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The Emotional Intelligence of Successful African American Entrepreneurs

Breanna Johnson
Walden University

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Breanna Johnson

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Review Committee
Dr. Richard Schuttler, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty
Dr. Kerry Mitchell, Committee Member, Management Faculty
Dr. Anton Camarota, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

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Abstract

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MBA, Keller Graduate School, 2014

BS, DeVry University, 2012

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Leadership and Organizational Change

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Abstract

African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, lack the emotional intelligence required to be self-employed and remain in business. The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a robust understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs can adopt to increase emotional intelligence, which will aid them in remaining in business beyond the first 5 years. The central research question focused on common understandings of the strategies African-American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, adopt to increase their emotional intelligence such that it contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial 5 years. The conceptual framework that grounded the study was the emotional intelligence theory. Data were collected from semi-structured interviews with a purposeful sample consisting of 15 African American entrepreneurs from Houston, TX who have been in business for a minimum of 5 years. The interviews consisted of open-ended questions. A thematic analysis was conducted on 15 interviews. Eight themes were developed from the data analysis: emotional intelligence, leadership styles, emotional reactions, maturity level, training, business sustainability, communication, and flexibility. Consistent emotional intelligence training emerged as useful in African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability. The potential implications for positive social change stem from African American entrepreneurs developing more sustainable organizations. The findings of this study may be used by stakeholders and organizational leaders to provide the opportunity to build more emotionally intelligent organization.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to almighty God for guiding me during the entire duration of this doctoral program. I would also like to thank my husband, Calvin Johnson, and my children, Sidney, Skyler, and Caleb for being a constant motivation and reminder of why I started this journey. Lastly, to my parents, Deborah and Wilbert Allums, for being there for me throughout my entire academic journey. Thank you so much for your support, encouragement, and prayers, which sustained me during the entire doctoral journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Entrepreneurship is a dominant force for creating wealth, enhancing the economy, and bringing about innovation in not just the United States, but the world (Glaeser, Kerr, & Kerr, 2015). The African American population is one of the fastest growing entrepreneurial groups in the United States, increasing at a rate of 9% (Alsaaty, 2013). However, the primary downside for all business owners is sustaining a new business (Mora & Dávila, 2014). This challenge is more prevalent in the African American entrepreneur community. Researchers have shown that African American entrepreneurs have the capabilities to have a positive impact on the U.S. economy by ameliorating social negatives such as unemployment, poverty, and crime (Crump, Singh, Wilbon, & Gibbs, 2015).

It is beneficial to explore cases and strategies that have supported business sustainability in the ever-changing business environment (Reuben & Queen, 2015). Doing so can create a foundation for future research. From interviews, I gained a shared understanding of experiences and strategies of African American entrepreneurs who have been successful past the first 5 years to identify common themes associated with their leadership styles and levels of emotional intelligence. Leaders and educators from many industries may consider the findings of this study a valuable addition to the existing body of knowledge regarding entrepreneurship and emotional intelligence (Ma, Zhao, Wong, & Lee, 2013). Consequently, the findings of this study will be incorporated into future teachings and business practices to promote sustainability in minority entrepreneurship.

Chapter 1 includes the background of African American entrepreneurship, problem statement, purpose of the study, research question, and significance of the study. Qualitative researchers who have conducted studies on emotional intelligence have concluded that taking a more structured approach to being aware of one's own emotions and reactions can contribute to business success (Savel & Munro, 2016). Individuals engaging in business activities without the support of a structured emotional intelligence approach are a concern because they do not possess the tools to achieve sustainability.

Background of the Study

Historically, African American success in business stemmed from tailoring the enterprise to the needs of their own African American communities. In the early 1900s, African American entrepreneurs such as Booker T. Washington firmly believed that the more African Americans who owned a business, the more likely an increase in African American economic power would occur (Boyd, 1991). This economic power started to come into fruition when the African American community moved south post World War II. Legislators passed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, that helped lead to some of America's largest African American-owned businesses produced revenues of over $473.4 million in 1972.

Following those gains, the Small Business Innovation Development Act of 1981 was able to aid African American business owners in securing federal contracts in 1981 (Boston, 1999). Although this was a step in a positive direction, the profits secured by African American businesses were never comparable to those of other race groups by only making up 11.3% of the revenue. African American owned businesses demonstrated

the worst outcomes of all ethnic groups with a closure rate of 39% within the first four years of business (Fairlie & Robb, 2007).

Productions are all pillars of the African American business community. Feldman (2017) revealed that Black Enterprise, Radio One, and Harpo. However, while the success of those organizations should not go unacknowledged, these companies are an exception to a very alarming failure rate of minority owned businesses. By examining the interdependent relationships between African American business owners, emotional intelligence, and leadership styles, researchers have identified a need for more effective strategies to aid sustainability for African American-owned businesses (Miles, 2013). Leaders utilize emotional intelligence in developing viable leadership skills. Shinnar et al. (2013) stated that emotional intelligence has become a measure for recognizing effective leaders, and Dabke (2016) posited that emotional intelligence is a critical component in influencing leader performance. The development of emotional intelligence in African American entrepreneurs could therefore lead to increased business success. This study may result in social change by using the lived experiences of successful African American small business owners to help other African American entrepreneurs develop meaningful strategies to increase emotional intelligence and promote company sustainability.

The information in this study will assist African American entrepreneurs in identifying strategies that can mitigate obstacles critical to business sustainability and help them develop tools that lead to greater emotional intelligence. Emotional

intelligence is an essential factor for success in leadership in diverse working

environments.

Problem Statement

The general problem is that there is no formal emotional intelligence training used

by minority entrepreneurs in the United States; this lack of training contributes to a high

failure rate within the first 5 years of business (Bagshaw, 2000). This may be attributed to

a lack of awareness of the various trainings that are available. Minority entrepreneurs

have a failure rate of 88% in new business start-ups (Miles, 2013). Approximately 12%

of minority-owned businesses in the United States have remained in business beyond the

first 5 years (McManus, 2016). The specific problem is that some African American

entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, lack the emotional intelligence required to be self-

employed and remain in business beyond the first 5 years (Cronin, 2014). There has been

a lack of new research concerning the drastic drop of business that make it beyond the

first five years that contributes to approximately a 6% difference between general

business failures and those of African Americans. In this qualitative interview study, I

interviewed 15 African American entrepreneurs whose businesses have survived beyond

the initial 5 years.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a robust understanding

of what strategies African American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional

intelligence and remain in business beyond an initial 5 years in Houston, TX. By gaining

an in-depth understanding of the experiences of current minority entrepreneurs, the

failure gap for others in the future may be reduced. An in-depth understanding could aid new minority entrepreneurs to experience success. I purposely sampled 15 minority entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, with open-ended questions in semistructured interviews and gained a shared understanding of their levels of emotional intelligence and how emotional intelligence has impacted their success.

Research Question

RQ: What are the common understandings of the strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, adopt to increase their emotional intelligence such that it contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial 5 years?

Conceptual Framework

Choosing a conceptual framework involves developing significant research questions, selecting particular theories as they relate to the research topic, and connecting the RQs to the theories (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In this study, the conceptual basis was drawn from Salovey and Mayer's (1990) emotional intelligence theory. This theory was used to inform the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research question, and the interview questions I used to explore and understand the drastic drop in African American entrepreneurs and their business sustainability beyond the initial 5 years. Wagner (2013) believed that an in-depth understanding of emotional intelligence could influence an acknowledgment of its relations and effects. In this study, I explored emotional intelligence strategies that African American entrepreneurs can adopt to become more effective leaders. Goleman (1996) argued that emotional intelligence

managers are better able to resolve workplace adversities. Emotional intelligence aids leaders in handling more demanding leadership roles.

Besides the emotional intelligence theory, I also utilized Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) situational leadership model. I utilized the emotional intelligence theory when trying to understand that adequate and appropriate leadership is highly dependent on the situation. The foundation of this specific leadership model is that no one leadership style will be appropriate for every situation and circumstance. Finding the appropriate leadership style depends on a leader's emotional intelligence ability. Also, a successful leader has to be able to adapt when applying leadership as well as recognize the role that emotional intelligence has on the success of any particular leadership style. This study involved examining the various levels of emotional intelligence in minority entrepreneurs and assessing the influences that it has on the leadership styles and success of those individuals.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative research method used in this study. Park and Park (2016) asserted that qualitative methods focus on applied and theoretical findings based on research questions. The qualitative method was most suitable for this study because the central concept being explored was African American entrepreneurship, and the qualitative analysis method can provide an in-depth understanding of a case. The qualitative interviewing of the individuals helped to provide insights on events that I had never experienced. In qualitative studies, the researcher can create a depiction of complex processes from each separate interview (Turner, 2010).

Quantitative research was not an appropriate methodology for this study because quantitative research addresses a relational, causal, or predictive type of research question and deals with operationalization. The goal of quantitative research is to collect numerical data to explain a phenomenon (Ludwig & Johnston, 2016). The aim of this study was not to test the effect of an action or the relationship between two variables; also, there was not a hypothesis to be tested for acceptance or rejection. The aim was to reveal strategies that can be implemented by African American entrepreneurs in order to increase their emotional intelligence and their business sustainability.

The design of this study was a qualitative interview study. Edwards and Holland (2013) asserted that a qualitative interview study could help the interviewee, as well as the interviewer, learn more about a specific aspect of themselves and the other. This design was used to gain a robust common understanding of the relationship that emotional intelligence has with leadership styles and the success of African American entrepreneurs. The experiences and views of different African American entrepreneurs constituted qualitative data collected from open-ended questions in semistructured interviews. Qualitative interview studies allow a researcher to identify the commonalities between those interviewed to gain a deeper insight into the participants' experiences (McNamara, 1999). A qualitative interview study was the appropriate method of inquiry to aid in understanding the aspects of emotional intelligence development in African American entrepreneurship and the strategies used to foster that development.

I used the qualitative interview design to uncover the meanings of participants' experiences. The chosen approach was preferred over ethnography, phenomenology, and

the grounded theory approach. Ethnography was not suitable for this study because the study did not deal with the social behavior of the group but rather was an inquiry into the knowledge of emotional intelligence of African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX. Phenomenology was not suitable for the study as this approach is used to identify and report in depth the lived experiences of a common phenomenon for multiple individuals (Enger & Lajmodiere, 2011). Grounded theory was not suitable because the purpose of this study was not to create a new theory.

Definitions

African American business owner: An African American who holds 51% or more of stock interest, claims, or rights in a company (Smith & Tang, 2013).

Attachment theory: The behavioral theory of attachment states that the child becomes attached to the mother because she fed the infant (Cherry, Fletcher, and O'Sullivan, 2013).

Change management: Change management refers to the management of adjustments and development within a business or other organization (Gelaidan, Al-Swidi, and Mabkhot, 2017).

Creative leadership: Creative leadership refers to the development and realization of innovative ideas through the shared ambition of improving the world through enterprise formation (Sohmen, 2015).

Emotional intelligence: Emotional intelligence refers to a person's processing ability represented by five qualities: (a) being aware of emotions, (b) identifying own emotions, (c) identifying others' emotions, (d) managing own emotions, and (e)

expressing emotions adaptively, as measured by the Emotional Judgement Inventory (Rajagopalan, 2009, p.11)

Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur is a creator, owner, or perhaps manager of a small firm (Kovalainen & Osterberg-Hogstedt, 2013)

Self-awareness: Self-awareness is the ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment (Goleman, 2005).

Situational leadership: Situational leadership refers to when leaders or managers of an organization must adjust their style to fit the development level of the followers they are trying to influence (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

Social awareness: Being aware of the problems that different societies and communities face on a day-to-day basis and being conscious of the difficulties and hardships of society constitutes social awareness (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Business sustainability: Business sustainability refers to the condition of businesses that have survived a minimum of 4 years or more after the initial start-up phase (Raudeliūnienė, Tvaronavičienė, & Dzemyda, 2014).

Assumptions

An assumption is a statement that is a realistic expectation of something the researcher expects to be true but that is unverified (Burgos & Mertens, 2016). Therefore, assumptions have the potential to aid in developing and implementing the research process. The research study contained several assumptions. The first assumption was that the participants would answer the interview questions honestly. The second assumption was that the qualitative interview design was the appropriate design for the study. The

third assumption was that conducting the study in Houston was a large enough geographical area to provide data for the study. The final assumption was that the participants would have a sincere interest in participating.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The scope of the study provided the boundaries of the study (Giustina & Gianluca, 2014). In this study, the boundaries were a sample population of African American entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs were using their experiences and entrepreneurial skills to remain in business beyond the initial five years. The participants in this study were African American entrepreneurs from Houston, TX. The participants were asked a series of open-ended questions in semistructured interviews. In order to address transferability of the study, I offered a thorough explanation of the findings of this study as well as detailed descriptions that could potentially allow the readers and any further researchers to make informed decisions about the concerns of transferability of the findings to African American entrepreneurs who have remained in business beyond the first 5 years.

Delimitations are defined in research as the boundaries that specify the inclusions and exclusions of the study (Fan, 2013). As a result, delimitations can narrow the scope of the study. The first delimitation was the use of the small business category. The interview study consisted of multiple African American businesses that have been established and remained in business beyond the initial 5 years. The study was also delimited by the geographic area of the participants' ownership of the business being located in Houston, TX. I delimited the focus of the study to a business that demonstrated

sustainability beyond the first 5 years. Lastly, selecting only African American

entrepreneurs was a delimiting factor.

Limitations

Limitations of a study are focused on internal and external validity (Connelly,

2013). A potential limitation of a research study can include time restraints of the

interviews with the participants. Another limitation could be misinformation coming

from the participants due to lack of understanding of the purpose of the study. Participant

bias is also a concern in every study. I upheld the integrity and responsibility for

reporting any of these limitations that became present in this study.

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Significance of the Study

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This research was essential to understanding the content and context of emotional

intelligence needed to help future African American entrepreneurs remain in business

beyond the first 5 years, as well as to apply the behaviors and skills intended to create

value for African American entrepreneurs. McMansus (2016) believed that the high

African American entrepreneurial failure rate suggested that there is a societal need for

more efficient and prepared African American entrepreneurs to help provide innovative

solutions to many of the social needs and business problems. The need for emotional

intelligence is becoming vital to entrepreneurial success (Liu, 2012).

Significance to Practice

The results of the research could potentially be useful to scholar-practitioners and

researchers regarding the professional application of research findings as well as

recommending strategies that can be used in everyday activities for decreasing the

African American entrepreneurial failure rate. The results may lead to the generation of information for entrepreneurial skill training programs. The results may also be substantial for leaders of the community, region, state, or country at various levels of authority. The study may also show how a leader's commitment to understanding the competencies of emotional intelligence could lead to a creation of employment that can empower and motivate minority entrepreneurs to contribute to the national economic growth and entrepreneurial skill development. Lastly, the study may benefit the field of management by helping to develop a new theory that can assist organizations to more accurately address African American leadership styles and emotional intelligence development.

