

**The Influence of Context and Emotional Intelligence Practice in Leading a Physical
Fitness Testing Situation for Police Officers**

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Abstract

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has gained popularity in recent years due to its strong links to effective leadership. During the past few decades, various researchers have explored the importance of relationships and leadership achievement through the lens of EI (Pearman, 2011; Schneider, 2013). EI skills in sport leadership roles are crucial to maintaining strong relationships and positive outcomes. The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers. In particular, the study examines the emotions present leading up to the police bi-annual Physical Competency Test (PCT) and the influences PEOs have on the psychological states of the police officers completing the test. A qualitative descriptive approach with semi-structured interviews was employed to gather data from five PEOs and five police officers. Data were analysed using thematic analysis and themes were drawn using the theoretical framework of Goleman's (2004) five dimensions of EI and the Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Nelis et al., 2009).

The findings of the study revealed that EI skills are essential within the PEO's role due to the strong emotions present leading up to the PCT. Further, EI skills combined with effective communication can ultimately lead to trust within interpersonal relationships. The outcomes of this study clearly illustrate the need for the NZ Police to address the development of interpersonal skills within the PEO role specifically focusing on communication and building trust. Incorporating continuing education programmes aimed at developing EI and authentic collaboration skills should therefore develop strong interpersonal relationships within the role. This outcome is also relevant to the entire NZ Police force seeking to create effective leadership and strong relationships more broadly within the organisation.

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Attestation of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institute of higher learning."

Student: Kelly McCallum

Signature:

1 September 2020

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The NZ Police is a vast and complex leading organisation responsible for reducing crime and ensuring community safety. They pride themselves on living their values of professionalism, respect, integrity, commitment to the Māori and Treaty, empathy and valuing diversity (PRIMED). These values guide their daily decisions and ensure their dedication to fulfil trust and confidence in the people of New Zealand. The NZ Police are committed to being responsive to Māori and acknowledging the Treaty of Waitangi as NZ's founding document (NZ Police, 2020). Whilst their priority lies in the overall mission of "making New Zealand the safest country in the world" (NZ Police, 2020, p. 1), the NZ Police also place priority on the wellness of staff, and numerous measures are established to ensure the wellness and safety of the officers so they can carry out this purpose.

The Safer People group is a section of the NZ Police that actively supports the wellness and safety of the staff to ensure they remain fit for life and fit for purpose (NZ Police, 2020). Each police district contains a Safer People group and within each group is a health and safety advisor, a wellness officer and a physical education officer (PEO). The three roles work together to ensure the wellness of the district remains intact and that the officers are well enough to carry on the values of the business. Whilst the health and safety and wellness of the organisation is of utmost importance to the business, the PEO's role is to ensure overall fitness and health of the staff.

PEOs are the leaders in educating and guiding police to be physically and mentally fit for their job (NZ Police Association, 2019). The PEO's role encompasses a number of competencies, ranging from skill-based performance testing, to attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as increasing confidence and morale in staff. Due to the demands of police work, emotional states often run high amongst staff, so it is essential that PEOs are able to understand and manage the emotions present within the job through building relationships with the staff. The ability to lead self and others in managing emotions requires a certain degree of non-cognitive skills and competencies called emotional intelligence (EI) (Stein & Book, 2011).

1.1 Research Background

During the past few decades, research has explored the importance of relationships and leadership achievement through the lens of EI and how EI supports effective leadership (Pearman, 2011; Schneider, 2013). EI can be defined as a set of emotional and social qualities that enable us to influence the way we perceive and express ourselves (Stein & Book, 2011). EI, motivation and inspiration play an important role in determining success and developing

strong interpersonal relationships with the personnel the PEOs are testing (Chan & Mallet, 2011). The PEO's ability to create strong relationships with police staff is essential for preparing the police staff to carry out their daily duties. An important part of the PEO's role and probably one that most staff associate the PEO with is the bi-annual PCT. Whilst the PCT may appear to be a relatively straightforward test, the underlying influences of context and environment represent a challenge to the leadership of the PEO and the qualities of EI.

The PCT test assesses a police officer's ability to perform tasks relevant to police work using a combination of skill, strength and physical fitness (Newcops, 2020). The test must be completed within an age-related time frame once every two years. Although the end result of the PCT is a pass/fail, the pathway leading up to the test is by no means straightforward for the police. Failure to pass the test results in the police officer becoming non-deployable and deskbound until the next scheduled PCT test. Similar to a high performance sports coach preparing an athlete for a high performance situation, identifying and regulating emotions leading up to the main event such as the PCT could prove to be a critical skill for enabling PEOs to have positive relations with those personnel they test (Chan & Mallet, 2011).

In the months leading up to the PCT test, sergeants are required to nominate specific police officers who may need assistance in developing their fitness prior to the PCT. The police officers nominated become classed as remedial to the PEO, and the training process commences with training plans, sessions and one-on-one meetings to help support the police officer up to and during the PCT test. Likewise, a police officer who fails the PCT will also be classified as a remedial. Although the term *remedial* is the preferred label for this particular group of police officers within the organisation, the word *remedial* dates back to the 1860s through to the 1960s where remedial education was the preferred term to describe students who were academically backward or deficit in specific skills (Arendale, 2019; Clower & Escoll, 1977). Due to the word's negative connotation, this paper will refer to the remedial as *client*.

1.2 Research Context

Similar to many other physical education and sport leadership roles, the role of the PEO is subject to the discourse of what people perceive a PEO's role is (Dowling & Karhus, 2011; Garrett & Wrench, 2007; McEvilly et al., 2015; Olofsson, 2005; Rossi et al., 2009; Svensson & Levine, 2017; Varea & Underwood, 2015; Webb & McDonald, 2007). Descriptions such as 'PCT tester' or 'he/she runs the stopwatch' are often used by police officers to describe what the PEO's role consists of. As the PEO role falls under the same context as sport leadership, discourses associated with sport leadership are often focused on performance and skill, e.g., passing a physical skill test as opposed to focussing on the emotional states of the

staff or athlete (Lee & Chelladurai, 2016; Svensson & Levine, 2017). Furthermore, whilst the PEO role is a formal leadership position, the social construction of leadership leads to an emphasis on social, collaborative and relational experience (Dee et al., 2018). This perspective focuses on leadership as a collective approach and the PEO's interactions and constructions with the police officers in a particular context (Dee et al., 2018; Ferkins et al., 2018; Grint & Jackson, 2010). Despite the plethora of research on the importance of EI in sport leadership contexts (Crawford et al., 2018; Laborde et al., 2016; Mohiyeddini & LeBlanc, 2009; Wang, 2011), western views still support the discourse of sport leadership roles as physical skill based or performance based rather than an holistic perspective including the emotional state (Svensson & Levine, 2017).

