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The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Pastor Leadership in Turn-Around Churches [Dissertation Notice]

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International Leadership Institute.

The project began with an examination of the level of biblical knowledge elders and leaders possessed prior to the study. A pre-study questionnaire was given to all elders and leaders, and an open-ended interview was also conducted before the start of the study. Eight study lessons then were presented over a period of four months.

After the lessons were given, a post-study questionnaire and an open-ended interview were conducted with all the elders and leaders to determine the result of the ministry intervention. The results indicated that consistent and proper training will increase the biblical knowledge of elders and leaders and enable them to minister to God’s people effectively.


Preparing, selecting, and training lead pastors for established churches in the United States is a growing challenge as 84% of churches are in attendance decline or are failing to keep up with population growth in their communities. Interest in how leadership qualities influence the turnaround from a declining church into a growing church served as the impetus to explore the conceptual topics of turnaround churches and emotional intelligence (EI) competencies of lead pastors. This quantitative study compared the EI of lead pastors of Foursquare churches in the United States using the 15 competencies of the Bar-On EQ-i assessment to determine whether certain competencies were significantly different based on the church attendance pattern. Two subgroups were compared—pastors whose congregations were considered to be in decline, and those considered to have a congregation with a turnaround or growth pattern.

Statistical analyses revealed that five EI competencies (emotional self-awareness, independence, flexibility, assertiveness, and optimism) were significantly higher among pastors of turnaround churches, suggesting that pastors with higher levels of these specific EI competencies have a stronger likelihood of improving church attendance and promoting continued growth.


Research reveals that more than two thirds of the next generation leave their congregations during their teens and early 20s; the church is losing its children. The problem addressed in this study is the continuing challenge for church leaders, educators, and administrators to provide the best possible conditions for spiritual and organizational growth in order to retain the next generation. While observation and anecdotal evidence have suggested for a long time that the faith development of adolescents and young adults is influenced by family and church factors, no actual study had been done to investigate whether these observations can be confirmed and generalized across German-speaking Europe.

This study, based on the data gathered by Valuegenesis Europe, examines if a relationship between family and church variables and the faith development of adolescents and young adults in Austria, Germany, and Switzerland can be established. Applicable items were selected from...