Significance to Theory

The existing literature on entrepreneurship has not included the lack of knowledge on the emotional intelligence required for self-employment in Houston, TX. The research findings from the study may reveal additional information regarding how African American entrepreneurs have used their emotional intelligence to become self-employed. Leadership scholars may find the information useful for a closer look at the emotional intelligence development as a means for resolving the minority entrepreneurs' failure rate and offering opportunities for growth and development. The results of this research may be beneficial to the management of educational institutions as they help leaders to identify and understand the differences in strategies amongst minority entrepreneurs versus nonminority businesspersons.

Significance to Social Change

The research findings from the study have a potential to impact positive social change in the lives of people of Houston, TX, because the data collected in the study could help to address the high failure rate of African American entrepreneurs in the small business sector in Houston, TX. The data can potentially help lead to a shift in paradigm as it may decrease the failure gap of minority entrepreneurs. Any new standard developed would help serve as an initiative towards the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitude.

Summary and Transition

Theorists believed that there is no best way to lead. Emotionally intelligent leaders possess individual strengths such as self-awareness, ability to manage emotions, ability to motivate others, and empathy. A combination of emotional intelligence and the appropriate leadership styles can be utilized to create a sustainable business environment.

The goal of this study was to add insight to African American entrepreneurship by attempting to understand the correlation between emotional intelligence and appropriate leadership styles in an entrepreneurial environment. An assessment of entrepreneurs' leadership styles has the potential to increase the entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence, which could aid them in handling diverse critical situations and increase the overall sustainability of the organization. Organizational sustainability may improve due to the entrepreneurs' ability to deconstruct the needs of employees, which could lead, in part, to more effective decision making.

In Chapter 1, I presented an overview of the study including the theoretical support for the current research. Evidence from the literature validated the need for an investigation into entrepreneurs' emotional intelligence and appropriate leadership styles. The literature review in Chapter 2 enhances the reader's understanding of concepts that were presented in Chapter 1. Research presented in the literature review clarifies the impact of emotional intelligence and leadership styles on business sustainability.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review was a critical essay of synthesized ideas concerning organizational leadership styles and emotional intelligence. Various leadership styles were evaluated and compared against other viewpoints. Several leadership methods were explored in order to give a clearer view of different interpretations of leadership. Viewpoints on how a manager's leadership style can potentially have a relationship with emotional intelligence were examined as well.

Sources for this study were located in several databases with substantial differences being found in a combination of the key words: *emotional intelligence, leadership styles, entrepreneurship, situational leadership, change management, attachment theory,* and *creative leadership*. The following databases were searched for this literature review: Academic Search Premier, Business Source Complete, ABI/Inform Collection, and ProQuest.

The literature search for references on increasing emotional intelligence in African American entrepreneurs indicated this was not a frequently explored concept. Simple searches of peer-reviewed journals and articles evolved into searches across a broad range of topics. *Emotional intelligence, leadership styles, attachment theory, situational leadership theory,* and *entrepreneurship* were terms and topics researched. This chapter includes the specific problem and the purpose of the research, the literature search strategy, theoretical and conceptual foundations, and a review of historical and recent literature relevant to emotional intelligence and leadership styles of African American entrepreneurs.

The intent of this qualitative interview study was to explore what level of emotional intelligence and leadership styles were needed for African American entrepreneurs to remain in business beyond the initial 5 years. Emotional intelligence and leadership styles that positively impact performance and sustainability were explored through a qualitative interview method and design by studying entrepreneurship in African American owned small businesses in Houston, TX. Appropriate levels of emotional intelligence and leadership styles provide African American entrepreneurs with the tools and strategies to have a positive influence on sustainability, which may reduce African American business failure rates (Furlan, Grandenetti, & Paggiaro, 2014).

Existing literature pertaining to entrepreneurship has failed to include knowledge on the emotional intelligence necessary to be self-employed in Houston, TX. The findings of this study revealed additional information regarding how African American entrepreneurs have used emotional intelligence to become self-employed. Scholars of leadership may find the data useful for a closer look at emotional intelligence development as a resource to resolving the minority entrepreneurs' failure rate and suggesting a new perspective for growth and development. The results of this research will be beneficial to the management of educational institutions as it helps leaders to identify and understand the differences in strategies amongst minority entrepreneurs versus nonminority businesspersons.

Literature Search Strategy

Building on the steps recommended by Rubin, Rubin, Piele, and Haridakis (2010), I used the following six steps in the literature search for this study.

1. Identify types of required sources.

2. Leverage networks of specialized professionals to expand access to data
   sources.

3. Select specific databases and sources.

4. Develop and conduct iterative key word and phrase searches.

5. Cross-reference standard primary sources.

6. Select, evaluate, and summarize sources.

Conceptual Framework

The definition of emotional intelligence is having an understanding of how the consequences of our actions have an effect on ourselves and people around us (Tapia, 2001). The primary conceptual base for this study was Salovey and Mayer's (1990) emotional intelligence theory. The scope of the emotional intelligence theory involves understanding the influence that appropriate leadership styles can have on a situation. Emotions are the responses to an event (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). Emotions may dictate how people interact with one another. The concept of emotional intelligence involves an individual's ability to identify emotions as well as identify the situation or circumstances from which the emotions originally stemmed (Mayer et al., 2016). The entrepreneurial world introduces many instances that can be identified as diverse or complex. In such cases, self-awareness of emotions can allow a person to more effectively manage the situation. Researchers such as Simmons and Simmons (1997) had done extensive research on the characteristics of emotional intelligence and as a result created the Simmons Personal Survey. The survey is a self-examination of emotional

intelligence. The survey provides insight into a person's approach to change and risk-taking.

Emotional intelligence was also referred to as heart-based leadership by many researchers. Emotional intelligence research continues to serve the purpose of exploring the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness. Baesu and Bejinaru (2015) argued that the values of an organization are found in the employees. The level of emotional intelligence helps a leader to think more positively, which devolves to the employees. Leaders also have a variety of options on their chosen leadership style based on personality traits. Cabello, Sorrel, Fernandez-Pinto, Extemera, and Fernandez-Berrocal (2016) measured emotional intelligence ability by using the Mayer-Salovey Emotional Intelligence Test. The authors then took those results and explored the differences between men and women. The conclusion of the cross-sectional study revealed that both gender and age influence emotional intelligence ability during aging.

Literature Review

Tyler (2015) highlighted the works of Goleman in the article "What Makes a Leader." In this article, he described the five components of emotional intelligence. These components include self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. Tyler outlined the effect of training on the emotional intelligence program participants. Tyler compared the emotional intelligence of PLA graduates and pharmacists just entering the program. The emotional intelligence of participants was assessed in five domains: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal skills, decision

making, and stress management. The results revealed that graduates had higher levels of emotional intelligence than nongraduates.

Ackley (2016) discussed the evolution of emotional intelligence over the past 25 years. Three of the most popular models were compared and contrasted as well as the assessment tools used to measure each model. The author also presented sample applications of emotional intelligence such as in the workplace and in personal interactions. From the study, Ackley was able to conclude that emotional intelligence can be increased and does not remain stagnant based on your experiences and what you learn from the experiences of others. Ackley believed that emotional intelligence will be a powerful tool in delivering psychological expertise in many forms to organizations. The research presented in the article was valid and reliable because it supported a wide range of emotional intelligence aspects.

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in stress reduction, performance enhancement, and an improvement in strategic capabilities. Ghosh and Rajaram (2015) found that 75% of business success is driven by emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is considered to be a requirement in today's chaotic business environment. Ghosh and Rajaram were looking to prove the hypothesis that emotional intelligence influences entrepreneurial skills such as decision making, motivation, leadership, risk-taking, and creative abilities. The authors also found that entrepreneurship is a major catalyst in economic development. The authors were able to use the results to show that there is a significant influence of emotional intelligence in entrepreneurial abilities. The

findings helped to develop a possible route towards the use of emotional and psychological abilities of entrepreneurs in entrepreneurship development.

Emotional intelligence plays a major role in leadership effectiveness. In one study, Dabke (2016) focused on the relationship between performance-based emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. The data was collected from 200 managers who were given the Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test. The author then performed a Pearson correlation in order to reveal a significant relationship. The results showed that emotional intelligence did not emerge as a predictor of leadership effectiveness. The author also presented a review of past literature pertaining to emotional intelligence. In relation to transformational leadership, the author believed that high emotional intelligence indicated the presence of a transformational leader. Dabke presented four different hypotheses. All of these were geared towards examining the relationship between performance-based emotional intelligence and transformational leadership.

There are three categories of leadership qualities in business: (a) translating company goals into sharable visions, (b) knowing how to influence employees to share those visions, and (c) motivating followers to work together to build the visions. Wagner (2002) provided a qualitative study of the impacts of emotional intelligence on leadership styles. Wagner used items such as Stogdill's Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire and the Bass and Avolio Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire in order to measure effective leadership. The author formed a measurement model to establish casual connections. Additionally, the author compared leadership measurements. The

researchers on emotional intelligence found that it enhances intellectual stimulation. The author discovered that leadership can be defined as goal-oriented, influence-oriented, vision-oriented, and coordination-oriented. This study is relevant to the current research because it defined the impact of effective leadership and identified which other abilities might be important. Wagner acknowledged that emotional intelligence and motivation have to be measured in order to understand irrelations and effects. In discussing effective leadership, Wagner explained that personal vision and external relations are skills needed to formulate the company's vision. This piece is useful to entrepreneurs as it discusses the necessary skills needed to successfully improve leadership effectiveness. However, more information should have been provided to determine how this changes based on demographics.

Relationship Management

The people who utilize emotional intelligence have the ability to manage emotions of others through restraint and understanding (Goleman, 2005). In order to have the capability of managing the emotions of others, a person must establish the precedent through daily interactions. When there are instances of conflict or opposing viewpoints, a manager who is aware of how to manage relationships will find it easier to direct and reinforce the behavior of others. Fehr, Herz, and Wilkening (2013) explained the role that authority and power have in the political, social, and economic spectrums of life. The authors studied the incentives that motivate employees and what drives them to put effort into their tasks at work and found a gap in the literature.

There are many aspects and characteristics to being an effective leader. Fehr et al. (2013) described a theoretical motivation where a four-stage game is used. The model of authority that was developed by Aghion and Tirole (1997) highlighted the hierarchical structure of an organization and how the principal and agent relationship affects decision rights. The first stage includes the leader choosing to maintain all decision making rights or assigning them to a specific person or group. The second stage is where both parties come together and gather information. The third stage includes the subordinate suggesting a plan for moving forward. The last stage is when the leader implements the plan. The results suggested that the leader or authority has a direct effect on motivation. The authors also determined that genuine distaste for being overruled is a substantial determinant of the desire to retain control. The results of the study support the notion that how a person leads and uses the power that they have can have a direct impact on the relationships that are upheld in the organization. In other words, how power and authority are used not only reflects on how emotionally intelligent a leader is, but also has implications for the longevity of the business as a whole.

Social Awareness

The definition of empathy is the ability to comprehend someone else's feelings and re-experience those emotions for themselves (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The more in tune an individual is with his/her own feelings, the easier it is to have empathy for the circumstances of others. Also, understanding the emotions of others helps to create bonds amongst personnel, which can result in a more productive work environment. In the instance of having numerous emotionally intelligent people together, Salovey and Mayer

(1990) believed that these individuals will have a better chance of empathetic and supportive. Goleman (2005) suggested that a person's nonverbal expressions such as tone of voice, gesture, and facial expressions can help you to read an individual.

Self-Awareness

The ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is defined as self-awareness (Goleman, 2005). It is responsible to assume that someone's emotions can be revealed by simply observing someone. However, through monitoring of those emotions may reveal otherwise. Individuals can become overwhelmed by their emotions and feel helpless to escape them, causing them to remain in a situation with anxiety, anger, and depression. Goleman (2005) believed that a person who is self-aware is able to handle his/her emotions in order to be independent, and display a positive demeanor regarding life. Effective leaders assess their emotional abilities and accept constructive criticism which builds confidence and gives them a better outlook on their capabilities.

Situational Leadership Model

Situational leadership theory was originally referred to as the "Life Cycle Theory of Leadership" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977). The change stemmed from relabeling follower maturity, willingness and commitment, and ability. Past research revealed that leaders play a significant role in the overall situational leadership theory proposes the idea that an effective leader must possess a rational understanding of a given situation as well as an appropriate response to the situation (McClesky, 2014). The situational leadership model transpired from the task-oriented versus people-oriented continuum. The roles of leadership overlap and are not always as clear as they appear to be. Over the

past few decades, there has been a shift from a hierarchical organizational structure to an open leadership model. There had been a very lively debate in regards to the evolution of management (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

The basis of the situational leadership model supports the fact that the maturity of an employee will dictate the type of power base a leader will need. Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) developed the model and utilized it when trying to understand that effective and appropriate leadership is highly dependent on the situation. The foundation of this specific leadership model is that appropriate leadership styles are circumstantial. Also, a successful leader has to be able to adapt when applying leadership and recognize the role that emotional intelligence plays in choosing the appropriate leadership style to address a specific circumstance. This study will involve examining emotional intelligence in minority entrepreneurs and assessing the influences that it has on the leadership styles and success of those individuals. The situational leadership theory (SLT) advocates for the need to vary your leadership style based on the skills and abilities of the subordinates (Chaneski, 2016). The SLT consists of four different leadership styles. The four styles illustrated as directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. The directing style includes high directive and low supportive behavior. The coaching style includes highly directive and highly supportive behaviors. The supporting style includes highly supportive and low directive behavior.

Lerstrom (2008) explored the situational leadership model being used in academic advising sessions. The author argued that the leadership style of an effective leader has to match the maturity level of the followers. The results of the case study revealed that as

students were developing confidence in their abilities, the advisor could focus on more pressing issues and be more direct with the students. Smith (2013) discussed a study were the situational leadership model would be applied to police officer field training. The situational approach was applied based on the directive and supportive behavior of a field training officer.

A facet of the situational leadership model is the transformational and transactional leadership styles. Both of these leadership styles are associated with various organizational outcomes. These outcomes include satisfaction at work, commitment to work, and productivity (Rodriguez & Ferrera, 2015). Any of these types of behaviors can be described as individual discretionary acts that may not necessarily be acknowledged by the organization's reward system. The core characteristics of a transactional leader are one who clarifies goals and displays rewards and punishments associated with the achievement of these goals. Rodriguez and Ferrera (2015) discussed a study that predicts the organizational citizenship behaviors. However, transformational leadership focuses on the individual needs of the subordinate and also encourages them to target their interest and aspirations towards the organization's goals.