The controversial debate on whether the PCT should exist or not within the sworn officers' role has gained momentum in recent months. The Police Association (2018) put forward a notion to re-examine the test after a number of its members criticised the components of the test and declared them irrelevant to the role of a sworn police officer. Furthermore, injuries created during the PCT were also a highlighted concern. Despite the adverse physical concerns associated with the test, recent movements challenging the PCT have also targeted the psychological challenges of the test. An illustration of this is demonstrated in the following statement, "now my main problem with the PCT is psychological. I get so wound up the weeks before I have to sit it that I feel physically sick. I get nervous just thinking about it" (Leask, 2019, p. 1).

Comparable to a sports coach preparing an athlete for a challenging upcoming game, identifying and regulating emotions leading up to the main event such as the PCT could prove to be a critical skill for enabling PEOs to have positive relations with the police officers (Chan & Mallet, 2011). Despite the recent popularity of EI research within sport leadership, there is no formal research to date exploring EI within the PEO role (Laborde et al., 2016; Mohiyeddini et al., 2009; Wang, 2011). Research within the physical domain of the role, such as running the PCT, has contributed to changing how the test is carried out. However, the emotional aspect of the test itself has never been formally discussed. Moreover, physical requirements of the NZ police officer role has been reviewed in recent years highlighting the physical demands associated with the high risk accompanying the dangerous tasks within the job but lacking reference to psychological wellbeing (Irving et al., 2019). Stephens and Pugmire (2008) investigated the determinants of psychological distress and self-rated health by measuring the hassles and uplifts of the small daily events experienced by NZ police staff. Although the authors explored the psychological wellbeing of police staff and concepts of EI, the actual influence of context and EI practice amongst leaders and staff was limited. Consequently,

there is a need to explore the importance of EI within the PEO role and the psychological and emotional pressures associated with the PCT.

1.3 Research Aim and Design

The purpose of this research was to explore the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers. Given the PEOs are in a formal leadership role, this study aimed to emphasise the significant connection between leadership and EI. This study aimed to take a closer look at: the expectations of the PEO to demonstrate EI; how the perspectives of the PEO differ from the perspectives of the client; and the improvements needed to enhance the EI of PEOs.

The study was guided by the underpinning research question “What is the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers?”

The research sub questions were:

- How are the PEOs expected to demonstrate EI with clients?
- How do PEOs perceive they demonstrate EI and how does this differ from client perspective?
- What improvements might be needed to enhance the EI of PEOs?

1.4 Methodology and Methods

The research study presents a post-positivist approach with a qualitative descriptive methodology. The post-positivist paradigm recognises that it is not possible to truly gain an objective understanding through measurement and observation without exploring the phenomenon using a variety of means (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Therefore, this study employed a combination of inductive and exploratory approaches. Semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were used. The semi-structured interview format required a flexible approach to ensure the interview allowed for discussion around the general questions (Dearnley, 2005; Gratton & Jones, 2010; Mojtahed et al., 2014). The study based the questions on a previously formulated theory drawn from the theoretical framework of Goleman’s (2004) five dimensions of EI and the Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Nelis et al., 2009; Reiter, 2017). These two models are relevant to the study as they both capture the non-cognitive elements of EI and the psychological pressures associated with emotions in challenging circumstances.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter one provides background information on the purpose of the research and outlines the significance of the topic within the research context. The research aim and questions are clearly stated and an overall research plan is presented. Chapter two critically reviews relevant literature in relation to the research topic. Literature specific to leadership, sport leadership and EI are examined. The concept of EI is analysed pertaining to past and current theories and models. Chapter three outlines the research framework and provides a rationale for the philosophical underpinnings of the study. The qualitative descriptive methodology, methods and data analysis are discussed, as well as the ethical considerations for the research. Chapter four presents the findings and the key themes synthesised from the interviews. Chapter five discusses the key themes and the significance of the research findings. Relevant literature supports the key findings. Chapter six concludes the key findings and limitations to the study as well as offering implications and recommendations for future research. The next chapter presents the literature relevant to this qualitative study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the theoretical foundations for the research within the concepts of leadership and EI, and examines the relationships between leadership, EI and the role of a PEO. Firstly, leadership is defined and the evolution of leadership styles are described with references made to associated literature. Secondly, the chapter introduces the concepts of emotions and EI. Goleman's (2004) conceptual theoretical framework of EI is explained and critiqued by referring to relevant EI models and literature. Lastly, the chapter discusses the dynamic relationship between leadership contexts and EIs with a specific focus on the role of the PEO and the relevance of EI within a role that is primarily perceived as a physical role. The literature review concludes with a general summary and a critique of the gaps in research relating to the PEO role and the perceptions surrounding the role.

2.2 Leadership

Leadership is a significant research topic in the social sciences. In the search for what defines leadership and the successful qualities of a good leader, numerous studies have tried to make sense of this phenomenon by generating hypotheses and theoretical viewpoints about what it means to be a great leader. The definition of leadership is one of the most debated topics in leadership literature, and, currently, a consensus around a formal, standardised definition of leadership has yet to be reached (Silva, 2016; Vroom & Jago, 2007). Although leadership definitions greatly vary, they share similar views on the involvement of change and having one or more followers (Vroom & Jago, 2007). These views have populated the current leadership research and tend to focus on specific traits of leadership (Avolio et al., 2009; Jackson & Parry, 2011; Vroom & Jago, 2007). More recently, literature has emerged that offers theoretical perspectives on the evolution of leadership in traditional organisational structures and the relationships between the leader and followers (Daft & Pirola-Merlo, 2009; Ferkins et al., 2018; Hackett et al., 2018; Jackson & Parry, 2011). Leadership theories have taken an evolutionary turn from focusing solely on the leader to including a vast array of individuals representing an entire spectrum of diversity (Avolio et al., 2009; Ferkins et al., 2018).

