

## **Emotional Intelligence: An Irrefutable Component for Pastoral Leadership in Crisis Situations**

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### INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence EI is also known as emotional quotient EQ. It is the act of understanding, managing, relating, controlling and influencing behaviors. It is the intelligence use of reasoning to understand, empathize and communicate effectively to someone in pain, joy or in times of crisis. During the rave of the pandemic, some pastors lost members to the virus, while others had members quarantine, and some were battling with members in specialize hospital as COVID 19 patients. There are other crises such as closure of schools, churches, banks, and other institutions. The closure of churches and massive retrenchment of workers led to financial crisis in many families, churches and other organizations. Since pastors are spiritual guidance and fathers to their church members, they are responsible for the wellbeing of their members. Unfortunately, this creates emotional imbalance for the pastor because members seek answers and believe that the pastor has solution to their current challenges.

Therefore, this paper investigates emotional intelligence as an irrefutable component for effective pastoral leadership in order to deal with the COVID 19 pandemic. The goal is to underscore emotional intelligence as panacea to COVIC 19 crisis through effective pastoral leadership in the contemporary church.

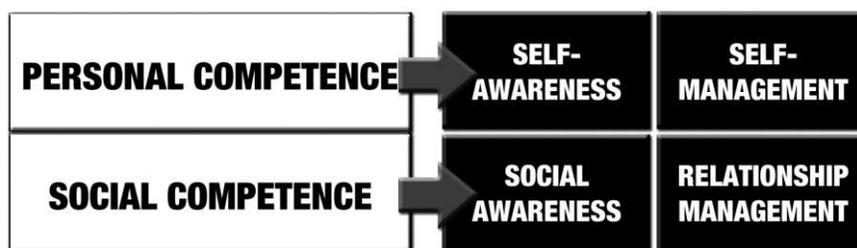
## The Concept of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence EI/EQ is the ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict (Goleman, 1998). According to Cherneiss and Goleman (2001, 14), emotional intelligence EI/ emotional quotient EQ refers to an ability to effectively control one's self and learn methods to cope with stress, anger, and confusion. It refers to the informed use of emotions and feelings in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them.

Emotional intelligence EI/EQ is a recent discovery in the field of management, psychology and leadership. It involves understanding and identifying feelings, emotions and using the understanding of these emotions to navigate relationship and the daily life of any individual (Tabari and Ghorbani, 2009). It involves both the internal and external characteristics which include cognitive and interpersonal skills. Goleman asserts that looking deeply at almost any factor that influences organizational effectiveness; and the individual will find that emotional intelligence plays a vital role. For instance, there have been price hike, fuel crisis, Boko Haram, kidnapping and covid 19 pandemic. At this juncture, it is essential for pastors to understand people's needs and find a better way of meeting those felt needs. To Emuze (2016), emotional intelligence EI/EQ is relational in nature and crisis emerges when relationship is not properly managed due to poor understanding of individual differences.

The pastor must possess a certain degree of emotional intelligence to enable him cope with the striving changes that occurs daily due to poor or uncontrolled governmental leadership. There is a need to identify and understand the great challenges that worshippers today face at different places of service in the contemporary church. Everyone wants to be

happy, this has influences everything that an individual do. This is evident starting from the choice of job and place of resident. There is an inert desire to seek happiness and many will do anything if only to achieve that. Such feelings will sometimes show in the right direction and sometimes in the wrong direction. Pastors must have a feeling that points them to the right direction. They must learn the different between feelings that are irrelevant and misleading, and feelings that are relevant for pastoral leadership. In other words, emotional intelligence enables leaders to tune into the gut feelings that are most accurate and helpful in making difficult decisions. There are several domains of emotional intelligence some are intrapersonal and others are interpersonal. According to Goleman (2014) and Amuze (2016), the four skills that together make up emotional intelligence are: self-awareness skill, self-management skill, social-awareness skill and relationship management skill. The self-awareness and self- management skills are more about the leader. The bottom two skills, social awareness and relationship management are how the leader relates with his people or environment.