Attachment Theory

Cherry et al.(2013) used the attachment theory for the study of emotional regulation. An individuals' attachment style is developed during early childhood. An attachment style can be simply defined as the emotional bond between individuals based on the expectation that both members can provide the need of the other. Attachment styles can trickle into adulthood and can exhibit various patterns such as generalized

thoughts, feelings, and expectations. There are two levels of the attachment theory: attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance. An individual's emotional intelligence influences their ability or inability to communicate effectively. In other words, it is safe to conclude that individuals with higher emotional intelligence portray appropriate emotional reactions in comparison to someone with low emotional intelligence.

There are four dimensions of the attachment theory that are very central issues to the topic (Groh, Fearon, Van IJzendoom, Bakermons- Kranenburg, & Roisman, 2017). The first central issue is the role that the environment has on attachment. The second central issues are the patterns that attachment can create. The third central issue is the stability of the attachment patterns. The last central issue is how attachment affects someone's ability to adjust. Since the discovery of the attachment theory by Bowlby (1969) there was an increased interest in the role that attachment has on describing and interpreting phenomena in the work environment. Scrima, Di Stefano, Guarnaccia, & Lorito (2017) believed that there are strategies and methods that can be used to adjust the attachment styles of an individual. Place attachment can be described as an effective bond or link between people and specific places.

There are four different adult attachment styles which are secure, preoccupied, dismissing, and fearful attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). The attachment theory is known as the best-established framework in regards to interpersonal relationships (Berson et al., 2006). Attachment styles have an effect on every relationship that a person can engage in, including work relationships.

Change Management

Gelaidan et al. (2017) argued that an effective leader exercises change management to achieve the required organizational results. Leadership plays a vital role in organizational change and sustainability. Effective leader's behavior has the ability to direct and determine employees' attitudes towards the success of the organization. This notion connects directly with emotional intelligence. A leader needs to possess the ability to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Any organization is ultimately looking for breakthrough results. These types of results can take on many forms. Some examples include: greater profitability, increased market share, faster cycle times, improved customer satisfaction, and enhanced product innovation (Anderson & Ackerman, 2010). The most beneficial thing a leader should put their energy towards would be leading change. This can lead to financial and cultural benefits that ultimately have a positive impact on the sustainability of the business.

There are various levels of success based off of the changes that occur within the organization. To increase the level of success a change strategy must be produced alongside a process plan to match these efforts. It is apparent that change does not just happen. There are particular drivers of change that establish a context for the change to actually happen. Anderson and Ackerman (2010) listed the drivers of change as follows:

- Environment
- Marketplace requirements for success
- Business imperatives
- Organizational imperatives

- Leader and employee behavior

- Leader and employee mindset

Some of the challenges to organizational change is that the leader and/or employees can be highly resistant to it. There are two ways for change behavior to be conducted. One way is through informational strategies or a change to the structure where the behavior takes place (Gifford, Kormos, & McIntyre, 2011).

Traditional Models of Change

Traditional models of change take a "top down" approach. The ultimate goal of these models was to develop skills that would aid in identifying, planning, and implementing service improvement. As a result, this can increase networking opportunities and boost personal and professional development.

Lewin's model of change. Lewins (1950) created the original model of change. Lewin identified aspects that generate change such as external factors, internal factors, economic factors, and social factors (Angel-Sveda, 2012). These ideas stemmed from the belief that every individual has certain preferences that they act within. This can be called their "zones of safety". The process of change includes three stages. The first stage of change is unfreeze. This is where individuals consciously and unconsciously resist change. Motivational tactics must be used to get an individual past this stage. The next stage of change is transition, where an individual or organization is learning to adapt to a new way of thinking and responding to change. Refreeze is the final stage of change where the individuals or organization is now operating from the new way of thinking.

Lewin believed that change is a active balance of strengths. One side puts pressure on change and the other determines the resistance to change.

McKinsey 7-S model. Waterman, Peters, and Philips (1980) created a model that took a more universal approach to change. The McKinsey 7-S model included 7 factors that work collectively to contribute to change. These 7 factors include: skills, staff, style, systems, strategy, and shared values. The model suggests that all seven parts should be addressed simultaneously. This model also provides a method on how to identify issues and understand how the organization can move forward.

Kotter 8 step change model. The 8 step model was created by Kotter (1995). This model challenged employees to support change after leadership convinces them that the change is necessary. The 8 steps of change include:

1. Increase the necessity for change.

2. Build a team committed to change.

3. Generate a vision for change.

4. Empower staff with the skills to change.

5. Create short term goals.

6. Stay determined.

7. Make the change permanent.

This model will be utilized in order to provide a gradual approach to change. This focus is not directed at the actual change but on the preparation and acceptance of change.

Leading Edge Models

      SWOT model. The SWOT model is a framework used for analyzing internal and external factors, opportunities, and threats in an organization. The SWOT model is used to assist managers in creating strategies that aid the organization in coping with internal and external factors that they are consistently encountered (Bell & Richford, 2016). As the business environment became more complex, the SWOT model shifted to a series of checklists. Unfortunately, the SWOT has lost its ability to reveal relationships between internal and external factors. Managers' behaviors and thoughts can be drastically altered once a thorough understanding of the SWOT analysis occurs. Once a grasp is made, it is difficult for a manager to go back to their old way of thinking and behaving. Hopefully, this new found understanding will uncover unseen relationships that were overlooked previously.

<p style="text-align:center;">Leadership Theory</p>

      Traditional views of leadership have become less and less useful when considering the complexities of the modern world. Modern-day leadership theories challenge organizations to become more adaptive as well as develop new perspectives as it relates to the needs of the organization. There have been many systems, practices, and strategies proposed in order to address the constant evolution of organizational performance. Leadership dynamics have surpassed the capabilities that one individual can produce. New leadership practices advocate for a team environment where each component of the organization contributes in a positive way towards the desired goals and outcomes.

The 21st-century leadership models assume that the very essence of leadership is highly dependent on the characteristics of management. In other words, how managers/supervisors respond to change can create a misguided presence at the forefront of the organization. This can easily result in lack of innovation productivity, and decreased organizational performance. There have been so many different definitions of leadership established that have made contributions to the workplace environment (Bass, 1990). There are many components that are compiled together to help conceive the concept of leadership. Factors such as personality, influence, persuasion, interactions, and structure all determine the type of leadership that will be exerted into a given environment. The leadership theory is one of the most complex groups of theories. A fundamental aspect of management is understanding what effective leadership consists of, as well as, how to develop effective leaders within the organization (Cheramic, 2015). Although there has been much development of leadership development models, most have failed to account for the differentiation that is present in leadership training and development (Clarke & Higgs, 2017). There is a wide array of approaches and processes associated with an organization attempting to secure effective leadership.

Leadership and Emotional Intelligence

Leadership is the process of influencing the behaviors of followers in order to achieve a common goal. Goleman (2005) suggested that leaders with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in information sharing, trust, and risk-taking amongst employees. As a result, an atmosphere where learning is accepted and employee growth are created. In other words, a leader must increase their emotional intelligence in

order to create successful outcomes over an extended period of time. The most successful organizations are those where the employees work well together and are in tune with what the common goals are.

Goleman (2005) began the article by highlighting previous research that had examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. One major component that was unwavering is that emotional intelligence is a vital factor for being an outstanding leader. Goleman believed that emotional intelligence accounts for 90 percent of what outstanding leaders are judged.

Harms and Crede (2010) concluded that the traits of a transformational leader were similar to those of an emotionally intelligent individual. The purpose of the study was to determine whether emotional intelligence is related to transformational or transactional leadership behaviors and what circumstances impact these behaviors. The methods utilized during this study included a detailed literature search. In an attempt to ensure a high level of accuracy and rating agreement, the authors included a coding procedure. The meta-analysis procedure allowed for the estimation of the amount of variance attributable to sampling errors.

The results of the study revealed that the relationship that once linked emotional intelligence with transformational leadership variables are not as strong as previous research has advocated for. The results also revealed that the hypothesis that contingent reward has a positive relationship with emotional intelligence. The limitations of meta-analysis may have affected the results. There has been no well-designed study that

validated the emotional intelligence and leadership relationship. Despite the weakness of the results, there are still theoretical implications for future research.

Entrepreneurial Leadership Styles

The effectiveness of the group is directly correlated with how the employee feels about the group and the organization as a whole. Borgogni, Dello Russo, & Latham (2011) began the article by discussing how over time organizations have become structured teams. Collective efficacy is defined as an individual's perception of the group's collective capability to successfully perform job-related tasks (Borgogni et al., 2011). In this study, the authors investigated the relationship between collective efficacy beliefs and the employees' perceptions of the group's leader. The study contributed to the literature by examining the different contributions of group efficacy. Also, the extent to which perceptions mediate the relationship between self and collective efficacy beliefs was explored. The study included 1,149 participants at the middle-level managerial level. The results of the study were done against six major factors including self-efficacy, perceptions of IS, perceptions of TM, group collection efficacy, organization commitment, and job satisfaction. There are some limitations to the study. There is no measure of organizational behavior. In the future, research should examine the predictive validity of the model.

The dynamically changing business environment has forced organizations into improving employee creativity and innovation. Peng and Weichum (2011) examined the relationships between creative identity, transformational leadership, and creativity. This is necessary in order to obtain the competitive advantage. Innovation driven leadership

such as transformational leadership is key to achieving the creativity necessary. Some researchers believed that transformational leadership may not be the overall solution for every organization to foster innovation. Little research has been done on the dynamics that surround transformational leadership. The authors intended on extending transformational leadership and creativity research. Prior research indicated that both group and individual creativity are influenced by factors that are spread across multiple levels.

From the situational leadership theory, it can be derived that a leader's maturity level is a determining factor for leader behavior. Meier (2016) discussed the benefits that integrated and blended learning provides. The study is helping to uncover appropriate methods that will satisfy specific learning goals. The author connected these ideas to situational leadership because of the diverse settings that learning and teaching take place in. The author's goal was to transfer the situational leadership theory into a learning and teaching framework. Teaching has been found to be an intricate part of leading. The author suggested that leaders introduce methods that can help to maintain the structure. There are various learning goals based on maturity level. No limitations were mentioned. No recommendations were made for future research.

Rupert, Jehn, Engen, and Reuver (2010) conducted a study where they investigated commitment of cultural minorities and majorities in organizations. A field study consisting of 107 employees was conducted at a multinational organization. The researchers investigated how factors such as pressure to conform and leadership styles affect commitment. The findings indicated that organizational leaders and researchers

should not only focus on increasing and maintaining the commitment of minorities but also focus on how members react to cultural socialization and integration processes. The author's challenged the existing theoretical view of the similarity-attraction theory and the relational demography theory. Past research has focused on the effects of team diversity on group processes. The authors suggest that leaders can show confidence in minority capacities which will result in self-efficacy. However, inconsistency can cause a decrease in commitment. The literature analysis was extremely thorough. Although this study was performed in 2010, the majority of the findings are still applicable. The authors feel that future research should attempt to gain a better understanding of the influence of socialization processes in organizations. Overall, the enhancement of commitment should be addressed throughout the entire organization.

The cross-cultural approach studies the similarities and differences that are present amongst the behaviors at work across cultures. Gibson and McDaniel (2010) took into account the importance of a cross-cultural approach to organizational behavior. The authors defined organizational behavior as the study of how processes and practices affect individuals and groups. The authors noted that past cross-cultural organization behavior research has focused solely on the nation. The authors address theories that include collective cognition, attitude formation, and virtual teamwork. The review of these theories supports the claim that organizational behavior theories vary in the extent that they can be applied unilaterally across cultures. The authors covered the concepts of teams, collective cognition, team attitudes, virtual teams, leadership, charismatic leadership theory, and empowerment. Approached to effectively view cultural differences

were identified. Future research needs to extend into other domains to become highly

impactful and important.

Individuals can categorize and prejudge an individual or group based solely on

gender, race, culture, or sexual orientation. Eagly and Chin (2010) addressed the

weaknesses that exist in past leadership research. The lack of research has removed the

ability to address some of the more provocative aspects of modern-day leadership has

been taken away. The authors chose to address why women are under respected in

leadership roles and what is causing them to lack the qualifications needed to be

successful. They outlined the importance of knowing who is more at risk for this type of

treatment. Also, how people view these individuals is an important aspect to assess. The

rest of the article focused on leadership behaviors based on gender, race, sexual

orientation, and culture. Theories of leadership should include diversity considerations.

Human development stemmed from interactions with other individuals. The authors

revealed that certain biases exist in North America that has really highlighted certain

traits and behaviors. The expectations of a leader are constantly changing due to

demographic and intellectual changes. The requirements of a leader have become so

complex that they rely drastically on the knowledge of these concepts. This is why the

authors encouraged the empowerment of subordinates.

Creative Leadership

Creative leaders need to possess the ability to identify, articulate, and express

constraints that provoke individuals of an organization to generate creative responses.

There are certain conditions that creative leaders must adapt to in order to promote and

nurture the creativity of others. Keamy (2016) stated that creative leaders perform the

following tasks: Stimulating a sense of urgency, exposing colleagues to new thinking,

and experiences, providing a time and place facilitate the practicalities setting high

expectations, promoting individual and collaborative creative thinking and design, using

failure as a learning opportunity, relinquishing control, and the modeling of creativity and

risk-taking.

Creativity is not compiled of just thinking, but also the process of manufacturing

what is perceived as being innovative in tangible and intangible ways (Sohmen, 2015).

This type of leadership fuels visions creates novel ideas, crafts diverse methods, produces

innovative output. Creativity can be very beneficial to an organization if employed

constructively. Byproducts of creativity are flexibility and competitiveness. Creativity

helps to generate ideas and aid in problem-solving. Creativity is a difficult component to

measure. There are seven creative thinking skills: diagnosis, visionary, strategic,

ideational, evaluative, contextual, and tactical (Sohmen, 2015).

Moral Leadership

Due to significant and rapid technological, cultural, demographic, and economic

changes employee creativity has become a necessity in a workplace environment (Gu,

Tang, & Jiang, 2013). Employees have to continuously be challenged in order to maintain

a sustainable competitive advantage. Although, moral leadership has grown in

importance, it has been neglected in leadership-creativity relationships. Moral leadership

has a positive effect on employees' intrinsic task motivation and trust in leadership which

has a direct correlation with employee behavior and performance. Moral leaders serve as

role models and exhibit characteristics such as unselfishness and self-discipline. These individuals have a great influence on employees by possessing the ability to mold the perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors of employees. A valuable leader-member exchange is associated with moral leadership. When an employee has a strong, trusting relationship with a leader they are apt to be committed to the needs of the leader. In other words, the needs of the organization are met.