2.2.1 Evolution of Leadership

The lens through which we view leadership has evolved over the years. Leadership reflects the larger society and the theories evolve as the norms and understandings of the larger world change (Daft & Pirola-Merlo, 2009). Prior to the mid-twentieth century, leadership was viewed through a lens that attributed personality and behaviours to effective leadership (Jackson &

Parry, 2011). Mainstream theories have populated literature focusing on links between leadership and individuals who were born with extraordinary characteristics and traits to lead effectively. Traditional theories like the Great Man theory, the trait theory and behavioural theory were all fuelled by the continued assumption that the person in charge was the leader (Bono & Judge, 2004; Jackson & Parry, 2011; Organ, 1996). The Great Man theory proposed leadership as a pre-ordained trait that individuals were born with rather than something that is developed over time (Organ, 1996). In contrast, the trait theory proposed that these inherited traits, if identified, could possibly be trained and developed in non-leaders. These traits would then distinguish between ineffective and effective leaders (Bono & Judge, 2004; Germain, 2012; Jackson & Parry, 2011; Judge et al., 2002). However, the establishment of a universal list of traits linked to effective leadership proved to be difficult. As a result, the leadership paradigm shifted to focusing more on what a leader does and the behaviours differentiating effective leaders from ineffective ones.

2.3 Leadership, LMX and Trust

A vast number of variables and characteristics are associated with notions of what constitutes an effective leader. For some, effective leaders are attuned to other people's feelings and move them in a positive emotional direction (Goleman et al., 2001). For others, effective leaders demonstrate openness, clear communication, trust and cooperation with a purpose to develop the people around them (Larsson, 2017; Larsson & Vinberg, 2010; Piggot-Irvine, 2015). However, although numerous papers and the media emphasise the importance of leading effectively, effective leadership is not exclusively constituted by the leader alone; rather the *ship* within the term *leadership* highlights the importance of the relationship between the leader and the followers. From this perspective, the adopted leadership definition that guides the following sections is one that defines leadership as a collective achievement rather than something that belongs to an individual (Cullen-Lester & Yammarino, 2016; Ferkins et al., 2018).

A popular leadership model that demonstrates the dynamic relationship between leader and follower as a collective is the Leader Member Exchange (LMX) theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Hackett et al., 2018; Jackson & Parry, 2011). This theory seeks to highlight the importance of communication and understanding that people come from diverse backgrounds and not one style of leadership suits everyone. Graen (1995) first proposed the LMX theory based around three distinct phases that help to evolve the dyadic relationship between leader and follower. The process commences with the stranger phase, a formal exchange between the leader and follower that remains contractual and both are only bound by what is needed of them. In the

second phase, the acquaintance phase, social exchanges are increased and sharing resources and information are used as testing agents to build a rapport between the dyads. In the final phase, the mature partnership stage, the relationship between leader and follower is highly developed and factors such as trust and mutual respect are extremely high and are at the forefront of the relationship (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). However, this process is not as straightforward as it may appear. The LMX phases require a high level of communication between the dyads and for many organisations this can be very time consuming (Maslyn, 2006). Maslyn (2006) suggests that an acquaintance relationship between leader and follower would be more beneficial for achieving outcomes and incurs less time rather than a mature stage relationship that involves more communication. Despite researchers' differentiating emphasis on the LMX phases, the LMX model is proceeding with relentless empirical research, and pre-existing relational theories are regaining popularity (Hackett et al., 2018; Jackson & Parry, 2011; Murrell & Blake-Beard, 2017). An example of a pre-existing theory gaining popularity is the Tuckman and Jensen (1977) group development model incorporating the five stages of forming, norming, storming, performing and adjourning. Whilst Tuckman and Jensen's (1977) model focused more on group dynamics, Tuckman (1965) characterised each stage as embodying two realms: the interpersonal realm and the task realm (Kiweewa et al., 2018). The interpersonal aspect of the model parallels the LMX theory of leader-follower interaction and relationship to one another. This leader-follower relationship connects the personally earned authority with the role-vested authority to create a relationship that is based on trust (Jackson & Parry, 2011).

Furthermore, research has found that the LMX theory is relevant to sport leadership contexts and trust (Hoye, 2004; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). Hoye (2004) examined the quality of LMX within a sample of thirty-four sporting organisations and their relationship with board performance. He found that higher levels of board performance directly related to the board members who demonstrated higher leader-member exchanges compared to their respective relationships with board members. The reciprocal relationship of trust between board members, board executives and board chairs determined the effectiveness of board performance (Hoye, 2004; Hoye & Cuskelly, 2003). Similarly, Kent and Chelladurai (2001) explored the relationship between transformational leadership and LMX within sport managers and their subordinates. Transformational leadership focuses on the leader-follower relationship that benefits both the individual and the follower through collective achievement (Kent & Chelladurai, 2001). They found a direct correlation between high levels of transformational leadership, LMX, high trust and high functioning sport organisations (Kent &

Chelladurai, 2001). Both studies highlighted the importance of leadership based on respect and high mutual trust.

Research has demonstrated the importance of trust as a contributing factor to group performance (Benamati et al., 2010; Colquitt et al., 2007; De Jong & Elfring, 2010). However, there is a lack of empirical evidence in conceptualising and measuring how trust develops over time within interpersonal relationships (Burke et al., 2007; Spence et al., 2010). Williams (2001) was the first to emphasise the importance of emotions and of developing trust by adding emotional states as an affect-based antecedent to moderate the role of motivation to trust, which in turn specifies a distal outcome of trust. Her added dimensions portray the need to address both the cognitive and the affective influences of social group membership on trust (Williams, 2001). Although her model progressed the trust literature from the perceived dimensions of trustworthiness (Mayer et al., 1999; Williams, 2001) into social and group development, it still fails to explore the dynamic processes and outcomes affiliated with interpersonal trust (Burke et al., 2007; Piggot-Irvine, 2015; Williams, 2001).