**Figure 1: Diagrammed showing the relationship of the four skills**

Goleman explained intra-personal and inter-personal skills as:

**Self-Awareness:** Self- awareness is the ability to accurately perceive your own emotions in the moment and understand your tendencies across situations. Self- awareness includes staying on top of your typical reactions to specific events,

challenges, and people. Therefore, a keen understanding of your tendencies is important; it helps you quickly make sense of your emotions. According to Bradberry and Greaves (2009) “Self- awareness is a foundational skill; when you have it, it makes the other emotional intelligence skills much easier to use.” As a leader, your ministry is defined according to the amount of self- awareness you possess, for your self-awareness increases people satisfaction with the leadership style of the Pastor. Blanchard, Fowler, Hawkins asserts that pastors needs to take charge of their life at work, at home, and in their community (nd), in order to be effective in their pastoral leadership responsibility. Hence, pastors are to be watch-man over their own emotions if they are to manage the emotions of others. It is not possible manage the emotions of others unless the person understand and manage his own emotions.

**Self-Management:** Self- management dependent on your self-awareness and is the second part of personal competence. Self-management is the ability to use the awareness of your emotions to stay flexible and direct your behavior positively. This means managing emotional reactions to situations and people. Some emotions create a paralyzing fear that makes thinking so cloudy that the best course of action is nowhere to be found. Martinez, (1997); Tischler et al., (2002) opines that Self-regulation or self-management is the ability of an individual to regulate the rational and emotional mental processes in balanced ways to provide an emotional support for the rational mind to make logically correct and socially acceptable decisions and judgments. Ultimately, leaders and pastoral leadership needs to possess self-management skills if they are to properly manage the organization or the church in a transformative fashion. The concept of the above dimensions depict that understanding of one’s self creates the avenue for one to better manage him or her. Therefore, self-awareness and self-management skills provide pastoral leadership the insight for effective and efficient behavioral management leading to social efficiency.

**Social Awareness:** social awareness is the ability to understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people; pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognize the power dynamics in a group or organization. Amuze defines social awareness as the ability to sympathize with others and learn about their views (2016). Social awareness is beyond sympathy, it is the ability to empathize, feeling the pains of others empathically. “Social awareness is ability to accurately pick up on emotions in other people and understand what is really going on in their minds. This often means perceiving what other people are thinking and feeling even if you do not feel the same way. It is easy to get caught up in your own emotions and forget to consider the perspective of the other party” (Goleman et al 2014, 38). One of the major tasks of pastoral leadership is the ability to sense and carefully calculate the trauma follower’s face during the COVID19 period and the subsequent lockdowns, restrictions, lack of salary, and the fear spread on by fake news through the social media platforms and other sources. This calls for social understanding and alertness.

**Social Intelligence or Relationship Management:** it is being able to tune your emotions to serves a social purpose, connecting you to other people and the world around you. Relationship management is the ability to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict. Relationship management is also the bond you build with others over time. People who manage relationships well are able to see the benefit of connecting with many different people, even those they are not fond of. Solid relationships are something that should be sought and cherished mostly in pastoral leadership. According to Amuze pastoral leadership with high level of establish relationship do much better in ministry with an outstanding relationship above spares (2016). Relationship is the bedrock of pastoral leadership, it could be said that the factors that influence the growth of the church whether positive or negative are integrated in one factor called pastoral relationship.

## Biblical Basis of Emotional Intelligence

The Bible is the written word of God. It is a record of God's dealings with humanity for his purpose (Gen. 1&2). It is a collection of records that delineates God as a relational being to man and other creation both in the past, present and will be in the future. Therefore, throughout history God has been understood and known as a relational being, (Gen 2: 18) who continually relates and interacting emotionally with his creation and humans. A careful study of the major biblical accounts in the scripture shows the heartfelt emotions of God streaming down in the persistent interaction between God and the people of Israel. Mostly, his emotions are aroused as reactions to people's actions. The divine acts of God revealed in the Bible were not only caused by his sovereign plan, but also displayed as his own faithful correspondence to the people of God based on the covenant relationship with them. On the overall, the Bible illustrates the development of leadership via emotional intelligence.