Transactional Change Leadership

As opposed to the transformational leadership style, transactional leadership is characterized by two distinct factors. This particular leadership model includes an employee being rewarded for reaching clearly defined organizational goals. The first factor is the contingent reward and the second is management by exception (Holten & Brenner, 2013). Managers have the ability to be an important change agent that can influence and facilitate change through the employees. Transactional leadership is a more instrumental style that gives leaders the platform to engage with the employees as change is being implemented.

<div align="center">

Entrepreneurship

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There is not one specific definition of entrepreneurship because of its complexities and its multiple facets (Kannadrasan, Aramvaalarthan, & Kumar, 2014). Entrepreneurship is defined as the capacity and willingness to develop, organize, and manage business ventures along with any of its risks in order to make a profit. A more simplified definition of entrepreneurship can be broken down into the following phases: prelaunch, launch phase, and a post-launch phase (Frese & Gielnik, 2014). During the

pre-launch phase, an opportunity is recognized. During the launch phase, the entrepreneur executes a plan based on available resources. Lastly, during the post-launch phase, the entrepreneur manages the endeavor in order for it to grow and sustain itself. Entrepreneurial opportunities can promote creativity (Wooley, 2014). There is also the potential of reducing unemployment and poverty (Alvarez & Barney, 2014). Entrepreneurship is a business practice that is relevant all around the world. As a result, it can catapult the creation of more jobs and overall economic growth (Smith & Chimucheka, 2014).

Entrepreneurial Characteristics

The personal characteristics of an entrepreneur are a key component of the entrepreneurship theory (Casson & Rugman, 2014). In conjunction with the organization's culture, entrepreneur characteristics have a major impact on the innovative capabilities of a company. There is a large quantity of published studies pertaining to the various roles of entrepreneurs. As early as 1959, Richard Cantillion published an article that defined the differences between a landowner, entrepreneur, and employees. Entrepreneurship has been linked to the process of innovation as a contributor to the development of enterprises in the economy. Omerzel (2016) proposed five dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation. These dimensions include proactiveness, competitive aggressiveness, risk-taking, autonomy, and customer orientation. Brettel, Chomik, and Flatten (2015) stated that studies have found that organizations with higher entrepreneurial orientation tend to perform better.

Proactiveness. Proactiveness helps entrepreneurs to identify opportunities in a

market. Proactiveness can be defined as an entrepreneurs' willingness to engage in bold moves such as introducing new products or services ahead of competitors and anticipate any demands that may create, change, and shape the environment. Having proactive tendencies allows an entrepreneur to attain a greater reach than their competitors. In most cases, if a firm lacks proactiveness, they lack the market knowledge and intentions needed to obtain opportunities.

Competitive aggressiveness. An organization that exhibits competitive aggressiveness displays a large variety of actions to ensure that they outperform the competitors (Giachetti, 2016). The competitive aggressiveness of an organization can have numerous and diverse strategic and tactical manifestations. Some organizations may employ various types of aggressive strategies in order to achieve or maintain a strong market position. However, the disposition of the manager to take on and desire to dominate competitors has a direct reflection on the organization as a whole.

Risk Taking. The endeavor of starting a new business is accompanied by much uncertainty. The entrepreneurs that are most successful must engage in calculated risks. The entrepreneurs that are most successful must engage in calculated risks. Risk taking is synonymous with entrepreneurship. In most cases, a career, personal finances, and mental health are at stake. Vereshchagina and Hopenhayn (2009) suggested that entrepreneurs with a high degree of risky behavior also have a high return. Entrepreneurs have to be calculated risk takers. Entrepreneurs attempt to reduce risks with every step they take.

Autonomy. Autonomy can be defined as freedom or independence (Gelderen, 2016). An entrepreneur motivated by autonomy has the potential to affect a range of

internal and external conditions and the actions of the entrepreneurs. Autonomy has been previously identified as a unitary concept. Autonomy has a strong reference to entrepreneurs' decisions making in regard to what is done and how it is done. However, there is a misconception of autonomy comes automatically with business ownership. Autonomy is also associated with striving to develop your own goals (Gelderen, 2010).

Customer orientation. A customer-oriented approach is when the organization focuses on helping the customers to meet their long-term goals. Customer orientation is one of the core aspects of marketing. Therefore, it is a set of beliefs that the needs of the customer are a priority. In most cases, customer orientation and marketing orientation are used interchangeably. Customer orientation is referred to as the business' philosophy that can lead to superior performance and profitability (Racela, 2014). Entrepreneurs need to create and deliver superior customer value to maintain sustainability.

African American Entrepreneurship

Over the past three decades, innovation alongside entrepreneurship has become a very dynamic topic (Furman, Gawer, Silverman & Stern, 2017). Entrepreneurship aids in creating an innovative and dynamic culture within an organization. Achtenhagen and Price-Schultz (2015) discussed the how entrepreneurship is portrayed in the media. This portrayal can play an important role in how attractive a career or investing option is perceived. Little literature has been developed about how the media frames ethnic minority entrepreneurs and how it affects the response and perceptions of the surrounding community. Achtenhagen and Price-Schultz asserted that a key to community development is the need for individuals of all ethnicities to be interested in starting a

business. The article included suggestions on how community development officials can assist minority entrepreneurs. The main research question asked if the way that newspapers communicate creates a supportive environment for ethnic minority entrepreneurs. The overall findings showed that minority entrepreneurs are underrepresented in U.S. newspapers. Community development leaders can encourage minority entrepreneurs by helping them believe they can start a business, creating and publicizing programs to help minority entrepreneurs, and show the benefits of promoting minority entrepreneurship in newspapers.

Previous studies have focused simply on why women become entrepreneurs. Kogut, Luse, and Short (2014) analyzed the variances between female minority and non-minority entrepreneurs. However, the focus of this study was on a statistical analysis of the demographic differences and similarities. The authors hoped that the results will aid in gaining a better understanding of the face of sole owners in regards to gender and minority relationship. Kogut et al. highlighted research done by another theorist that had studied the demographics of entrepreneurship. This study was relevant to revealing the surface of entrepreneurs and as a result uncovering strategies that can help even the playing field. The results revealed some significant differences between male and female entrepreneurs. The authors acknowledged that males dominate this field. However, no recommendations or limitations were communicated.

The choice of becoming an employee versus starting your own business was explored. Bates and Robb (2013) investigated the motivations of minority and immigrant entrepreneurs by analyzing viability among urban small businesses. The authors also

addressed concerns regarding the barriers that prohibit minority and immigrant small

business owners from dominating in more desirable market niches. The authors found

that most businesses that fail are only serving the local clientele. The authors sought to

gain an understanding of the phenomenon through comparing young firm viability in the

minority-household market niche to nonminority neighborhood markets and a broader

marketplace.

A framework, referred to as the opportunity structure, is a tool that can be utilized

in order to understand an entrepreneurs' likely potential in a given area. Bates and Robb

(2013) offered a thorough review of small firms in minority and nonminority

neighborhoods. Entrepreneurial success is being attributed to the opportunities available

to a particular individual or group. The authors provided the statistics based on the type

of neighborhood and type of clientele it caters to.

McManus (2016) discussed trends that were found in the 2012 Survey of Business

Owners. The results of the study revealed that only 29% of businesses nationwide are

owned by minorities. The author found that although the number of minority-owned

business has increased, minorities are still underrepresented. The survey outlined several

factors identified as minority entrepreneur issues. The author did not discuss limitations.

The key findings supported the fact the minority firms are vital to the U.S. economy. The

author stated that more research will reveal profitability based on demographics. Any

future research will need to focus on causation.

Mora and Dávila (2014) provided a quantitative study to explore the growing

number of minority entrepreneurs and managerial quality. The researchers based their

study on the findings of economists and social scientists pertaining to the success of new minority business ventures. In order to analyze those issues, the authors used the data from the 2007 Public Use Microdata Sample of the Survey of Business Owners. In one sample there were newly established businesses of Hispanic, African American, or non-Hispanic European American-owned businesses. The sample included 84,161 firms. Though the results derived from this data it showed that all of these groups were over-represented in businesses that ceased operations.

Although the publication itself is dated in 2014, the data used is from 2007. In 2007, businesses started by African American women had the highest likelihood of failure. However, since 2012, the number of African American women who have businesses that survive is four times more than 2007. In other words, the data used for this study was outdated. The article did not seem to have a specific audience. The researchers presented useful information considering the inclusion of the empirical analysis of the likelihood of ceasing operations. The authors also challenged the current public programs, saying that these differences occurred in spite of a system being in place. Therefore, this case study can be useful when conducting more current research.

Gap in the Literature

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a common understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence in Houston, Texas. The majority of the literature review consisted of data that concentrated on emotional intelligence, situational leadership, and values

entrepreneurial characteristics. Very little data exists on formal emotional intelligence training and strategies for African American entrepreneurs (Bagshaw, 2000).

The identified gap in literature represented an opportunity to advance the research knowledge for new and experienced minority entrepreneurs. Therefore, the lack of formal emotional intelligence training may have contributed to the high failure rate of African American entrepreneurs within the initial five years. The gap in literature was a social change opportunity to advance the research knowledge by interviewing African American entrepreneurs that voluntarily participated in this study that lead to ongoing research.

Conclusion

Management has evolved over the past century with various definitions and interpretations. Emotional intelligence research continues to serve the purpose of exploring the impact of emotional intelligence on leadership effectiveness. Organizations have benefited from understanding the importance of emotional intelligence and how it can aid in healthy organizational culture and increased productivity. However, less was known about the effect emotional intelligence has on minority entrepreneurs and how it can provide the opportunity for growth. There was a gap in understanding the possibilities of utilizing emotional intelligence to increase revenue in minority entrepreneurs.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a robust common understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond an initial 5 years. By gaining an in-depth understanding of the experiences of current minority entrepreneurs, the failure gap for others in the future may be reduced, which ultimately may help more new small business owner be more successful. I purposely sample 15 African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, with open-ended questions in semistructured interviews to gain a common understanding of their levels of emotional intelligence and how emotional intelligence has impacted their success.

The research findings from the study have a potential implication of positive social change in the lives of people of Houston, TX. Positive social change is possible as the data collected in the study could help to address the underrepresentation of mature African American entrepreneurs in the small business sector in Houston, TX. The data can potentially help lead to a shift in paradigm as it could affect policy makers to advance programs to develop emotional intelligence, which could lead to a decrease in the failure rate of minority entrepreneurs. Any new standard developed would help serve as an initiative towards the development of entrepreneurial skills and attitude.

Research Design and Rationale

Although there are several research approaches that are feasible for exploring concepts such as emotional intelligence and leadership styles, a qualitative interview study was the most appropriate for identifying and interpreting how the level of

emotional intelligence in African American entrepreneurs has affected the sustainability of their businesses. Edwards and Holland (2013) asserted that a qualitative interview study can help the interviewee as well as the interviewer learn more about certain aspects of themselves and others. The findings of the qualitative interview study might assist in understanding the aspects of emotional intelligence development in African American entrepreneurship and the strategies used to foster that development. In this study, I asked in-depth, open-ended interview questions that generated responses that uncovered important themes, categories, and subcategories. I used these interview questions (see Appendix F) to interview 15 African American entrepreneurs.

This study was focused on answering one research question:

RQ: What are the common understandings of the strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, adopt in order to increase emotional intelligence such that it contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial 5 years?

Answering this question added to the existing body of knowledge. It required synthesizing, collecting, and interpreting individual perspectives and experiences. The results of these findings may add value and contribute to an increased level of emotional intelligence and longevity for African American entrepreneurs, which would positively impact the U.S. economy (Smith & Tang, 2013).

Yin (2014) stated that qualitative research methodology has various approaches including ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative, and case study. Ethnography can be described as a systematic description of a group of individuals by utilizing direct quotes and the individuals' routines and daily lives (Van Maanen, 2015).

Ethnography did not meet my need to gain a robust common understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and that have sustainable buiness success. Phenomenology garners individuals lived experiences over a prolonged period (Kupers, Mantere, & Statler, 2012). I did not use this design because it does not aid in understanding processes or the significance attached to specific actions. The grounded theory approach would require new theory development (Gambetti, Graffigna, & Biraghi, 2012); therefore, it did not coincide with my goal of using existing theories to direct the study. The narrative approach focuses on lived experiences (Manning & Kunkel, 2014); however, this approach would not lead to meaningful data from African American entrepreneurs concerning how emotional intelligence and leadership styles are related to business sustainability.

The emphasis of this qualitative interview study was to learn what strategies African American entrepreneurs need to adopt in order to increase emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond initial 5-years. As a result, I focused on African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, who have remained in business beyond the initial 5 years. By gaining an in-depth understanding of the experiences of current minority entrepreneurs, the failure rate for others in the future may be reduced, ultimately helping the success of more new small business owners (Miles, 2013). The results of these findings may add value and contribute to an increased level of emotional intelligence and longevity for African American entrepreneurs, which would positively impact the U.S. economy (Smith & Tang, 2013).

Role of the Researcher

I served as the interviewer to establish and maintain appropriate professional

relationships with the participants (Collins & Cooper, 2014). I had the advantage of

gaining direct knowledge from interviewing rather than participating. As a researcher, I

was responsible for remaining in an objective role to ensure impartiality and neutrality. It

is the primary responsibility of every researcher to minimize bias as much as possible. As

the sole researcher, I interviewed African American entrepreneurs who have remained in

business beyond the initial 5 years. It is natural for cultural perspectives and world views

to create bias (Patton, 2014). There was no direct relationship between me and any of the

participants.

I managed potential research bias by examining the experiences of African

American entrepreneurs and focusing on their perspectives and beliefs. Affirming

confidentiality of the participants and the academic nature of the scholarly study reduced

the risks of misinterpretations of the participants' responses. No conflicts of interest

existed for me because I am not an employee, business partner, or in a similar business

field of any of the participants. Using participants from organizations other than ones that

I have been employed by helped to aid in mitigating the potential of researcher bias and

conflicts of interest.

As part of the ethical practices required by the Walden University Institutional

Board of Review (IRB), I did not use individuals with personal relationships, family

members, or persons over whom I have or had authority in a business or educational

capacity. As a researcher, it was my responsibility to diffuse any potential problems that

could jeopardize the outcome of the study. The researcher must also act as a safeguard to the confidentiality and rights of the participants without influencing their opinions.

Methodology

This methodology section includes the research approach for this qualitative interview study. How a researcher gathers, analyzes, and interprets data is explained strategically through the section. The methodology may be adjusted throughout the study depending on circumstances that may arise as data is being collected. The methodology must align with the nature of the study as well as the research question (Clough & Nutbrown, 2014).

The research method used for this study was qualitative. Park and Park (2016) asserted that based on research questions, qualitative methods focus on applied and theoretical findings. The qualitative method was most suitable for this study because the main concept being explored was African American entrepreneurship, and qualitative analysis method provides an in-depth understanding of a case. The qualitative interviewing of the participants helped to gain insight of events that are unique to African American entrepreneurs. They were compiled from separate interviews, which allowed me to create a depiction of the complex processes (Turner, 2010).