Whilst the research is limited in relation to the measurement of trust over time within an interpersonal relationship, organisational learning theory (OLT) explores the dynamic processes involved in extremely complex interactions that lead to openness and trust (Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010). More specifically, OLT seeks to detect the source of the problem and address the errors within it (Argyris, 2002; Boreham & Morgan, 2004; Piggot-Irvine, 2015; Senge, 2006). Identifying and addressing these errors ultimately tests trust within the interpersonal relationship and can often lead to defensive behaviours. Argyris (1991) argues that defensive behaviours become present due to feeling threatened or embarrassed, or a feeling of being incompetent or vulnerable. To increase trust and combat the level of defensiveness whilst engaging in difficult conversations, Argyris (1991) put forward a ladder of inference that highlighted the thinking process and emotional attachment that individuals go through when exposed to reality or facts. The intent of the theory is for an individual to use the steps of the ladder as checking points to become more aware of the decisions made and ensure objectivity. The top rung of the ladder represents a final decision, or conclusion, point. Senge (2006) extended this theory to accentuate the importance of the middle steps of the ladder that are often misguided and unseen. Senge (2006) argues that our beliefs influence the selection and meaning of data and therefore assumptions are made. Whilst drawing conclusions is a natural end point to a decision making process, the dialogue between both participants should be open and communicative to ensure the final conclusion has been reflected on during the process.

Argyris (1991) and Senge (2006) both argue that reflection, advocacy and inquiry are three ways in which a person can communicate and make the thinking processes visible within a dialogue (Argyris, 1991; Senge, 2006). Firstly, reflecting during the decision making process (reflection-in-action) as well as after (reflection-on-action) allows a person to reshape what they are working on to change the course of action to achieve the goal. Reflecting-in-action and reflection-on-action was first proposed by Schon (1983) and later emphasised through Argyris's (1991) and Senge's (2006) ladder of inference theory. Secondly, using advocacy enables others to see the communicator's view and opinions. Furthermore, when others can see or hear the data and reasoning behind the advocacy, an open and honest dialogue is created (Argyris, 2002). Thirdly, there needs to be a balance between advocacy and inquiry. Inquiry allows a situation to be understood from both perspectives and in doing so, a mutual understanding is created (Argyris & Schon, 1974). Moreover, Goleman (2004) also supports the importance of reflection, advocacy and inquiry as he connects great leadership to the ability to drive people's emotions in the right direction at the right time. Emotions, and how they contribute dynamically to enhancing intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships, have been memorably labelled by Goleman (1995) as EI.

2.4 Emotions

A leader's ability to use cognitive understanding to know what constitutes effective leadership and to behave in a particular way that resembles an effective leader has been at the forefront of leadership literature (Bono & Judge, 2004; Germain, 2012; Jackson & Parry, 2011). However, research on the emotional aspects of leadership and how a leader 'feels' when he or she is effective is only in its early stages of development. Researchers are now acknowledging the emotional dimensions of cognitive and behavioural outcomes (Barrett, 2017; Germain, 2012; Grint & Jackson, 2010; Laborde et al., 2016).

Emotions were originally understood as a survival mechanism in producing quick reactions to pleasant or unpleasant situations. However, due to current research and the popularity of neuroscience, the emotion paradigm has started to shift from a classical perspective to a constructive perspective (Barrett, 2017; Laborde et al., 2016). A classical perspective holds that emotions are artefacts of evolution and are necessary for survival (Barrett, 2017). This theoretical standpoint views emotions as universal fingerprints that are recognised from birth and which often fall under one of the seven basic emotions: anger, fear, happiness, love, surprise, disgust and/or sadness (Barrett, 2017; Laborde et al., 2016). Whilst these emotions are still considered today to represent the main emotions, situational variables and

experiences are also regarded as influencers on emotions (Barrett, 2017; Barsalou, 2005; Barsalou et al., 2003; Laborde et al., 2016).

The constructive perspective highlights the importance of context and suggests that the concepts involved with emotional processes are largely due to experience, expression, perception and regulation (Barrett, 2017; Barrett et al., 2010; Greenaway, et al., 2018). Similar to the popular argument that leaders are made and not born, emotion constructionist theorists believe that there are no fingerprints for certain emotions and the emotions that we experience are linked to emotional meaning through social interactions (Barret, 2017; Barsalou, 2005; Barsalou et al., 2003). Furthermore, Bechky (2011) stipulates that people do not directly respond to situations, rather, their interpretation of their local situation is what creates the emotional bond. Therefore, the importance of developing institutional processes that nurture and promote positive culture will, in turn, create emotional bonds based on memorable meaning (Creed et al., 2014; Grey et al., 2018). In contrast, in the absence of a nurturing environment and culture, specific self-conscious emotions can negatively influence social behaviour (Verbeak et al., 2004; Creed et al., 2014; Grey et al., 2018; Treeby et al., 2016). Self-conscious emotions play an important role in the regulation of social behaviours and self (Beer et al., 2003; Treeby et al., 2016). Two self-conscious emotions that contribute to a negative effect in the regulation of social behaviours are shame and guilt.

Shame and guilt are often experienced together, but differ in their relevance to social behaviour and self (Tangney et al., 2007; van Dijk et al., 2017). Individuals experiencing guilt will try to fix their failures by changing their problematic behaviour (e.g. "I can't believe I have done that, I need to fix this") (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). Subsequent emotions and actions following a feeling of guilt are traditionally feelings of regret, remorse and often apologetic references (Van Dijk et al., 2017). In contrast, the feeling of shame is focused on self and associated with feelings of inferiority and helplessness (Tangney et al., 1996; Treeby et al., 2016). Scheff (2003) proposes that shame is the premier social emotion of everyday life but is usually concealed within cultures because of taboo. The taboo on shame may indirectly be a way of upholding status quo by avoiding shame altogether especially in the emotional/relational context (Scheff, 2003). Lewis (1992) concurs with this notion as she implied that shame is an instinct outside our awareness that has a function of signalling threats to the social bond. Lewis transcribed hundreds of psychotherapy sessions and encountered shame to be the dominant emotion present within all the transcripts. Whilst the word shame was rarely mentioned amongst participants, she found a high frequency of shame markers: anger, anxiety, fear and grief serving as cues to indicate shame. These markers were present when the participants were situated in a context of rejection and criticism. Brown (2006)

furthered the empirical research on shame and developed the shame resilience theory, a multidisciplinary and contextualised understanding of shame. Similar to Lewis (1971), her participants reported feelings of fear, judgement, anger and blame to others and to their self (Brown, 2006). Although her preliminary research participants were primarily female, the results built significantly on the underpinnings of relational-cultural theory and the importance of understanding connection, empathy and isolation (Brown, 2006). Whilst a growing number of researchers are examining shame and other influential emotions (Brown, 2006; Lewis, 1992; Scheff, 2003), the connections between culture, interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships and emotions have also gained momentum.