“When Jesus saw her sobbing and the Jews with her sobbing, a deep compassion welled up within him. He said, “Where did you put him?” Master, come and see, they said. Now Jesus wept” (John 11: 33-35 TMB). Emotional Intelligence is what the Bible refers to as spiritual discernment, empathy and Godly wisdom. Jesus was Emotionally Intelligent. His tender sympathy with these afflicted friends, appeared by the troubles of his spirit. In all the afflictions of believers he is afflicted. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Tears of compassion resemble those of Christ (John 11:33). He discerned thoughts, rather than reacting to His circumstances or other people. An example is seen in the story of the woman whom they tried to stone for adultery (John 8:3-10) or the woman who wept on his feet and poured on him perfume from her alabaster box (Matt. 26: 6-10). Zacchaeus would not be left out, as Jesus was able to recognize him from afar (Luke 19:1-5). Jesus displayed emotional intelligence at the pool of Bethesda with the impotent man (John 5:1-10). What

would have been Jesus testimonies during the period of COVID 19, experiencing the lockdown and the lack in the land due to retrenchment of workers from organizations who could not afford to pay their workers and many more?

#### Understanding Pastoral Leadership in the Context of COVID 19

John Gardner's definition employs the terms emotional intelligence (EI) and example to inculcate the means by which leaders move people toward their objectives. According to Gardner (1990), leaders' persuasion is never enough unless accompanied by emotional connections geared visible understanding to both parties. Leaders must not only deliver a message to their followers, they must incarnate it personally. Pastoral leadership would do well to heed Gardner's emphasis on emotional intelligence (EI). The opposite form of this would be bullying and dictatorship. But this is not the method of pastoral leadership. Pastoral leadership involves more than merely achieving objectives, the heart of pastoral leadership is people. Pastoral leadership is people well-being centered leadership (Mitchell, 1970).

James McGregor's Burns, has wisely insisted that followers have a key role to play in the process of leadership. He acknowledges that all leaders are driven by particular motives. He also identified the institutional, political, and psychological arenas of pastoral leadership (1978). Furthermore, Burns noted that leaders seek to meet the needs of their followers and in order to achieve that leaders need to understand the basic needs of their followers more especially the COVID 19 period where everything seems to be collapsing. This may involve helping followers identify their highest needs before enabling them to meet those needs (1978). His observation brings to mind Harry Truman's Maxim, a leader is someone who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do and like it. While Truman's definition sounds attractive about leadership, it also falls short in describing pastoral leadership. While leaders do have goals and objective achievement as their

motives, pastoral leadership is move by the people, in the state of happiness or in sorrow.

The challenge of the COVID 19 such as lockdown, inflation of prices, sack of many workers as a result of inability to pay salaries and the closure of many companies due to movement ban and the fear of being infected by colleagues. Many have no food and others which they could only commit suicide if only to avoid this traumatic life. At times embracing the status quo is the greatest enemy to advancing Christian cause and the leader's task is to keep people from growing complacent and weary of life. Pastoral leadership should provide a reason to live. Most importantly, pastoral leadership is not primarily driven by their effort to satisfy the goals and ambitions of one person but those of people they serve (1978). Pastoral leadership is people concerned leadership.

Sanders (1994) stated that, leadership is influence. The term influence pervades current discussions of leadership. Sander correctly asserted that people who make no difference in other people's lives are not leaders (1994). Hershey also concurred that leaders must exert influence if they are to lead. To be more specific, in his definition he said. "Leadership is an attempt to influence the behavior of another individual or group" (1992, 16). Influence, however, is the product of Emotional Intelligence. To Lunenburg and Ormstein (1991), a leader should be able to influence others and modify behavior via emotional intelligence. Leadership occurs when people are move from where they are to where they ought to be. The result of leadership is that people are not in the same place they are before they were led. Pastoral leadership have a greater responsibility today more than ever in the use of emotional intelligence. Bierema revealed that emotions can be hiding until it is triggered. Due to the COVID 19 pandemic so many emotions have been triggered (2008). Pastoral leadership have a higher order of, "helping others understand and make sense of these emotion-laden experiences... represents one of the

most important and most challenging tasks for adult educators” (Dirkx 2008, 9).