Quantitative research was not an appropriate methodology for this study. Quantitative research deals with a relational, causal, or predictive type of research question. Quantitative research is deductive, using various testing instruments and experimental or nonexperimental designs (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 2007). The goal of quantitative research is to collect numerical data to explain a relationship between

variables(Ludwig & Johnston, 2016). The aim of this study was not to test the effect of an action or the relationship between two variables. Also, there was no hypothesis to be tested for acceptance or rejection.

Participant Selection Logic

The purpose of the participant selection logic was to ensure the criterion for expert qualifications. I recruited participants through local African American entrepreneur programs, fraternities, and social groups. I collected data from the participants that contributed to a common understanding of the findings in order to enable the ongoing research of positive social change initiatives for African American entrepreneurship (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson, 2014). The participant selection process involved a purposeful nonrandom sampling approach. When utilizing a nonrandom sampling approach, the participants fit the constraints of the study in order to provide information that can answer the research question. Bias may be present in the selection due to the proximity of the researcher to the participants. Common biases that can be present are elite biases. Elite bias refers to the tendency to only recruit upper management participants or to select participants that are known to the researcher. In order to avoid these biases, this study included participants from various organizations with which I am not affiliated. The participants of this study were 18 years or older and resided in the City of Houston with at least 5 or more years of business sustainability.

The target population for this research study was African American entrepreneurs in the metropolitan area of Houston, TX. The Houston area and its surrounding suburbs include a plentiful amount of African American entrepreneurs who own restaurants,

convenient stores, automobile dealerships, and insurance agencies. Both large and small businesses that have been owned and operated in Houston, TX, were included. The participants were queried for qualifications to ensure they meet study requirements before interviews were conducted.

Selecting appropriate participants is crucial in capturing their experiences of using emotional intelligence to remain in business beyond the initial 5 years. Vagle (2014) mentioned the need to explore how experiences were lived rather than through theory. The availability and access in Houston presented the opportunity to use purposeful sampling strategies. Selecting appropriate participants, African American entrepreneurs experienced in increasing emotional intelligence and knowledgeable about leadership styles, represented a central tenet of purposeful sampling in qualitative research (Patton, 2014).

The strategies I used will aid in establishing credibility and triangulation were the use of an audio recorder, member checking, and the literature research. The data I collected from the participants I used to develop themes to contribute to a common understanding of the study topic. The justification for selecting 15 respondents was based on the results of an analysis of the data from the first 15 participants. I performed an additional three interviews in order to see if any new themes emerged. Data saturation is achieved once there are no new themes developing. The data collection obtained the best results by utilizing open-ended interview questions. I audio recorded, hand coded, and provided the participants a transcript to give them an opportunity to check for accuracy prior to conducting the analysis for interpretation. Prior to the interviews, the participants

were apprised of purpose and methodology of the study. The participants had an option to meet at a public location or do a telephone conference call. The participants received a written explanation of the ethical procedures explaining their rights, protections, and security of data.

Instrumentation

This study used in-depth interviewing for data collection. The interview protocol I established (Appendix F) served as an instrument for collecting data. I used my personal laptop for data collection. In the instance of technology failure, I have a desktop computer, backup laptop, and IPad that can be utilized. Participants have the choice of face-to-face, Skype, or telephone interviews. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in a quiet place. Telephone and Skype interview took place at the participants' choice of location. In depth interviewing was the primary mode of data collection. The interview strategy followed a semi structured approach. In semi structured interviews, the researcher sets aside their knowledge and experiences, biases, and assumptions in order for participants to express their lived experiences. Personal knowledge is fueled by an individual's subjective experiences and interpretations. As a result, we are prone to construct "personal theories" about a given topic (Griffiths & Tanns, 1992). Bias can occur during the planning, data collection, and analysis of a study. Bias for the study can include the researcher's mental and other discomfort which could pose a threat to the truth value of the data obtained from the interviews. Chenail (2011) stated that the researcher being the instrument can be the greatest threat to the trustworthiness in qualitative research. Assumptions are ideas constructed without any form of evidence. It

is important that assumptions are stated explicitly. All of these components have the potential to jeopardize the quality of the study but can also prevent a study from being conducted because the IRB can question the integrity of the instrumentation. These three components can also be perceived as a weakness in the instrument. A semi structured approach includes open-ended questioning that serves more as a conversation in order for participants to not feel restricted (Morgan, Kingston, & Sproule, 2005).

The ultimate goal of the researcher is to let the experiences of the participants' flow (Maxwell, 2013). In order to accomplish this, the interviews will account for both heterogeneous differences and homogeneous similarities in perspectives (Patton, 2014). A script has been developed by researchers in order to ensure consistency and accuracy in the interview questions. The interview questions (see Appendix C) are aligned with the research question. Vagle (2014) suggested that researchers can mitigate researcher bias and ensure validity by staying focused on the experiences of the participants during the interviews. Keeping the interviews focused on strategies for success, emotional intelligence, appropriate leadership styles, and the impacts of these factors can have on sustainability will increase validity while decreasing bias. The interview protocol (Appendix F) should help with the interview focus. Strategies that can set aside and simply mitigate potential negative impacts of these items include: (1) clearly defining the risks and the outcomes, (2) selecting the participants using a rigorous criterion to avoid confusing results, and (3) standardizing the interviewers' interactions with the participants.

I will use an audio recorder for the one-on-one interview sessions. Each interviewee will have the opportunity to accept the use of the audio recorder. I will hand code after each interview in order to support the accuracy and validation of the data collection process (Bernard, 2013). Researchers who utilize the qualitative interview methodology are closer to their data which increases the transparency of the interpretations.

Member checking can cover a range of activities including returning the interview transcripts to participants and conducting member check interviews using the interview transcript (Birt, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016). I will follow up with the participants to member check as well as confirm the data collection in transcription form before doing the analysis and interpretations (Yin, 2014). The full transcript was emailed to the participants' personal email address. If a response is not received within 48 hours, a follow up email was sent out thanking the participant for interviewing and to notify them that final transcriptions had been completed.

This will allow for the clarification of initial responses. Member checking can also allow participants to volunteer additional information that may have surfaced during the interview process (Chang, 2014). All participants will receive a form with the research question and interview questions if additional feedback is desired.

Field Test

I conducted a field test on the interview questions prior to interviewing study participants. The field test aids in ensuring the reliability and validity of the test instrument (van Teijlingen & Hudley, 2002). The field test participants included three

experts in the qualitative field who analyzed the questions to ensure that they were properly aligned with the research question. The experts that participated in the field test were academia professionals with extensive experience with qualitative studies. I recruited the expert by emailing eight prospective participants a solicitation letter (see Appendix B) that included a description of the major components of the study and a copy of the interview questions. As a result of the field test, two experts recommended adjustments to the interview questions to ensure that they would result in data that would answer the research question.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Turner (2010) described the qualitative interview design as providing in-depth information pertaining to the participants' experiences. Every study requires a plan to recruit and collect data from participants. Therefore, the procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection will include, IRB approval from Walden University, a script to make the initial introduction and invitation of the study to potential participants (see Appendix A). Also, I provided a Consent Form entailing the topic of study, the research questions, interview procedures, privacy and confidentiality, the voluntary nature of the study, risks and benefits, including the options for the mode of the interviews. Most times qualitative interviews are coupled with other forms of data collection in order to provide the researcher with a well-rounded analysis. Selection of participants and the data collection methods have an overall goal to answer the research question holistically.

The sole purpose of the recruitment process well be to ensure that the criterion of expert knowledge and qualifications namely five years of successful entrepreneurship. I will utilize public lists, the Internet, and local organizations for the selected sources. I will notify 75 participants via email and or telephone using the procedures. The participants will satisfy the criterion of 18 years or older and residing in the city of Houston, TX; the script (see Appendix A) entails the purpose of the study, the career experience required to participate, and a request for voluntary participation. The participants have the option to meet at a public location, conference call, or answer questions via email. The participants will receive a written explanation of the ethical procedures entailing their rights, protection, and security of data on the Consent Agreement Form.

As the researcher, I will conduct semi structured interviews in English. I will also have the responsibility of collecting, storing and securing the data (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I will use a recording app on my IPhone. If necessary I will purchase an additional audio recorder. I will take notes as a backup technique. I will schedule the interviews within a 2-3-week span. Before the participants end an interview session, they were given the opportunity to add anything to the questions. Also, the ethical procedures were reviewed with each participant concerning their volunteering, confidentiality, and procedures for the interview as well as the follow up. Each of the interviews were transcribed and returned to the respective participant in order to give them an opportunity to review the comments and provide amendments if needed or desired. In order to recruit

participants or this study, it was necessary to obtain written permission for each participant. The participation in this study were voluntary.

Data Analysis Plan

Formal data analysis began after the completion of 15 interviews although I performed hand coding during each interview. There should be consistent themes that emerge from the initial 15 interviews. I conducted an additional three interviews to ensure that no new themes emerge. Semi structured interviews provided the primary source of data. A thematic analysis was conducted with all of the interviews collected. After transcriptions, the interviews were read through several times to get a thorough understanding of the data (Nyberg & Lennernas Wiklund, 2017). Data obtained from the interviews were hand coded into Microsoft Excel. Hand coding required the review of the interview transcripts to identify common themes and phrases. Coding techniques provided a means to organize the data to make any comparisons or identifications of similar patterns (Myers, 2013).

The data was then sorted and categorized using codes and key words. The initial round of analysis included 15 interviews. The stopping criterion included an additional three interviews until no further themes emerge. The research problem and research question drives the research design including the data collection and data analysis procedures. NVivo was utilized to organize the data. The use of both hand coding and software to capture and organize data enhanced the reliability of the study.

Coding

A code can include a word, phrase, or sentence that represents an aspect of the

data that has been collected. Coding is a process that includes assigning a word or phrase

to a section of data for the purposes of reducing data, understanding phenomenon,

developing construct, and emerging theory. A code is also a construct symbolizing the

interpreted meaning of data (Saldana, 2013). Within these symbols a researcher is able to

identify patterns, categorization, and theory development. The process of coding includes

coding, sorting, synthesizing, and theorizing. I performed a two cycle approach to code

data. An initial round of deductive coding took place followed by inductive coding.

Inductive coding involves the theory emerging from the content of the raw data. The

transcripts were read several times to identify themes and categories. This is done to

ensure there are no misconceptions that are made in advance of the analysis.

Precoding

The first cycle included coding for themes, data examination, and establishing

connections between the existing data and the research question. Saldana (2013)

suggested that during the first cycle the following methods are included: attribute coding,

descriptive coding, structural or holistic coding, and *in vivo* coding. Interview transcripts

are coded for perspective, language, and participants' views.

The second coding cycle incorporated into pattern coding and conceptual

ordering. When searching for patterns the researcher identifies similarities, differences,

frequencies, sequence, correspondence, and causation (Saldana, 2013). When the data is

being organized conceptual ordering is utilized. Birks and Mills (2015) stated that

conceptual ordering is facilitated by identifying themes. I used NVivo if the number of themes exceeds 20. The next phase of data analysis was the recoding of the data. This round of coding utilized codes that were derived from the theories supporting and framing the study.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Findings for this study may go beyond what is found in existing research and may be supported by utilizing strategies associated with credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility, authenticity, and integrity are primary components to ensuring validity in qualitative research (Heckerman et al., 2016). The goal of the literature review is to reveal the current research regarding emotional intelligence development, and how success in this development can aid in African American entrepreneurial sustainability beyond the initial five years. A review of the current and existing research should expose a gap with regard to whether emotional intelligence development can contribute to African American entrepreneurial growth and development. The findings from this study addressed the knowledge gap.

Credibility

Credibility can be achieved through triangulation and member checking. Credibility is necessary in order to validate the researcher's inferences. Patton (2014) suggested that multiple coders can used in order to cross validate themes and patterns. Also, whenever participants are able to articulate consistent themes from separate lived experiences aid in providing a degree of validation that is consistent with triangulation (Vagle, 2014).

Transferability

Whenever a researcher gives rich, detailed descriptions it enhances the transferability of the research. The experiences of various participants need to correspondingly align. My selection of participants, although is limited by geographical restraints, maximized diversity. The thick and detailed descriptions of the themes and patterns that were identified helped shape the transferability within the limits of the study.

Dependability

Patton (2014) acknowledged that dependability is analogous to reliability. Systematic inquiry methods need to be adhered to in qualitative research. There needs to be consistency in both the collection and analytical procedures. Dependability relates to a researcher's ability to repeat the study with the same participants and yield the same results and arrive at similar conclusions. For a study to be considered dependable, the findings of the study are consistent and repeatable. Dependability was addressed in the following ways: (1) a detailed explanation of the research design and its implementation, (2) a detailed description of data collection strategies as well as any concerns or constraints found in the field while collecting data, (3) a detailed depiction of data analysis and clarification procedures, (4) a member check on all participants.

Confirmability

The main concern of confirmability is to present findings as objectively as possible and recognize and address biases introduced by the researcher. The results need to reflect the experiences of the participants without the perceptions of the researcher. The findings of the study addressed issues of confirmability by triangulating the data

collection methods and sources of data. Addressing confirmability required documenting the researcher's predispositions and biases. Young, McGrath, and Filiault (2013) suggested that the best approach to confirmability is to justify the use of selected methods and approaches, a detailed account of the methodology and thoughtful audits, and testing conflicting explanations. I audio recorded the interviews of the participants, and listen to the recordings several times in order to make sure that my personal experiences and philosophies do not taint the data and the views of the participants are accurately portrayed.

Ethical Procedures

I sought the permission of the Walden University IRB before commencing research for the ethical security of the research participants. Once an eligible target participant has been identified and selected through phone and email inquiries, the participants received a letter that asked for their voluntary non-incentive participation in the study by explaining the nature of the study. The data collected was confidential, shared only with the actual participant and the interviewer. The participants name or any other personal information was not shared. As required I followed the ethical guidelines and eliminate personal opinions and biasness.

I ensured the security of data, the participant privacy, and their professional associations (Yin, 2014). After data collection, I stored the data of the respondents on a laptop using a secured password for protection along with a USB drive for backup locked in a safe. As the researcher, I stored the data in a secured location that was accessed by me. Upon approval by the IRB, the participants received a letter of consent for their

signature that will authorize their participation. The consent form outlined the participant withdrawal procedures by writing or verbally without penalty.

Summary

Chapter 3 provided the general methodological approach to this qualitative interview study. This chapter reviewed the methods for recruiting participants collecting the data and performing an analysis. Chapter 3 also provided sufficient detail to ensure reliability and validity. Chapter 3 described the purpose of the study as gaining a robust common understanding of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial 5 years through the lens of a qualitative approach inquiry. The objective of the study was to aid African American entrepreneurs to implement strategies using the findings of the study and at the same time fill a literature gap in minority entrepreneurship for business sustainability.