The growing interest in these connections has prompted research to explore the concept of mindset and emotional development (Attwood, 2010; Dweck, 2012; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Mindset research has been popularised by researcher Carol Dweck and her exploration of how fundamental mindsets form in children and adults. Dweck's (2009) construct of mindset evolved into two separate distinct concepts: fixed and growth mindset, and both refer to individuals' internalised beliefs that determines their behaviour, outlook and mental capabilities. A fixed mindset assumes that intelligence and abilities are fixed traits that cannot be developed (Dweck, 2009). Alternatively, a growth mindset assumes that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, learning and persistence (Dweck, 2009). Kouzes and Posner (2019) further developed the mindset theory by exploring the mindset of leaders and how this influences their leadership behaviour. Their study found that leaders with a growth mindset engaged in all four positive leadership behaviours (modelling, inspiring, challenging and enabling) more so than the fixed mindset leaders (Kouzes & Posner, 2017; 2019). The growth mindset leader possessed a more malleable belief that skills and abilities can be developed both emotionally and collaboratively (Kouzes & Posner, 2019). Similarly, studies that have researched the concept of leadership mindset within the sport and physical activity environment have found the coach can directly influence the performance and motivation of the athlete (Atwood, 2010; Chase, 2010). The strength of the interpersonal relationship between coach and athlete relies on a leader who believes in emotional development and being open to possibilities of growth (Chase, 2010). A leader's ability to emotionally develop intrapersonal as well as interpersonal relationships relies on certain leadership behaviours corresponding to EI. The term EI has gained popularity in recent decades and prompted continual debates and discussion amongst scholars on how to clearly define the constructs of EI.

2.5 EI

Despite the lack of consensus around a universal EI definition amongst scholars, the definition by Salovey and Mayer (1990) is popular today: “the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s feeling and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). During the past few decades, research has explored the importance of relationships and leadership achievement through the lens of EI and how it supports effective leadership (Pearman, 2011; Schneider, 2013). Due to the different findings from vast amount of empirical work conducted on the concept of EI in recent years, the progress of conceptualising EI has been difficult (Davis & Nicols, 2016; Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017). Linking emotions to the underlying cognitive processes is a relatively new concept as previous research has traditionally separated emotion and cognition and presented these as incompatible aspects of the human psyche (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017).

2.5.1 Ability Versus Trait

Divergent understandings of the connection between cognition and emotion has created differing theoretical perspectives within the EI research field and divided EI into two distinct conceptualisations: EI as a learned ability and EI as a cardinal trait (Laborde et al., 2016; Stough et al., 2009). The concept of EI as an ability highlights the *can do* element of a situation and the individual’s ability to recognise that there is a problem, based on what is happening in the environment. Ability EI is measured as a capability that spans the border between reason and feeling (Brannick et al., 2009). In contrast, the perception of EI as a trait foregrounds the *will do* dimension of the situation, wherein the individual uses tools to find a solution to the problem. Trait EI is measured by non-cognitive abilities related to success, such as self-regulation (Brannick et al., 2009). An example of these differences in a leadership role would be a CEO recognising that the deadline of a project causes stress in a client due to their behaviour and emotions (ability) and the CEO acting upon these recognised emotions by motivating the client to overcome their fears through self-talk (trait) (Constantin et al., 2019). However, although the distinction between ability EI and trait EI seems relatively straightforward, Joseph and Newman (2015) argue that there is a lack of theoretical consensus on what elements are actually covered by trait EI. They contend that trait EI is actually a mixed application of four content areas: conscientiousness, extraversion, self-control and self-related qualities such as self-efficacy (Joseph & Newman, 2015; Mayer et al., 2003). These four content areas overlap into what some may consider an ability, hence the description of it as *mixed*. For the purpose of understanding the evolution of EI, this chapter will use the terms ability EI, trait EI and mixed EI as a guide to differentiate between the EI models. Distinguishing

the difference between the three is paramount to developing an understanding of the EI models that have populated the literature.

2.5.2 EI Models

Joseph and Newman (2015) were the first to organise the conceptual literature on EI into three models distinguished by the measuring instruments employed: the performance-based ability model, self-report ability model, and the self-report mixed model. The first model, the performance-based ability model, focuses on EI as a form of intelligence and is evaluated by having the individual solve emotional problems through performance tests (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017). The most widely used test for ability EI is the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Mayer & Salovey, 1997, 2003; Petrides, 2010). The MSCEIT is a computer-based assessment that focuses on four 'branches' of EI awareness including: a) perceiving emotion; b) using emotions to facilitate thought; c) understanding emotions; and d) managing emotions (Laborde et al., 2016; Mayer et al., 2003; Stein & Book, 2011). Mayer and Salovey's (1997) ability model sufficiently highlights the cognitive and emotional aspects as complementary systems rather than antagonist processes (Arribas-Galarraga et al., 2017; Chan & Mallet, 2011). In the same way that emotions influence thought processes, emotional states rely on cognitive processes to mediate decision making (Arribas-Galarraga et al., 2017). This model employs performance-based criteria dependent on intelligence, and many researchers would argue that it excludes the non-cognitive factors such as personality within its measurements (Chan & Mallet, 2011; Petrides, 2010; Schneider, 2013). Other concerns include difficulties with the scoring system (Maul, 2012) and lack of EI information supporting the items used within the test (Marina et al., 2014; Laborde et al., 2016). Furthermore, ability EI assessments often have an intentional vagueness between intelligence, behavioural effectiveness and declarative knowledge, and therefore have elicited a wave of scientific criticism due to blurred results (Freudenthaler et al., 2008; Macann & Roberts, 2008; Petrides, 2011; Warwick, Warwick et al., 2010). Ability models rely on the participant to have a certain level of emotional knowledge to properly assess their behaviour in emotional situations whereas the trait models assess the adequacy of a participant's behaviour in any given emotional situation (Freudenthaler & Neubauer, 2005; 2007; Freudenthaler et al., 2008). Critics of EI ability-based models argue that they are too vague and the levels of emotional knowledge they measure are too incongruous to be useful (Chell & Baines, 2000; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides et al., 2007).