It has been made clear in this research work the difference between Pastoral leadership and leadership in general. While pastoral leadership involves many of the same principles as general leadership. It has certain distinctive qualities that must be understood and practiced if spiritual leaders are to be successful. The following are the distinctive elements of spiritual leadership implied in the definition.

1. Pastoral leadership is tasked with moving people. This is made possible by understanding God's will. Pastors must make every effort to move their followers. Who had been promoting their own agendas, to pursue God's purposes, until this happens, pastors have not actually led. They may have exhorted, manipulated, bullied, or held an office, but they have not led unless their people have adjusted their lives to God's will.
2. Pastoral leadership is an accountability leadership. Pastors are accountable to God for every soul. Just as a teacher has not taught until their students have learned, pastors should not blame their followers when they fail to follow. Leaders should not make excuses; they assume their responsibility which is to move people to do the will of God. Until they succeed in this, they have not fulfilled their role as leaders. Pastoral leadership is taking people from where they are to where God wants them to be.
3. Pastoral leadership focuses on people. Leadership is fundamentally a people business (Maslow, 1954). It is not merely about budgets or visions or strategies. It is about people. Pastors should never lose sight of this fact. Pastoral leadership elevates people and makes them better for having followed. Pastors make out time

to influence their members in business, politics, and in other works of life, inside and outside the country.

4. Pastoral leadership influences all people. An important truth that should not be overlooked is that pastoral leadership can influence all people, not just Christians. God is at work in the school, local factory, as well as the local church. His agenda applies in the marketplace as well as the meeting place. Although, pastoral leadership will generally move God's people to achieve God's purposes. God can also use the pastors to exert significant influence upon unbelievers. Pastoral leadership should have influence over the secular society. Monti (1997, 9) has written: "It is a testimony to the awesome dignity that Almighty God has bestowed on each human soul that just one man can exert such a marked and lasting influence on the course of human events an influence for good or for evil."
5. Pastoral leadership should work from God's agenda. The greatest obstacle to effective pastoral leadership is when the leader starts pursuing his own agenda rather than seeking God's will. God is working throughout the world to achieve His purposes and to advance His kingdom. His concern is not to fulfill leader's dreams and goals or to build the kingdoms and careers. His purpose is to turn his people away from their self-centeredness and obsession with temporal materials, and to draw them into a relationship with himself, so pastors are His instruments for accomplishing his purposes.

Pastoral leadership must know how to manage their own emotions and able to understand the emotions of their followers and the context in which those emotions occur" (Shuck & Herd 2012, 168). Pastoral leadership is people-centric, understanding different perspectives are crucial for leadership

that is emotionally intelligent (Nelson & Low, 2011). “Leadership addresses emotional as well as conceptual work” (Heifetz & Linsky 2002, 116). To that end, Yukl (2010) acknowledges that emotional intelligence (EI) appears to be an important component for effective leadership. “Emotional intelligence can help leaders solve complex problems, make better decisions, plan how to use their time effectively, adapt their behavior to the situation, and manage crises” (Yukl, 2010, 213).

### Challenges of the COVID 19 Crisis

On March 11, 2020, corona virus (COVID 19) was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). According to the WHO a pandemic is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of people. A widespread endemic disease with an increasing number of infected people<sup>150</sup>. It is believing that the new corona virus strain originated from bats and was transmitted to humans in Wuhan, China. Medical-News-Today claimed that the first infected case in Wuhan was in December, 2019.<sup>151</sup> It added that some common symptoms of the COVID 19 include: fever, breathlessness, cough, sore-throat, headache, muscle pain, chills, loss of taste and smell and the full manifestations of these symptom fully takes effects after fourteen days and at that time there was not a cure.<sup>152</sup> In Nigeria, the first infected case was confirmed on 27<sup>th</sup> of February 2020, in order to curb the spread, the Federal Government of Nigeria together with Ministry of Health instituted the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19.

