supported inference that gender is not a strong predictor of EI or SE.

A final multiple regression was also conducted to assess whether gender and EI act as predictors for SE. This regression further supported the failure to reject both null hypotheses regarding SE predictors. The results for this regression indicated that while EI does have a strong statistical relationship to SE, gender does not.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

**Introduction**

This quantitative comparative study aimed to explore the relationship between EI and SE as compared to gender in individuals who have completed a DVOIP. The study was conducted based on primary data collected from participants who had completed an intervention program. Initially focused within the Tucson, AZ, area but required expansion to gather enough data. SPSS software was used to conduct the data analysis testing on the firsthand data. Evidence was utilized through multiple linear regression analysis to tackle three research inquiries and substantiate three accompanying hypotheses. Additionally, chi-square tests for independence were conducted to juxtapose observed outcomes against expected outcomes. The results indicated that gender is not a significant predictor for either EI or SE; however, it was found that EI is a predictor for SE.

**Interpretation of the Findings**

This study was motivated by the lack of information about DV offenders and EI or SE. The extensive research of past and current literature indicated that there had been more studies focused on victims after incidents of DV and how their EI can directly relate to their feelings of SE. However, there was a lack of information about offenders and how this could contribute to reducing DV in the future. The primary focus of research on offenders was historical experiences of violence in their upbringing, their feelings of inadequacy prior to the event, and the need for buy-in of the offenders in treatment. For this reason, in this study, EI, SE, and gender were determined to be the key components

requiring additional investigation. Additionally, there is very little information focusing on whether gender influences the EI or SE of the individuals completing intervention programs, thereby supporting the focus of this study.

The analyses conducted on the participant's SE related to EI and gender separately and combined confirm that gender is not a predictor of SE; however, EI is. Despite previous research indicating that gender is a significant predictor of EI, the results from this study indicate that the same assumptions cannot be supported for SE. A large body of research about individuals involved in DV situations focuses primarily on the victims and their ability to cope with the trauma of what they have been involved in. The EIT focuses on individuals' ability to regulate emotions and behaviors (Goleman, 2001). Within this theory, in the context of this study, if an individual can increase their EI through some form of treatment, they should also be increasing their feelings of being able to face challenges. This study's premise focuses on SE being increased as EI increases.

Results from this study challenge the assumption that gender directly impacts EI and, therefore, SE. Previous research has indicated a significant difference between men and women and their ability to manage emotions, therefore supporting the assumption that gender directly predicts both EI and SE. This study's results indicate no direct relationship between gender and either EI or SE. This can indicate that both men and women can increase their EI without impacting their SE, but it could also indicate that while increasing EI, both genders can change their SE. The results also indicate that EI is a predictor of SE, supporting the previously mentioned assumption that as EI increases,

so does SE. Based on the results, this could be interpreted as being the beginning of reducing DV incidence in the future by increasing the individual's ability to understand their own emotions and the emotions of others and to believe in their ability to manage their emotions without violence.

## Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted in Southern Arizona, specifically in an area closer to the border with Mexico, where the Latino population is higher. The demographic composition is notably different from that observed in the eastern and northern regions of the country. However, the ethnic profile predominantly comprises other racial groups within the state, particularly African Americans and Caucasians. This region was chosen because of my location, so it must be considered a limitation. The results cannot be generalized to the rest of Arizona or the United States.

Additionally, due to the anonymous nature of the data collected, combined with the quantitative focus of the study, there is no possibility of follow-up with participants for additional information. This restricts the results to the constraints of the study and limits the inferences and applications of the results. Finally, the limitations of this study remain the size of the sample population and its comparative size relative to the overall population. The original sample was estimated to be required to be approximately 300 participants, but due to challenges with data collection, the sample size was smaller than that ($n = 62$). While the data collected could render statistically significant results from which to conclude, future research would require larger sample sizes and sampling from more areas across the country.

**Recommendations**

Despite this current study being subject to several limitations and the low

reliability of the findings, it is still valid and indicative of further studies in the future.

While specific testing may ensure internal validity within the study, such as Bonferroni

tests to reduce the possibility of Type I errors when comparing gender and EI or SE; this

requires a much larger sample size. Additionally, it would benefit future studies to

explore more in-depth demographic information compared to EI and SE and how those

factors may influence the variables. Based on research conducted and outlined in Chapter

2, a study focused on female offenders would greatly benefit the body of research. There

is very little information about female DV offenders; however, most respondents for this

study were female. It is difficult to conclude for sure that women may be more willing to

discuss their abusive behaviors. However, due to the lack of historical information, the

results of this study indicate there may be a significant area of research for future studies

about the female population.

**Implications**

The conclusions reached in this study pose implications for both further research

and social change surrounding the treatment of DV offenders. Understanding how EI, and

a lack thereof, impacts an individual's ability to regulate and express their emotions can

significantly assist in developing more effective treatment in the future. For everyone

who finds treatment helpful in increasing their EI and, thereby, their SE, there is the

potential for decreasing future DV in the household. This increase in personal

understanding of their emotions and how to manage them could potentially lead to

teaching future generations the same skills and understanding and affect the community by reducing not only DV but also other forms of violence and aggression. EIT also supports the possibility that this increase in understanding impacts the community through the decreased ability to harm others when individuals can better understand themselves.

DV is an ongoing social problem affecting many individuals and families negatively. Southern Arizona is no exception to this and remains a place for social change. DV does not discriminate between genders, racial backgrounds, or socioeconomic standing. This study has provided valuable results indicating that there is the possibility for development or improvement in how offenders are treated and how a focus not just on how their abusive behaviors affect their victims but also on how increasing the understanding and management of their own emotions can lead to a decreased ability to engage in abusive behaviors. Applying more of a focus on increasing EI and identifying ways those individuals in treatment can effectively apply the lessons being taught may lead to an overall decrease in DV in the future.

## Conclusion

There is no simple solution to the societal problem of DV. It is a problem that transcends gender, racial background, education, and social standing. This research study has provided insight into how increasing EI can contribute to possibly decreasing DV on an individual level, expanding to a societal level. Specific findings presented in this study diverge from the initially anticipated expectations, suggesting a need to dispense with all preconceived notions of how DV is currently treated punitively instead of as a lack of

knowledge and understanding. Implementing treatment focused more on increasing the

offender's understanding of their own emotions and those of their victims or even simply

people in their lives, which could impact their future propensity to engage in aggressive

or abusive behaviors. While this study was not directly focused on the treatment

programs, the results imply that increasing a focus on the development of EI and,

thereby, SE can directly influence a reduction in DV.

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Appendix A: Demographic Questionnaire

<div align="right">ID #_____</div>

## Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions as they pertain to you by marking the box next to the appropriate answer.

**Ethnicity**
- ☐ African-American
- ☐ Caucasian
- ☐ Latino
- ☐ Other

**Gender Identification**
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ I would rather not say

**Age**
- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 25-35
- ☐ 35-45
- ☐ 45-55
- ☐ 55-65
- ☐ 65+

**Education Level**
- ☐ Less than high school
- ☐ Some high school
- ☐ High school diploma/ GED
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ 4-year degree
- ☐ Graduate school and beyond

**Relationship Status**
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Single
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Separated