The self-report ability model is similar to the first model as intelligence is still considered a complementary element of EI. However the measuring instruments employed are self-report

and therefore rely on the subjective perspectives and traits of the participants (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017). The most common assessments used to measure trait EI are: Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) (Bar-On, 2004), Schutte EI Scale (Schutte et al., 1998) and the trait emotional intelligence questionnaire (TEIQue) (Laborde et al., 2016; Petrides, 2010). These assessments are self-report questionnaires and are a popular choice when measuring and evaluating trait EI (Austin et al., 2004; Laborde et al., 2016; Petrides, 2011). The EQ-i has since been developed into EQ-i 2.0 and EQ 360° to encompass a 360° view of a participant's emotional and social functioning (Stein & Book, 2011). To ensure the participant's EI is addressed in a multi-view manner, the participant nominates peers, family members, and bosses to also complete the assessment in regards to the participant's trait EI (Stein & Book, 2011). The variety of the assessments allow clarity within the methodical and theoretical underpinnings of trait EI as opposed to the vague results found in ability EI assessments.

The final model, the self-report mixed model, views EI as a broad concept and one that incorporates many components such as motivation, empathy, and self-awareness (Goleman, 2004; Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Joseph et al., 2015). Goleman's (2004) model of EI Leadership Dimensions is closely associated with this mixed model and in recent years has been a popular framework to explore effective leadership. Contrary to the performance-based ability model, Goleman's model of EI includes the non-cognitive elements of EI, highlighted through the dimensions of self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social skills and self-regulation (Goleman, 2004). These five dimensions each have corresponding competencies that respond to the personal or interpersonal dimensions of behaviours that are noted below (Goleman, 2004):

1. **Self-Awareness:** Self-awareness is an individual's ability to have a deep understanding of one's emotions and to recognise strengths, weakness, needs and drives within themselves. A person with high self-awareness will be able to recognise how his/her emotions can affect them, other people and their job performance.
Corresponding competencies: self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating sense of humour
2. **Motivation:** Motivation is a passion to achieve beyond expectation. A person with high motivation has a high desire to achieve goals and is optimistic even in the face of failure.
Corresponding competencies: strong drive to achieve, optimism, organisational commitment
3. **Empathy:** Empathy is the ability to understand the emotional make-up of others and respond to them in a way that is based on their point of view. An empathetic person

will be able to step into another person's shoes, see their perspective and act accordingly (Krznaric, 2014).

Corresponding competencies: strong interpersonal skills, cross cultural sensitivity

4. **Social awareness:** Social awareness is a proficiency in creating, managing and building rapport within relationships. A person with high social awareness encompasses a strong ability to lead change and build teams.

Corresponding competencies: effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, expertise in relationship building

5. **Self-regulation:** Self-regulation is the ability to handle one's emotions so that they can facilitate rather than act on a situation. People that can self-regulate their emotions in an unpleasant environment have an ability to control and redirect impulsive actions.

Corresponding competencies: trustworthiness and integrity, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change

2.5.3 Critique of EI Models

Whilst all the models have their merits and criticisms and are useful in their respective contexts, Hughes and Evans (2018) argue that no model has yet developed into a meaningful theoretical framework that encompasses a full range of EI constructs that can be properly evaluated or which can prevent conceptual confusion. Ability models (MSCEIT), whilst popular and complementary to the EI constructs, fail to provide sufficient evidence to a particular construct given that they only measure one element of EI (Hugh & Evans, 2018; Mestre et al., 2016). Alternatively, trait models (EQ-i, Schutte EI Scale and TEIQue) collect a wide range of affect-related personality traits and apply them to a particular construct. However, many of the traits explored within the models are redundant and overlap with each other, precluding a clear differentiation between unique traits (Hugh & Evans, 2018; Petrides et al., 2007). Livesey (2017) argues that other people's views of an individual's trait EI would be more reliable than a self-assessment. He states that a large percentage of people overestimate their propensity for behaving in desirable ways (Livesey, 2017). Models such as the EQ-I 360° are therefore gaining popularity as they provide a rich understanding of the participant's capabilities (Stein & Book, 2011). Some researchers, although acknowledging that trait assessments may evaluate redundant traits and yield non-unique results, argue that particular trait assessments, namely TEIQue, contain the only scale that has been linked to neurophysiological parameters which are important in supporting the predictive validity of the scale in the context applied (Laborde et al., 2011; 2014; 2016). Petrides (2010) advocates TEIQue as the preferable trait assessment for three reasons: one, it is directly related to the underlying theory of trait EI; two, the

assessment includes comprehensive coverage of the trait EI domain; and three, it has the capacity for predictive reliability.

Furthermore, when ability and trait EI are combined into a mixed model (i.e. the Goleman/Boyatzis model), scholars argue that the construct becomes so broad in trying to accommodate everything that this results in a lack of theoretical clarity (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Daus & Ashkanasy, 2003; Hugh & Evans, 2018; Locke, 2005; Mayer et al., 1999; Zeidner et al., 2008). Therefore, the recent trend in evaluating EI has turned to feature both trait and ability with an emphasis on the *why* and the *how*. Barrett (2016) highlights this change in her description of how EI is evolving:

Goleman's books offer a lot of reasonable, practical advice, but they don't properly explain 'why' his advice works. Their scientific justification is heavily influenced by the outdated 'triune brain' model – if you regulate your alleged emotional inner beast effectively, then you're emotionally intelligent (p. 180).

Although emerging models are still including trait EI and ability EI dimensions, they now encompass a third dimension that focuses on understanding to include the element of *why*. Recently, the Tripartite model (Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015) has emerged suggesting that the different EI theories need to complement rather than contrast one another (Wolfe, 2017). The three-part model combines the dimensions of knowledge, abilities and traits (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Wolfe, 2017). The first dimension, knowledge, is what people know about emotions (Laborde et al., 2016; Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Nelis et al., 2009). For example, a leader in charge of a group of staff might feel anxiety when approaching deadlines and use cognitive reappraisal techniques to reframe the anxiety-producing situation as a challenge to be overcome. The second dimension, ability EI, is the degree to which people are capable of performing an emotional regulation strategy to the situation at hand (Laborde et al., 2016). Using the same example, a leader may find trigger words or cues to curb their anxiety within the deadline situation if cognitive reappraisal techniques are not succeeding. The final dimension, trait EI, is what people actually do during emotional situations (Laborde et al., 2016). With the given example, a leader may know the cognitive reappraisal techniques needed to manage his/her anxiety (knowledge) and add the necessary emotional strategies when they have failed to curb their anxiety (ability). However, he/she may still struggle to meet the final deadline due to his/her anxiety (trait). As seen in this example, the Tripartite model loosely connects the three dimensions of knowledge, ability and trait. Some researchers argue that a greater understanding of the relationship between the three dimensions would

create a stronger theoretical understanding of the differing EI levels (Laborde et al., 2016; Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Nelis et al., 2009; Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015; Wolfe, 2017).