The research design followed a qualitative interview study approach because of the research problem and research question. The research problem is that some African American entrepreneurs lack the emotional intelligence required to be self-employed. Given the research problem and research question, I found that a qualitative approach and an interview design was the best fit for the study. A qualitative approach supports the need for an in-depth understanding. A qualitative approach also allows for a study to be explored in real world conditions. The rationale for an interview study design is that interview studies allow for the collection of data derived from the lived experiences of the participants.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to attain a common understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial 5 years. To address the research question and purpose of the study, I conducted semistructured interviews with 15 participants from selected organizations. I initially hand coded the data collected during the interviews. The RQ was: What are the common understandings of the strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX adopt to increase their emotional intelligence such that it contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial five years? Chapter 4 includes the research setting, data collection, data analysis, results, and conclusion.

Research Setting

This qualitative interview study involved two types of industries: secondary (production of goods), and tertiary (banks, education, and healthcare). For this qualitative research, interviewing was the method I used to collect data to extract detailed information from experienced individuals (Seidman, 2013). I conducted phone semistructured interviews by phone. Each participant was scheduled in 2-hour increments, and privacy and confidentiality were maintained.

Demographics

The criteria for this study required each participants to be an African American entrepreneur who had remained in business for at least 5 years. Demographics played an integral part in this study, so I noted the number of participants by gender, years of

employment, and by industry, as illustrated in Table 1. Using a purposive, random

sampling proved to be the best sampling feature for this study, as the participants'

responses evolved once the data collection process began (Miles et al., 2014). There were

15 participants from two different industries with similar responses as they related their

responses to different experiences. I was able to identify the themes and patterns based on

the participants' testimonies.

Table 1

Demographic data of the 15 Participants of the Study

	Gender	Industry	Years of employment
Participant 1	Male	Technology	18
Participant 2	Male	Catering	12
Participant 3	Mae	Insurance	19
Participant 4	Male	Bar	9
Participant 5	Male	Real estate	13
Participant 6	Female	Arts	22
Participant 7	Female	Technology	16
Participant 8	Female	Event planning	7
Participant 9	Female	Beauty	26
Participant 10	Male	Real Estate	11
Participant 11	Female	Clothing design	10
Participant 12	Female	Floral design	5
Participant 13	Male	Beauty	27
Participant 14	Male	Consulting	17
Participant 15	Female	Taxidermy	33

Data Collection

Walden University granted IRB approval (05-25-18-0566013) to conduct this

study. In preparation for data collection, I e-mailed and called individuals to recruit and

explain the study and invite them to participate in the study. Upon the agreement of the

participant, I e-mailed a copy of the interview protocol (Appendix C) and letter of consent to each participant. Once the participant acknowledged they had read and understood the documents, I scheduled a phone interview with the participants in 2-hour increments upon their availability (Yin, 2014). Before recording the interview, each participant signed the letter of consent and received copies of the consent form and interview protocol for their records. I made all participants aware of the scope of the study, identified the risks and benefits for them, and reiterated they could terminate the interview at any time without prejudice. In the same manner, each participant acknowledged they understood the importance of confidentiality.

While the interviews involved voice recordings, I sought permission to record from each participant prior to starting the interviews. I found the voice recordings to be useful in verifying accuracy of the transcripts. Each interview consisted of open-ended semistructured questions and had a duration of 60 minutes or less. The interviews were transcribed using Microsoft Word and sent to the participants for member checking.

After verifying accuracy of the 15 interviews through member checking, I systematically organized the data a Microsoft Excel Worksheet. Following Yin's (2012) algorithm for organizing data, I housed the participants' responses in one column of the spreadsheet and labeled a column for themes and patterns. I used NVivo software as a confirmation method for identifying themes and patterns.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted with all of the interviews collected. After the transcriptions were complete, I read through the interviews several times to get a

thorough understanding of the data (Nyberg & Lennernas Wiklund, 2017). This process included precoding, coding, pattern coding, and conceptual ordering.

Organizing

The collected data comprised verbiage from the transcripts of the phone interviews. Along with the transcripts, I used my notes from the interviews to help with the data analysis process. I created a spreadsheet for each transcript in which I added the responses from the transcript and then developed a formula to capture the appropriate cells on the master sheet. This strategy helped me to refer to the manual results of the themes and patterns.

Identifying Themes

While interviewing the participants, I began to hear recurring themes. Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, and Robertson (2013) stated that segments of data generate themes as the researcher continues to collect and sift through the data. The more interviews I conducted, the more the patterns emerged. These interpreted categories of themes constituted the findings.

Coding Process

The data analysis process involved hand-coding, but I also used NVivo software for pattern coding. By using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet to annotate the verbiage from the transcripts and NVivo software, I performed a cross reference verification to confirm the analysis. The coding process involved phases of coding the data, categorizing, naming conventions, and assigning meaning. This process generated units of developed meaning.

Alternatives Understanding

An interview question asked the following: Please describe any changes that have taken place in your organization. I realized during the interviews that nearly half of the participants struggled with this question. The word *changes* was a canvas for a variety of answers. To best ascertain the data, I asked these participants to elaborate more on question 4 to mitigate researcher's bias and to ensure accurate interpretation from the emerged themes. Member checking and triangulation seemed vital due to the various possible interpretations (Mertens, 2015). I followed this process until common themes appeared frequently.

Final Process

Using the process suggested by Marshall and Rossman (2016), I interviewed the participants, transcribed the data, e-mailed transcripts for member checking, organized the data, immersed myself in the data to identify themes and patterns, and followed a rigorous process to accurately conclude meaning from raw data. The instruments I used in this qualitative interview study research were the interview protocol, the participants' consent forms, and NVivo.

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Evidence of Trustworthiness

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In preparation for data collection, I conducted a field test with the interview questions and RQ. Components for evidence of trustworthiness include how well the researcher obtained information and analyzed the data (Miles et al., 2014). The field test consisted of three expert individuals who reviewed and provided constructive feedback to ensure I was asking the interview questions in a way that would yield the results that I

was seeking. Another component of evidence of trustworthiness was the ability to conceptualize and articulate the findings (Yin, 2014). I followed the protocol as delineated in Chapter 3 without deviation.

Credibility

In order to obtain substantial evidence, I asked participants additional questions to ensure that I was obtaining accurate, well-articulated information. As explained by Mayoh and Onuwuegbuzie (2015), some participants elaborated on their life experiences more than others during data collection. I did not deviate from the protocol in Chapter 3. Member checking consisted of me sharing the transcripts and ensuring accuracy in the participants' initial responses.

Transferability

Transferability allows for further application of the information in a new setting (Hitchcock & Newman, 2012). Hersey and Blanchard's (1977) situational leadership model provided the framework for the RQ: What are the common understandings of the strategies African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX, adopt in order to increase emotional intelligence such that it contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial 5 years? The results are explained further in detail in the findings section. I provide detailed descriptions of the data collection process and the data analysis process to augment the discussion of research transferability for the reader, stakeholders, and future scholars.

Dependability

To address the issues of dependability, I included a detailed explanation of the research design and its implementation, a detailed description of data collection strategies and any concerns or constraints found in the field while collecting data, a detailed depiction of data analysis and clarification procedures, and a member check with all participants. The research included validation of approved interview questions by a field test of experts and a dual process for identifying themes and coding. Documentation by taking rich notes during the interviews was useful in aligning my reflections with the emerged themes.

Confirmability

The purpose of confirmability was to interpret the data without yielding to researcher bias. I audio recorded the interviews of the participants and listened to the recordings several times in order to make sure that my personal experiences and philosophies did not taint the data and the views of the participants were accurately portrayed. I was positioned as an instrument that asked the interview questions, observed, and took notes. The findings are written to expose the participants' experiences and be interpreted with a plausible conclusion.

Study Results

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a robust shared understanding of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond an initial five years in Houston, TX. The data collection process included data from 15 participants of two groups: five to

ten years of employment (Group 1) and eleven or more years of employment (Group 2).

All participants expressed an avid interest in the questions as they explained their lived

experiences. The following information is results of each interview questions, as they

related to the research question; there were 10 interview questions (Appendix C).

Themes per Question

The thematic analysis allowed for recognizing patterns emerged from the data

(Patton, 2002). I established themes by extracting words or word phrases that were heard

frequently throughout the interviews. I numbered the word or word phrase and ordered

the themes with the highest frequency. I created a table for years of employment to

illustrate the primary and secondary usages of the themes per interview question. The

category named, primary, represents a word frequency of 20 times or more, while the

themes labeled secondary represents a rate less than 20 times. Table 2 illustrates the

themes from the secondary case, and Table 3 illustrates the themes from the tertiary case.

Table 2

Themes Emerged from 5-10 years of Employment

Interview questions	Themes	Frequency
1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	Restraint, self-control, customer satisfaction	Secondary
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10	Knowledgeable, role model, led by example	Primary
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9	Training, teaching, listening and feedback	Primary
1, 2, 5, 7, 8	Communication, problem solving, social awareness	Secondary
1,7,10	Trustworthy, multitask, flexibility	Secondary
1,3,5,8,10	Transparency, be open, openness, open-minded	Secondary

Note. ($N = 4$)

Table 3

Themes Emerged from 11+ years of Employment

Interview questions	Themes	Frequency
1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	Restraint, self-control, customer satisfaction	Primary
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10	Knowledgeable, role model, led by example	Primary
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9	Training, teaching, listening and feedback	Primary
1, 2, 5, 7, 8	Communication, problem solving, social awareness	Primary
1,7,10	Trustworthy, multitask, flexibility	Secondary
1,3,5,8,10	Transparency, be open, openness, open-minded	Secondary

Note. ($N = 11$)

In a review of the emerged themes based on the primary frequencies between

Group 1 and Group 2; emotional intelligence and leadership styles are the top two coded

themes. Emotional intelligence included word phrases such as, restraint, self-control, and

open-minded. Leadership styles involved word phrases such as knowledgeable,

trustworthy, flexibility, and transparency. While the additional themes labeled secondary

were less frequent than the primary, the themes were significant and supported the

primary themes. Though the themes coded, role model scored high Group 2; the theme

was less significant in Group 1. I have provided interpretation of the findings on the

emerged themes coded, emotional intelligence and leadership styles in Chapter 5.

There were 10 questions formulated to extract as much data from the participants'

testimonies. All the questions, excluding Number 3 were instrumental in the contribution

of emerged typologies for the emotional intelligence theme. In both cases Questions 1,4,

5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 provided overarching responses for the coded theme emotional

intelligence. Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 were significant to the leadership styles theme

for both cases. After averaging both cases, the results of the emerged themes were

directly generated from Interview Questions 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10 relating to the research

question.

The research question was: What are the common understandings of what

strategies African American entrepreneurs adopt in order to increase emotional

intelligence that contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial 5 years in

Houston, TX. Question two resulted in information based on the participants' experiences

with emotional intelligence training. Questions 5, 6, and 7 were designed to explore life

experiences in emotional responses, and the influence of emotional intelligence has had

on the sustainability of the organization. Consistently the participants' testimonies

provided themes of emotional intelligence and leadership styles. Lastly, Question 10

concluded the themes regarding the qualities of an emotionally intelligent leader. The

results of Question 10 emerged themes of emotional intelligence and leadership styles.

In Vivo Coding

During the first cycle of coding, I used the in vivo coding technique to explore the

interpersonal and intrapersonal participants' experiences of this study (Miles et al., 2014).

This technique entails assigning labels to a section of data such as interview transcripts.

Phrases and words were extracted that were used often by the participants. Each code

category represented a word, or word phrase emerged from the data on the transcripts and

housed into categories based on the conventions of the data. Words with similar meanings were compiled into one theme instead of multiple. The first cycle illustrates the raw data of common words or words phrases.

Each response from the transcripts was transferred to an excel spreadsheet and dissected according to the in vivo categories. I identified the main objective of the testimonies and pinpointed the main ideas from the testimonies. I extracted words or word phrases that were related to the strategies of achieving the objectives, identified any attitudes towards the conflicts, noted the emotions of the experiences, and annotated the unspoken thoughts or forms of gerunds for processing these codes. Question 5 reads as such, describe your beliefs regarding emotional reactions and how it is related to business sustainability. Below is a response to Question 5 from participant 7 and an example of the in vivo coding.

> There are so many things that encompass emotional reactions. In the sense of what I do I tend to come across a lot of people that say some very bizarre things. If I were to react the way that I wanted to, I would not have been in business for this long. You have to have a level of tolerance for people. If I do not grow a tolerance for the differences in people, then my sustainability will be down the drain. How I react will determine if I get a satisfactory recommendation. Even if my customers do not have the same tolerance as me, I have to display and maintain a degree of professionalism because ultimately I do need this person to maintain my livelihood. (Participant 7)

Based on the response of Participant 7, the in vivo coding is listed as such:

1. "React the way I wanted to."

2. "Would not have been in business for this long."

3. "Have a level of tolerance for people."

4. "Grow a tolerance for the differences in people."

5. "Satisfactory recommendation."

6. "Customers do not have the same tolerance as me."

7. "Maintain a degree of professionalism."

After completing these steps for each response, the results contributed to the emerged

themes. I proceeded to the second phase of qualitative coding.

Holistic Coding

The approach to a holistic coding is having a general idea as to what words or

word phrase to investigate within the data (Miles et al., 2014). After using the in vivo

coding and identifying the frequency of the words or word phrases, I categorized the

words by subject and coded each category, as shown in Table 9. While using a hand-

coded process to identify typologies, I used NVivo to validate the process. Using NVivo

was instrumental in storing data and identifying the word frequency.

Table 4

Coded Themes

Themes	Codes	Frequency
Restraint, self-control, tolerance, relationship management	Emotional intelligence	Primary
Trustworthy, multitask, flexibility, patience	Leadership styles	Primary
Mentor, role model, led by example	Role model	Secondary
Problem solving, finding solutions	Problem solving and solutions	Secondary
Communication, listening and providing feedback, feedback, active listening	Communication: Listening and feedback	Secondary
Transparency, be open, openness, open-minded	Transparency	Secondary
Knowledgeable, subject matter expert	Knowledgeable	Secondary
Teaching, training and development, teaching others	Training	Secondary

Interview Questions 2, 3, and 6 contributed to the development the emerged themes. Question 2 noted for the participants to explain if they had ever received emotional intelligence training. The development of the question was to explore if the participants understood the meaning of emotional intelligence. The strategy for Question

6 aligned with the research question to understand what strategies participants use to control emotional reactions. The plan for Question 8 was to explore other methods used to control emotional responses. While the other interview questions were important and generated secondary themes, I chose to focus on the primary themes categorized as emotional intelligence and leadership styles, as the primary themes had a high frequency rate.