The Presidential Task Force (PTF) partnering with the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC), instituted control

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<sup>150</sup> [www.who.int/covid-19/information](http://www.who.int/covid-19/information)

<sup>151</sup> [www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

<sup>152</sup> [www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

measures to contain the outbreak of the virus. The control measures that were in two parts: the first part addresses the person, it emphasis personal safety and hygiene, which includes: social distancing, no shaking of hands, no sneezing or coughing in public places, wearing of mask (nose mask, face mask and shield, etc.), involve Cleaning/washing of hands often, Cough or sneeze in your bent elbow, not your hands. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, limit social gatherings and time spent in crowded places, avoid close contact with someone who is sick, clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.<sup>153</sup> The second part however, addresses cooperate safety, it measures includes an initial lockdown of non-essential activities; closure of schools; a ban on international flights, closure of NYSC orientation camps; ban on worship services or limited attendance of less than 20-50 worshippers depending on the size of the hall or worship centers. A restrictions on any kind of gatherings, which includes in-door and out-doors events such as sporting leagues, football tournaments, recreational parks and event centers. Economic, transit and densely populated cities like Lagos, Abuja and Ogun states were shut down completely to resist further spread of the virus.

Dr. Kuldip Bhatia an industrialist exclaimed that, “the lockdown has caused more human suffering than Covid-19 as there is no help for the industry nor are there unemployment benefits.” Speaking to the Tribune he said that people are facing serious pain and suffering, as they have no money or food, companies and bank are laying off working in mass daily with little or no help from the Federal Government (Tribune 2021). Bhatia like many others shared the sentiment that though the lockdown was good, the PTF co-NCDC did not do much in preparing the masses for the forth-coming lockdown. Hence, there were little or no preparation for what was coming and the result was serious untold suffering befalling the masses. The suffering rages from loss of jobs, lack of food, water and other

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<sup>153</sup> <https://covid19.ncdc.gov.ng/advisory/>

basic amenities. There is force separation of families as a result of the inter-state lockdown; parents were forced to leave for months without their children that were schooling in other parts of the country. In an interview with Rev. Sunday Adepoju and Rev John Jenfa both residing and pastoring churches in Lagos shared their ordeal of the event in a revelatory nature. Jenfa in clear terms revealed that the trauma of the COVID 19 lockdown is not one to be easily forgotten.

The inadequacy of the method has become painfully apparent. People's lifestyles are being changed, their problems are not solved, and their unsolved difficulties have grown worse than expected. Pastors sometimes are the last to learn of problems befalling their members, which had they been aware of earlier, they might have prevented from growing to larger proportions. However, Adepoju asserted that the lockdown took people unprepared and unaware, it created anxiety, fear, anger, hunger and pains. It affected the social life and well as the spiritual life of worshippers which in-turn elicited thoughts of pain, grief, depression, loneliness, crime, or suicide. Abulatan affirmed the better experiences shared that the lockdown only widen the income inequality gap and make less privileged people move into crime because they have to eat. "Solutions like social distancing and self-isolation in Nigeria are [for] privileged people [that] not everybody ([www.theafricareport.com](http://www.theafricareport.com)). According to Abulatan, the Federal Government needs to do more in relieving the masses from the scourge of suffering and pains cause by the PTF preventive measures.

A talk with Rev Sunday Adepoju shows that pastors at this time need to do more to connect to the members and followers than any other periods. Not too long ago, the members of each congregation lived close to one another. They were part of the same programme, job, and social organization; all of a sudden everything just stop and they are now all alone, without neighbors or any active friends. According to Adams (), this present problem of the church thus virtually shrieks for a fresh examination and application of theoretical concept of

shepherding, pastors needs to figure how to meet the needs of their members and followers. It is on this premise that the writer is postulating the following steps that will enable pastor's reach-out to the members using emotional intelligence as a guiding tool.