2.5.4 Critique of EI

The concept of EI has shifted leadership development from a cognitive approach (knowing effective leadership), to a behavioural context (how a leader acts), to recent developments that highlight a more emotional aspect of EI (how a leader feels) (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Jackson & Parry, 2011). However, there are certain misconceptions about its constructs. EI is not a universal term that is culturally accepted and the perception of EI is not always pleasant and forthcoming (Davis & Nicols, 2016; Laborde et al., 2016; Miyamoto & Ma, 2011). Furthermore, specific domains of EI have been proven to be directly correlated to age and there is an overall assumption that EI increases with age (Lindebaum, 2009). The following three key factors will elaborate on the misconceptions and assumptions of EI.

Firstly, EI is a western concept. Whether EI and the theoretical mechanisms that underpin it are equally applicable in non-western cultures remains a matter of contention (Laborde et al., 2016; Miyamoto & Ma, 2011). For example, Easterners tend to dampen their positive emotions based on cultural beliefs and upbringing (Miyamoto & Ma, 2011). Miyamoto and Ma (2011) investigated how cultural scripts can influence emotional regulation based on emotional experiences and found that Easterners wanted to regulate their emotion hedonically (dampen their positive emotions) more so than Westerners. Furthermore, Barrett and Haviland-Jones (2016) research on the Himba culture found that the African tribe did not even contain a unified concept of 'emotion' for experiences that Westerners would normally lump together as being 'emotional'.

Secondly, there is a dark side to EI. There are contexts in which high levels of trait and/or ability EI can translate into negative effects for self and/or for others (Davis & Nicols, 2016). High EI may not automatically convey a positive attribute. Some researchers have linked narcissism and aggression to high levels of trait EI indicating that high levels of self-esteem can lead to manipulative behaviours and create anti-social outcomes (Baumeister et al., 2003; Petrides et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2015). For example, a person with a hypersensitivity to emotional information may use this skill to manipulate an interpersonal relationship to suit his/her needs if a reward is present (job offer, money, etc.). Furthermore, Davis and Nicols (2016) argue that there is currently a lack of literature pertaining to particular levels of trait and ability that affect positive and negative outcomes. They therefore contend that further research needs to be undertaken to identify precisely what optimal EI might be and in which contexts it might occur.

Finally, age is a dependent factor in developing EI. Researchers who have incorporated ability measures of EI within their research have found a correlation between age and a high level of ability EI (Kafetsios, 2004; Lindebaum, 2009; Mayer et al., 1999; Palmer et al., 2005). The literature on EI reveals that emotional functioning improves during middle and late adulthood due to individuals having, by this stage of their lives, experienced a wide range of emotions (Carstenson et al., 2003; Mayer et al., 1999; Mayer et al., 2003; Van Rooy et al., 2005; Wechtler et al., 2015). The socio-emotional selectivity theory (Carstenson et al., 2003) supports the notion of the correlation between higher levels of EI and age. According to this theory, people have a continuing collection of social goals that span across a lifetime (Carstenson 1992; 1995; 2006). However, the perceptions of these goals depend on time and life expectancy. Barber et al. (2016) argue that younger people typically base goals related to new experiences and future-oriented challenges. Older people, however, tend to prioritise goals in the present and are more focussed on emotional wellbeing and deepening existing relationships (Barber et al., 2016; Carstenson 1992; 1995; 2006). When people perceive their time as limited, they focus more on their emotional wellbeing and their goals become emotion focused (Barber et al., 2016; Barrett et al., 2010). The increase in attention to emotional wellbeing correlates with an increasing interest in the relationship between EI and physical activity.

2.6 Influence of EI in a Physical Activity Environment

Research has started to gain a foothold on the relationship between emotions and physical activity (Germain, 2012; Laborde et al., 2016; Mohiyeddini & LeBlanc, 2009; Wang, 2011). The theoretical underpinning of EI constructs is gaining momentum in areas beyond a leadership context (Laborde et al., 2016). Sporting environments are now starting to understand the value of EI and how it can positively affect the desired outcome. Sport coaches, trainers and physical education teachers are starting to realise that the interpersonal interaction within a physical environment requires a certain degree of governed EI (Laborde et al., 2016; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Petrides & Furnham, 2003). Relationships between coach/athlete, personal trainer/client and physical education teachers/student all require a certain level of trust and interpersonal connection. Laborde et al. (2016) recently conducted a systematic review that focussed on the differing measurements used in research regarding sport and physical activity settings. They found that EI has a direct influence on successful sport performance (Laborde et al., 2016). Research exploring pre-competition factors such as anxiety have found a correlation between low EI and poor performance due to poor attention control and lack of confidence before performance (Elliott et al., 2011; Germain, 2012; Lu et al., 2010). Lu et al. (2010) explored whether athletes high in EI perceived pre-competition