Theme Emotional Intelligence

The theme coded emotional intelligence mostly emerged from Interview Questions 1 and 3 from Group 1 and Questions 1 and 6 from Group 2. Tallying the number of participants who responded using words or word phrases for emotional intelligence was 13 out of 15 participants (87%). Eighty-seven percent of the participants confirmed that using emotionally intelligent methods has had a positive influence on their business sustainability.

Three out of 4 (75%) participants from Group 1 explained emotional intelligence as *being flexible, openness, and holding your tongue*. Utilizing emotional intelligence in the daily activities and decision making of the organization creates an environment where long-term success is achievable. Emotional intelligence allowed the participants to respond well to change or difficult scenarios within their organization. This includes a high turnover, challenging customers, financial adversities, and economic disadvantages. Another influential method of emotional intelligence in African American entrepreneurs was learning from others. As an entrepreneur it is imperative to use the experiences of others that may be more versed in a specific area. Together, the entrepreneurs confirmed

that emotional intelligence was influential in their business sustainability by acknowledging that there is no one particular way to respond to a scenario and you have to be flexible in order to survive beyond the initial five years of business.

The theme, emotional intelligence, emerged from word phrases such as, *learn from others*, *tolerant*, and *patience* from participants of Group 2. A crucial aspect of emotional intelligence has been the focus on customer satisfaction and retention. The ability to master customer relationships comes over time and grows through experience. Ideally, emotional intelligence when an employee was not getting the best ratings from customers. An example was noted that in the insurance industry, customers do not like to feel like you are selling a product and more like you truly care about their circumstance and want to feel protected. As the owner of the business, the participant decided to shadow the employee to witness what type of customer service was being rendered. The participant then developed a training for all of the employees to attend to tackle the issue head on. Each member plays an integral role in the satisfaction of the customer.

Four out of 4 (100%) participants in Group 1 recognized the phrase, emotional intelligence, as the ability to control your reactions when faced with something difficult. Learning from others in the industry gave them a role model. Similarly, the participants from Group 2 found that growing a tolerance for individuals has aided in them staying in business as long as they have. Emotional intelligence was an influential method used to achieve business sustainability by being flexible with the given circumstance.

Theme Leadership Styles

In a review of the themes coded as leadership styles was mostly contributed from Interview Questions 3 and 10 from Group 1 and Questions 6 and 10 from Group 2. Overall, themes emerged from multiple interview questions from twelve out of 15 participants (80%) of the participants. Twelve out of 15 participants (80%) confirmed that leadership styles contributed to the methods and strategies regarding emotional intelligence.

Data extracted from the participants' transcripts of Group 1 emerged theme words or word phrases such as *trustworthy, multitask, flexibility,* and *patience*. These word phrases aligned with the participants' contributions of emotional intelligence. Group 1 acknowledged that leadership styles were an influential factor towards business sustainability as this determines how emotionally intelligent an individual can be. Possessing an appropriate leadership style contributed to handling difficult scenarios in an emotionally intelligent fashion.

For Interview Question 10, the participants were asked to explain what type of leadership styles and qualities an entrepreneur needs to possess to be considered emotionally intelligent. Based on the participants of Group 1, the themes trustworthy, multitask, flexibility, and patience were most important attributes. The overarching response from the Group 1 participants alluded to leadership styles as an interactive activity and always evolving characteristics that allowed leaders to respond in the most effective way in a given circumstance.

Business sustainability is achieved through numerous avenues. Group 2 uses transparency to build customer relations. The objective of transparency involved being open to new ideas and being willing to communicate in order to address any shortcomings. Achieving business sustainability gave the participants the opportunity to be a role model for newly established businesses. Overall, the participants from both groups proclaimed that emotional intelligence and leadership styles play an intricate role in surviving beyond the initial five years of business.

Participants' Responses

This section reflects upon the participants' overall responses contributing to the coded themes. The information illustrated an overwhelming response to emotional intelligence and leadership styles. There were two of 15 participants (13%) of whom responded with little contribution of emotional intelligence and three of 15 participants (20%) with little contributions to leadership styles.

During the interview process, there were thematic word phrases with different connotations. The research group explained emotional intelligence as *self-control, restraint, and being open-minded*. While exploring the framework of emotional intelligence, these frequent phrases had underpinning descriptions. *Self-control* was a word phrase described as being able to suppress your initial urge to respond and remaining professional. As participants recited their experiences with emotional intelligence, they were disappointed that they had not received any formal training and could see how the training could have benefited their business.

The word phrase, *restraint*, was often coupled with word phrases of the theme, leadership styles. Learning that there is a time to react and a time to remain quiet was the stem of the phrase restraint. The word phrase *being open-minded* represented the practice of having self-control and showing restraint. Being open-minded was the action as part of having a sustainable business. Group 1 used tolerance: Accepting the things that you cannot control or change for the benefit of having a business relationship. The word phrase tolerance was mention as a prerequisite of emotional intelligence. Tolerance represented a level of maturity that only an emotionally intelligent individual can master.

These descriptions provided distinctions of the word phrases that integrated into the theme called, emotional intelligence. Similarly, the research group explained how important *communication*, *listening and feedback,* and *active listening* were to emotional intelligence. Leadership styles is the theme encapsulated from these thematic word phrases as methods of emotional intelligence. While jotting notes during the interviews, I understood the connotations of these word phrases and the importance each theme to business sustainability.

Emotional Intelligence Model

The conceptual framework used for this study mirrored from emotional intelligence theory. The rationale for this conceptual framework was to explore the idea that an effective leader must possess a rational understanding of a given situation as well as an appropriate response to the situation (McClesky, 2014). Salovey and Mayer's framework accentuated methods of emotional intelligence such as social and self-awareness.

During the phase of identifying themes and patterns, emotional intelligence with subtexts of management and leadership styles each emerged as a primary theme. While the code theme of leadership styles emerged as a primary theme, there were secondary themes with frequency scores between 11–19 times. These secondary themes were significant enough to support the primary themes to assert the baseline of the conceptual framework.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain a robust shared understanding of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond an initial five years in Houston, TX. Following the interview protocol established in Chapter 3, the participants provided sufficient data relating to the research question. The fundamentals in Chapter 4 were revealed by the data collection process, the data analysis process, evidence of trustworthiness, and the results of the study.

An analysis of the data regarding 10 interview questions concluded emerged themes from two groups based on their years of employment. The result of both groups were two primary themes and six secondary themes. The primary themes were emotional intelligence and leadership styles. These final themes developed from repeated word phrases with a frequency rate of 20 times or more. The secondary themes categorized as role models, communication: listening and feedback, problem-solving and solutions, transparency, knowledgeable, and teach and train had repeated word phrases with frequency rates between 11 and 19. These final results reveal the methods of emotional

intelligence used by African American entrepreneurs used to remain in business beyond the initial five years. Chapter 5 includes further discussion of the interpretation of these findings, limitations of the study, recommendations, and implications for positive social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The research problem for this study was that some African American entrepreneurs lack the emotional intelligence required to stay in business beyond the first 5 years. Despite the engagement of leadership style training and management education, it was possible that emotional intelligence lacked in the workplace (Bagshaw, 2000). The premise was that emotional intelligence combined with appropriate leadership styles could aid the success of African American entrepreneurs in establishing business sustainability. A review of the literature revealed a gap in research regarding leadership styles and the best practices of emotional intelligence leadership training.

The purpose of this qualitative interview study was to gain an understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial 5 years. The study included a purposive, random sampling of 15 research participants from various industries. Data collection involved face-to-face, telephone, and Skype interviews. There were 10 open-ended semistructured interview questions. The data analysis process included hand-coding and NVivo to identify the frequency of word usage and to store data. Presented in this chapter are the interpretations of findings, limitations of the study, my recommendations, implications, and the influence of positive social change.

Interpretation of Findings

The research method and design used for this study was a qualitative interview study to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of current African American entrepreneurs and how the failure gap can be reduced through emotional intelligence

training. Mertens (2015) explained that qualitative methods could provide detailed descriptions of the program, practices, or settings. The data came from the participants' transcripts. During the data analysis phase, themes emerged from the coding processes based on the frequency of words or phrases. The final results were two primary themes and six secondary themes. The primary themes were emotional intelligence and leadership styles. The secondary themes were emotional reactions, maturity level, training, business sustainability, and flexibility.

The themes were divided into primary and secondary themes, as the word or word phrases were scored based on the frequency of usage from the data on the transcripts. Tallying the data from 10 questions concluded in three categories of scores; primary scores occurred 20 times or more and secondary scores appeared between 11 and 19 times. Any scores fewer than 11 were considered immaterial. In this section I present the interpretations of the findings in comparison to studies from the literature review.

Emotional Intelligence

During this study, I conducted 15 interviews to ascertain the emotional intelligence strategies necessary for African American entrepreneurs to remain in business in Houston, TX, beyond the first five years. While there were 15 participants, there were different industries represented. Of the research participants, 15 out of 15 participants (100%) confirmed that emotional intelligence was an influential factor for business sustainability. Word and word phrases such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management formed the theme of emotional intelligence.

The findings from the study are consistent with those in the literature review. Research outcomes from three out of four (75%) participants in Group 1 indicated that the maturity level comes with experience. For example, a participant from the floral industry believed that if businesspersons cannot see a difference in themselves after 5 years versus when they first started dealing with customers, they are not growing emotionally. The findings supported Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) explanation of how the maturity level of individuals impacts the leadership styles as well as their focus on organizational goals.

The results of emotional intelligence in African American entrepreneurs was consistent with Goleman's (1996) statement legitimizing emotional intelligence as a successful strategy for resolving workplace adversities. Data from one participant's transcript addressing interview question 3 supports the idea of responsibility of African American entrepreneurs to control themselves. Interview question 2 asked the participants to explain their involvement in any formal emotional intelligence training. One participant's emphasized the necessity of being emotionally intelligent as an African American entrepreneur. During the formal emotional intelligence training, the participant took an emotional intelligence test. The participant believed that the results of the test revealed the level of emotional intelligence and ways to improve it by identifying their strengths and weaknesses. In this example, the participant demonstrated emotional intelligence by identifying awareness of the leadership styles and the participant's own behaviors, strengths, and weaknesses (Thory, 2012).

In Group 2, 11 of 11 participants (100%) provided in-depth details of emotional intelligence. Only 1 out of 15 participants (7%) had ever received emotional intelligence training. The rest were not aware such training existed. The common theme of emotional intelligence related to word phrases such as emotional responses, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management. These word phrases formed the final theme of emotional intelligence. Group 1 provided intricate details on the word phrase, relationship management. The interpretation of these findings relates to the RQ as to what strategies successful African American entrepreneurs utilize to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial five years.

Emotional intelligence in any industry coheres to business sustainability, meaning that more emotionally developed leaders help organizations to thrive for a longer period of time. One participant elaborated on how consistent emotional intelligence training would aid in employee development in different areas of the organization. This example emulates the work of Mayer et al. (2016) as they promoted new styles of emotional intelligence and opposing traditional development strategies. The concept posits that flexibility is needed to be truly emotional intelligent. The findings support what is already known of the importance of emotional intelligence. The goal will be to spread awareness of not only what emotional intelligence is but the resources that are available to be properly trained.

Leadership Styles

Through the process of data coding, leadership styles were a theme developed from common phrases. Four out of four participants (100%) from Group 1 provided

information on leadership styles, and eight of 11 participants (72%) of Group 2 provided data on leadership styles. Annotations of the theme of leadership styles included common phrases such as transformational, transactional, laissez-faire leadership, and leadership characteristics. As explained by the participants, leadership style identification was crucial in their industries and expertise. It was concluded that finding the appropriate leadership style was dependent on the type of subordinates that work for a particular organization.

Both groups confirmed that leadership styles were an influence on emotional intelligence. Goleman (2005) suggested that leaders with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to engage in information sharing, trust, and risk-taking with employees. Overall, 12 participants (80%), leaders from various industries, confirmed that understanding leadership styles was important for business sustainability. In the literature review, Harms and Crede (2010) concluded that the traits of a transformational leader were similar to those of an emotionally intelligent individual. Therefore, there was a direct link in the type of leadership style an individual chose and their level of emotional intelligence.

Secondary Themes

During the coding process, there were frequent themes that appeared between 11 and 19 times. These themes were identified as secondary themes as the common phrases were submethods of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, role modelling, social awareness, listening and feedback, problem-solving, being knowledgeable, restraint, transparency, and training and teaching. These findings were consistent with the literature

in Chapter 2. In research of different emotional intelligence development methods used in choosing appropriate leadership styles, the secondary themes were influential factors used in emotional intelligence trainings.

In support of the conceptual framework, Nicholson and Carroll (2013) asserted that leadership development was a set of processes by which individuals engage and measure their skills. The conceptual framework and the emerged themes show that it is possible for an organization to become an emotionally intelligent environment by sharing different strategies and ideas. The findings of this study align to each phase of the conceptual framework in the development of the primary and secondary themes.

In this context, the data is indicative of the findings by the themes of emotional intelligence and leadership styles present in the participants' transcripts. The literature in Chapter 2 reflect the themes from the participant interviews. The conceptual framework highlighted these themes in four stages identifying the influence of emotional intelligence. Through a rigorous data analysis, the conclusion is that by practicing emotional responses and sharing ideas and strategies for coping with change, leaders of an organization may generate knowledge within the organization allowing the culture to become a knowledge-based practicing organization. The work of Lahtinen (2013) on knowledge-based cultures was supported by these findings. It is essential to understand the common goal of emotional intelligence and the high value placed on emotionally intelligent organizations.

Limitations of the Study

The scope of this interview study encompassed two industries; secondary and tertiary. The word industry replaced the organizations' names to refrain from exposing the organizations' identity. There were several limitations of this study. The first limitation was related to the time constraints of the interviews with the participants. A total number of 15 participants served the purpose of exploring data of this study. There were no changes to the recruitment plan, interview protocol, nor the interpretation of the data. The findings of the two groups were genuine as the information emerged from the participants' data on the transcripts.

Omitting certain industries may have included the possibility of different emerged themes. A larger sample size may have produced greater results or opposing results of the findings. These possibilities may have influenced the results of this study. Qualitative interviewing allows the researcher to obtain information from the participants enhancing the support of the findings. Without interviewing the participants from the third industry no analytic generalization of this limitation were possible.

Data collection was through semistructured interview questions. The responses from the participants may have answered the questions based on their perception of what the researcher wanted to hear. The results of the study show no evidence of misconstrued information.