1. Pastoral Leadership and Self-understanding: Pastors should understand that they are also humans and are epizootic to the disease. Therefore, pastors and leaders should have a check list to be more self-aware of the effect the pandemic is afflicting on them and their households to be more effective in handling the crisis of their parishioners or members. Being a Pastor has a unique challenges and it should not be forgotten easily. Pastors are also experiencing what their members' experiencing and even more. During the COVID 19 era pastors experienced rejection, criticism, betrayal, loneliness, weariness; frustration, aggravation, disappointment, scarcity of food, lack of salary or delayed salary, over-dependence and the more. Therefore, emotional intelligence which is the ability to manage personal emotions and that of others become cogently essential at this time.
2. Pastoral Leadership and Self-management: Self-management is the act of taking good care of oneself, which means eating the right food at the right time, proper medical check-up, keeping to doctors recommendations, partaking in the regular excises and sleeping at when due. Most pastors spiritualize everything and in some instances fall victims of paralyses, stroke or untimely death. Odunlami opines that the important values of life are been damaged or destroyed. In her opinion, the overall health of the pastor is precious, which include biological health, family, work, friendship, peace of mind, hobbies, self-improvement, sport and relationships (2020). It will do

no good to anyone if the healer suddenly finds dead while trying to heal a patient. Therefore, pastors should manage their health properly so that they will be able to do much good during the era of the pandemic.

3. Pastoral Leadership and Social-awareness: There is a saying that an uninformed pastor is a deformed pastor. Social awareness is the ability to understand what is going on around an individual society. The pandemic has change the disposition of ministry in all ramifications. Pastors-leaders must be socially inclined and be well vast in the use of social media such as Facebook, YouTube, zoom and other applications in the furtherance of the gospel. Another vital aspect for pastor needs to know is to be in tune with current information that will enable him pass on informed information about the COVID 19.
4. Pastoral Leadership and Social Intelligence: Social intelligence is also known as relationship management. It is the ability to relate in a small or large scale. One major crisis during the COVID 19 pandemic is the sudden lack of friends and the unbridle loneliness that follows as people stayed home over and over waiting for the government to announce a relieve of restrictions. Rev. Adepoju submits that, “we try not to leave our members in loneliness, as we try to occupy them daily with short messages via Facebook, Youtube, and Whatsapp. These messages are words of encouragement and hope.” He continues by saying “all I tried to do was to connect with them telling them that I feel their pain also.” Pastors in the pandemic must learn to relate more to their members in order to suite their worries and troubling minds.

5. Pastoral Leadership and Inter-personal Relationship: There is a need for interpersonal relationship in pastoral leadership. Interpersonal relationship is an aspect of emotional intelligence EI/EQ, which synergies' the bond within two or more people in a relationship. Interpersonal skills are a critical, if not essential, part of effectively pastoral leadership. Interpersonally skilled pastors are more successful (Dierdorff, Rubin, & Morgeson, 2009; Van Velsor & Leslie, 1995) and interpersonally skilled pastors are more effective (Mumford, Campion, & Morgeson, 2007). Given that interpersonal skills are one of core skills necessary for pastoral leadership in the COVID 19 situation (Mintzberg, 1980). The interpersonal role of the pastor at this time involves motivating members and maintaining a web of relationships using the social media as a tool, with constant text and whatsapp messages.

### Conclusion

The COVID 19 pandemic created a ripple effect in the Africa and the world at large, destroying great institutions, organizations and leaving many jobless, hopeless and loneliness. The President in creating the Presidential Task Force for COVID 19 propose to help but in helping created more crises for the masses weight the option of the pandemic or hunger, suffering and loneliness. These masses therefore turn to the pastor who believed to have answer to every life challenge, leaving the pastor to be over labored and burdened. Thus, emotional intelligence is recommended for the pastor to manage him/herself and that of the members. The writer submits that the pastor should understand and manage their emotions before they can be of help to anyone. This self-understanding will help pastors to handle the emotional trauma of the members professionally and efficiently.

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**Notes.**