A limitation of the study included participants may provide answers to the interview questions per what they believed the purpose to be. There was no evidence regarding misleading information, as the participants were provided with copies of the

transcripts to review the accuracy of data. Member checking captured the responses of the participants' interviews accurately, and I created an audit trail of their responses and updates. Each response was unique to the participants' experiences; thus, mitigating conferred generalizations. As evidence of trustworthiness, a methodological triangulation eliminated bias, and rich descriptions of the data and a conceptual framework augmented transferability.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future research include further examination of the different methods of increasing the emotional intelligence of African American entrepreneurs. In Chapter 4, there is an explanation of the primary and secondary themes. While the primary themes have frequency scores of 20 times or greater, the secondary themes scored between the range of 11-19. Themes such as social awareness, self-awareness, and feedback, problem solving are a few secondary themes emerged from the data on the transcripts. These emerged themes warrant further examination of how these different emotional intelligence strategies influence business sustainability in African American entrepreneurs.

The purpose of this study was to understand what strategies African American entrepreneurs utilize to increase emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial five years. While the literature review provided information on the use of emotional intelligence in the workplace, this study revealed different strategies for controlling emotional reactions that have an influence on business sustainability. Though

the criteria for this study included the owners of an organization that has been in business for at least five years, the study revealed additional findings for future implications.

Future research could involve a qualitative ethnography study seeking a cultural pattern on the interdependency of emotional intelligence on other levels in the organization. Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2016) explained the Emotional Intelligence Test to measure an individuals' level of emotional intelligence. The emotional intelligence test may offer statistical evaluations supportive to the quantitative research. These studies might offer deductive data on the importance of emotional intelligence within organizational units and inductive data on lived experiences of emotional intelligence from one area to another department within an organization. Stakeholders would benefit from the quantitative and qualitative research studies to ascertain and execute emotional intelligence strategies between various levels.

There were two major themes emerged from the data provided by the participants; emotional intelligence and leadership styles. From all 15 participants, 14 participants (93%) highlighted emotional intelligence as an integral factor in business sustainability. Thirteen participants (80%) acknowledged leadership styles development as an essential method used in business sustainability. Addressing the research question, as to how, does emotional intelligence influence business sustainability within emotional intelligence training within a high performing organization, the results indicated through emotional maturity (emotional intelligence) and leader influence (leadership styles).

Quantitative Study

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how African American entrepreneurs utilize strategies to increase emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial five years. Using a qualitative centralized research question formed 10 semistructured interview questions. Emerging themes supported by the literature in Chapter 2. While this may inductively add to scholarly literature, there remains a gap coagulating the two topics of emotional intelligence and African American entrepreneur business sustainability. A quantitative study may offer a postpositivist worldview focusing on empirical observation and plausible claims of the stages of emotional intelligence with dependency on other levels within an organization (Patton, 2002). Perhaps a study of such would provide statistical evidence bridging the gap in the literature on emotional intelligence and African American entrepreneur business sustainability.

Qualitative Ethnography Study

A single case study and a multiple case study, both contain a methodological framework to explore the process of a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The benefit of an ethnography study may offer patterns of a knowledge-based culture learning from other departments. Alluding to this recommendation would support the emerged theme of leadership styles. While the study may not directly link the gap in the literature on emotional intelligence within African American business sustainability, the study would identify patterns of emotional intelligence. Sub-methods were useful to the emerged themes and findings of this study.

Implications

The general problem is that there is no formal, emotional intelligence training utilized by minority entrepreneurs in the United States; this lack of training contributes to a high failure rate within the first five years of business (Bagshaw, 2000). It also contributes to the gap in research regarding leadership styles and the best practices of emotional intelligence within leadership training. The research findings included information useful to stakeholders and future scholars researching emotional intelligence within African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability. In this section are the implications for social change, theory, and practice.

Implications for Social Change

Developing an emotionally intelligent environment by providing strategies to control emotional responses have implications for positive social change within any organization. The implications for positive social change were possible by the data extracted from the lived experiences of the participants. This study may serve as inductive research adding to the body of knowledge of emotional intelligence within African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability by publishing journals and manuals. Stakeholders may find the applications of the results beneficial to their organizations as leaders build an emotionally intelligent culture. One of the recommendations for additional research study included an ethnography study on the lived experiences of emotional intelligence training between various levels of the organization. Provisions by several participants explaining their experiences of emotional

intelligence in their organization alluded to this recommendation. The results may conclude a better community of leaders sharing knowledge and preparing future leaders.

Implications for Theory

The literature review revealed a gap in emotional intelligence training and the best leadership styles of African American entrepreneurs as it pertained to business sustainability (Bagshaw, 2000). While the results of this study support the assertion that emotional intelligence training and appropriate leadership styles are methods used in African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability, there remains a lack of literature on the coagulation of emotional intelligence and African American entrepreneurs'' business sustainability. Future implications of theory allude to more research on the influence of the emotional intelligence training within business sustainability strategies. The information from the research findings may narrow the gap in the literature relating two topics of emotional intelligence and African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability.

Implications for Practice

The research findings may deem important for stakeholders to emotional intelligence training in order to achieve long term business sustainability. Clarke and Higgs (2017) believed that although there has been much development of leadership development models, most have failed to account for the differentiation that is present in leadership training and development. Ghosh and Rajaram (2015) found that 75% of business success is driven by emotional intelligence. The lack of proficiency alluded to other practices in the organizations, such as emotional intelligence training. The research

results supported the assertion that the practice of emotional intelligence and appropriate leadership styles were instrumental methods used in African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability. Stakeholders may find this information useful to develop a knowledge base practicing organization.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of what strategies African American entrepreneurs utilize t increase emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond the initial five years. Using an situational leadership model formed the conceptual framework of the study. Data collection included the transcripts of 15 participants' lived experiences. The research participants acknowledge that emotional intelligence and leadership styles were influential methods used in ensuring African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability. The participants provided personal accounts of their lived experiences throughout the lifetime of the organization

Data collection included interviews using a semistructured, open-ended interview questions. Themes generated during the coding process from the data on the transcripts. There was an overarching response from the participants of the primary themes named, emotional intelligence and leadership styles. The secondary themes were supportive methods used African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability.

While the findings of this study confirmed emotional intelligence and leadership styles as influential factors in business sustainability, some of the recommendations included more investigation on emotional intelligence and race-specific leadership styles. The practices of consistent emotional intelligence training are apparent and useful in

African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability; yet, there remains a lack of literature coagulating the two topics. The research findings have potential implications for additional research and positive social change. Implications for future research may seek information of the numeric value on the stages of emotional intelligence training with dependency on other levels within an organization and an inductive study using a qualitative ethnography study seeking cultural patterns on the interdependency of emotional intelligence training on other levels in the organization.

Implications for positive social change included developing a more sustainable organization. The findings of this study provided stakeholders and organizational leaders with the opportunity to build a knowledge-based practicing organization. The strengths of these findings concluded with informational tools for leaders to become better leaders and develop future leaders. My recommendations for further research would complement the body knowledge on emotional intelligence training coupled with African American entrepreneurs' business sustainability.

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Appendix A: The Proposed Interview Protocol Before Field Test

Thank you in advance for agreeing to be a part of this study. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes. I will be asking you questions regarding emotional intelligence and strategies impacting African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX. I will be taking notes as you respond to each question. I will also be tape recording the session for the accurate coding of the session. Do you have any questions or clarifications that you would like to ask before we begin? I will be emailing you a summary of the transcript of this session at a later time to verify for accuracy or if your response has changed. You have the right to stop the interview at any time based on the consent agreement that you signed earlier. Are you ready to start the interview?

Research Question:

What are the common understandings of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence that contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial five years in Houston, TX?

Interview Questions:

IQ1: What behaviors have you adopted that are critical to your entrepreneurial success?

IQ2: Have you ever received formal emotional intelligence training?

IQ3: What role has emotional intelligence had on your success?

IQ4: How do you incorporate emotional intelligence into your business practices?

IQ5: What experiences personally, professionally, or other contributed to your success?

IQ6: What type of supports have you encountered to aid in increasing emotional intelligence?

IQ7: What type of emphasis is put on emotional intelligence in your organization?

IQ8: What has been the hardest component of increasing your emotional intelligence?

Appendix B: Field Test Solicitation E-mails to Faculty Experts

Dear Professor,

My name is Breanna Johnson, and I am conducting a field test and would love for you to participate as I need your expertise in aligning the research method to the interview questions. Your input would allow me to make revisions as well as improve the quality of my current proposal. Attached is the problem statement, purpose statement, research question, and interview questions. I would appreciate if you could provide feedback by the end of next week to help me generate an adequate dissertation proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

Breanna Johnson

PHD General Management Problem	PHD Specific Management Problem	PHD Purpose Statement	Research Questions	PHD: Identify gap in the literature	Framework (conceptual or theoretical)
The general problem is that there is no formal, emotional intelligence training utilized by minority entrepreneurs in the United States; this lack of training contributes to a high failure rate within the first five years of business (Bagshaw, 2000).	The specific problem is that some African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX lack the emotional intelligence required to be self-employed and remain in business beyond the first five years (Cronin, 2014).	The purpose of this qualitative interview study is to gain a robust shared understanding of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence and remain in business beyond an initial five years in Houston, TX.	What are the common understandings of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence that contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial five years in Houston, TX?	Very little data exists on formal emotional intelligence training and strategies for African American entrepreneurs.	In this study, the conceptual basis was drawn from Salovey and Mayer's (1990) emotional intelligence (EI) theory.

Interview Questions:

1. How do you define emotional intelligence?

2. How do you describe any emotional intelligence training you have received?

3. What strategies do you use to increase emotional intelligence?

4. What are your biggest challenges when fitting emotional intelligence into your organization's culture?

5. Describe your beliefs regarding emotional intelligence and business sustainability.

6. What was your approach for incorporating emotional intelligence into your personal business practices?

7. How do you compare your emotional intelligence today to your first five years of operation?

8. What has been the hardest component of increasing your emotional intelligence?

9. Have your beliefs changed over time in relation to emotional intelligence?

10. What type of leadership styles and qualities does an entrepreneur need to possess to be considered emotionally intelligent?

Appendix C: The Updated Interview Protocol After Field Test

Thank you in advance for agreeing to be a part of this study. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. I will be asking you questions regarding emotional intelligence and strategies impacting African American entrepreneurs in Houston, TX. The terms emotional intelligence, emotional reactions, and emotional awareness will be used interchangeably. I will be taking notes as you respond to each question. I will also be tape recording the session for the accurate coding of the session. Do you have any questions or clarifications that you would like to ask before we begin? I will be emailing you a summary of the transcript of this session at a later time to verify for accuracy or if your response has changed. You have the right to stop the interview at any time. Are you ready to start the interview?

Research Question:

What are the common understandings of what strategies African-American entrepreneurs adopt to increase their emotional intelligence that contributes to them remaining in business beyond the initial five years in Houston, TX?

Interview Questions:

1. What does emotional awareness mean to you?

2. Have you ever received emotional intelligence training? If yes, what was that like? If no, how did you learn what it is?

3. What strategies do you use to control your emotional reactions?

4. Please describe any changes that have taken place in your organization.

5. Describe your beliefs regarding emotional reactions and how it is related to business sustainability.

6. Are you expected to hide any emotions in implementation of change?

7. How do you compare your emotional intelligence today to your first five years of operation?

8. What has been the hardest component of increasing your emotional intelligence?

9. Have your beliefs changed over time in relation to emotional intelligence?

10. What type of leadership styles and qualities does an entrepreneur need to possess to be considered emotionally intelligent?

Appendix D: Details of Field Experts Consulted

Faculty Experts	Program	Research Method Experience	Subject Matter Experience
Expert 1	MGMT	Descriptive, case study, phenomenology, ethnography	correlation, regression, general linear models, logistic regression, cluster and segmentation, experimental designs
Expert 2	MGMT	Qualitative and Quantitative	Organizational Culture, harassment, bullying, leadership, organizational behavior, conflict management, organizational change
Expert 3	MGMT	Qualitative and Quantitative	LOC – Leadership and Organizational Change; Organizational Behavior; Organizational Culture; Team Dynamics and Team Cognition; Cross-Cultural and Comparative Management; Leadership Effectiveness in Emerging Economies; Job Stress and Coping in Organizations; Personal and Professional Development; Care
Expert 4	MGMT	Quantitative	Management and I/O Psychology - Teams/Personality/Leadership/Organizational Behavior
Expert 5	MGMT	Qualitative	Organization & Management, Ebusiness Management; Case study; ethnography; phenomenology; organizational leadership; strategic management; organizational culture, cross culture management; transformational and transactional leadership; global management; comparative management; organizational change; small business management; global business management
Expert 6	MGMT	Qualitative	Consulting. Conflict Resolution, Diversity Gender Issues, entrepreneurship, international business cross-cultural mgmt, military issues, leadership peace studies, future studies, organizational behavior non-profit management organizational development and change, disaster mgmt and first responders; strategic planning sustainability developing markets and economics internationalization of SMEs
Expert 7	MGMT	Phenomenology/ Critical Theory, Grounded Theory, Reflexive, Heuristic, Ethnographic	Cultural and Organizational Diversity, Governance, Human Resource Management, Leadership and Organizational Change, Learning Management, Management Theory, Organizational Culture, Organizational Development, Organizational Leadership, Organizational Performance/ Improvement Designs
Expert 8	MGMT	Qualitative	LOC,Management and organization theory. Generational theory, empowerment theory,

			systems theory. Leadership Development, Organization Dynamics and Development.

Appendix E: Responses from Field Test Experts

NAME OF EXPERT	RESPONDED (Y / N)?	RESPONSE
EXPERT 1	**N**	No response
EXPERT 2	**Y**	"Be clear and specific in your interview questions to get the answers you desire"
EXPERT 3	**N**	No response
EXPERT 4	**N**	No response
EXPERT 5	**Y**	"May be possible issue with asking them to define a concept they are unfamiliar with"
EXPERT 6	**Y**	"Well aligned with conceptual framework and theoretical foundation" "Your interview questions should focus on how EI may explain the success criteria that entrepreneurs use"
EXPERT 7	**N**	No response
EXPERT 8	**N**	No response

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

Participant Identifier:		Date (mm/dd/yyyy):	
Start Time (0000hrs):		End Time (0000hrs):	

1. What does emotional awareness mean to you?

2. Have you ever received emotional intelligence training? If yes, what was that like? If no, how did you learn what it is?

3. What strategies do you use to control your emotional reactions?

4. Please describe any changes that have taken place in your organization.

5. Describe your beliefs regarding emotional reactions and how it is related to business sustainability.

6. Are you expected to hide any emotions in implementation of change?

7. How do you compare your emotional intelligence today to your first five years of operation?

8. What has been the hardest component of increasing your emotional intelligence?

9. Have your beliefs changed over time in relation to emotional intelligence?

10. What type of leadership styles and qualities does an entrepreneur need to possess to be considered emotionally intelligent?

Transcription Date:		Duration:	
Date Sent for Member Checking:		Date returned from Member Checking:	