anxiety differently than those with low EI prior to performance. Using the Bar-On EQ-I model (2004) to assess levels of EI, they found that high EI is associated with low pre-competitive anxiety in athletes (Lu et al., 2010). Furthermore, trait EI has a profound effect on physical activity levels and positive attitudes towards physical activity (Laborde et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the relationship between coach/athlete, trainer/athlete or physical education teacher/student relies on EI. Arvinen-Barrow et al. (2010) are some of the few researchers to explore sport physiotherapists and their use of sport psychology skills on athletes. Reassurance and goal setting in rehabilitation with the athletes were the most used strategies amongst the physiotherapists. Reassurance was typically used to build athletes' confidence that they are progressing and preparing for return to performance (Arvinene-Barron et al., 2010). However, there were conflicting explanations of particular sport psychological skills by the athletic trainers which caused the researchers to generalise what they were referring to. For example, relaxation techniques were misconstrued with merely resting and therefore generalised in the concept of mental imagery (Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Moreover, the results were heavily inconclusive as most of the psychological skills conducted by the sport physiotherapists were implemented by gut feeling and intuition. Nevertheless, reassurance as psychological tool or motivational factor is a common strategy used to build athletes' confidence when returning to their sport (Tracey, 2008; Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Interestingly, Zakrajsek et al. (2017) conducted a study on athletic trainers' psychological approaches with their athletes and found that the appropriate expectations of the role required by athletic trainers should include: a) recognising the athletes' emotional responses, b) building a relationship based on trust, c) self-regulating and reassuring during the processes emotional process; d) creating relevant goal setting strategies that mirror game-like sport skills and e) normalising the processes to reduce anxiety and other affiliated emotions. Although EI was not mentioned in the study, the results clearly resemble the EI dimensions and the importance of EI within an interpersonal relationship in a sport context environment.

Motivation is a key dimension of Goleman's (2004) model of EI and an influential component of sport performance (Deci & Ryan, 2002). A dominant motivational theory used to measure motivation within a sport and physical activity environment is the self-determination theory (SDT). The SDT theory is an "empirically based, organismic theory of human behaviour and personality development" (Ryan & Deci, 2017, p. 3). The theory differentiates between two types of motivation, autonomous motivation (intrinsically supported) and controlled motivation (extrinsically supported), which are neither discrete nor connected but rather represent two points on an unique continuum (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hodge et al., 2013; Sukys et al., 2019).

Autonomous motivation reflects the behaviour driven by motives arising from enjoyment of or genuine interest in an activity (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Hodge et al., 2013; Vealey et al., 2020). Contrastingly, controlled motivation is when behaviour reflects a drive to participate in an activity due to the demands of others or from self-imposed pressures (e.g., shame, guilt, pride) (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Hodge et al., 2013; Vealey et al., 2020). Studies examining intrinsic motivation and sport have found correlations between positive behaviours involving increased effort, pleasure and creativity (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Vallerand, 2004; Alexandra et al., 2015).

Consequently, controlled motivation studies found that athletes with constrained commitments (had to do situations) reported higher levels of extrinsic motivation to complete a particular task (O'Neill & Hodge, 2019; Weiss & Weiss, 2003, 2006). This concurs with numerous research papers that have explored the undermining of intrinsic motivation when the focus is toward a more pride focus than the task itself (Duda, 1989; Dweck, 1996; Vallerand et al., 2008). Moreover, the type of motivation applied can be a direct result of where goal content is situated. Lindwall et al (2016) conducted a study on exercise goal content and associations with need satisfaction and motivational regulations. Whilst their overall findings supported the SDT and the need differentiation of autonomous and controlled motivation, there was one particular group classed as low skill development and goal content associated with image and social recognition. In contrast to the other groups who displayed differing levels of intrinsic goal variables and autonomous motivation, this class scored a higher need for controlled motivation and lower autonomous motivation. The authors concluded that there is a need to further clarify an individual's goal content and how to situate it within the motivational environment and climate (Lindwall et al., 2016).

Chan and Mallet (2011) explored the dynamic relationships between ability EI, high performance coaching and leadership. Using Mayer and Salovey's (1997) four branch ability model of EI as a framework, they concluded that low ability EI may contribute to poor interpersonal skills, low levels of trust within relationships and ineffective leadership (Chan & Mallet, 2011). However, as discussed previously, high ability EI does not necessarily equate to high EI if the trait EI is low (Laborde et al., 2016). Whilst Chan and Mallet (2011) claim the importance of ability EI on trust and leadership, they overlook the influence that trait EI has with ability EI to achieve effective leadership. Ability-based models often dismiss the non-cognitive components related to EI and the criticism of vagueness (i.e. emotional knowledge) that scholars often aim at ability-based models. (Freudenthaler et al., 2008; MacCann & Roberts, 2008; Petrides et al., 2007; Warwick et al., 2010). While the application of EI research in the sport and physical activity context has just recently reemerged (Chan & Mallet, 2011;

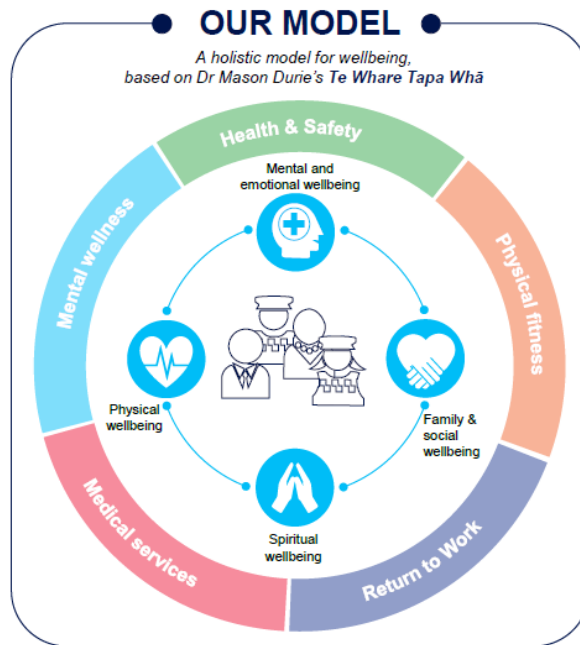
Laborde et al., 2016), the frameworks covered in the literature provide an effective starting point to examining the role of the PEO.

2.7 The PEO

The NZ Police have a number of groups associated with the organisation and the PEO role falls under the Health and Wellness sector – a subdivision of the Safer People Group. The Safer People Group are responsible for “supporting police in attracting, developing and retaining talented people across the organisation” (NZ Police, 2020, p.1). The overall purpose of the Safer People Group is “to enable our people to deliver our business” (Strategic Report, 2018, p.143). A subsector of the Safer People Group is the Health and Wellness sector. The Health and Wellness sector contains the Health and Safety advisors, the Wellness Advisors and the PEOs. An overview of the Safer People Group model is outlined below:

Figure 1

Safer People Group Model



Note. Safer People Group model. Reprinted from NZ Police *Strategy/Papers/Safer People* (2019, November).

The leadership role of the PEO is a complex combination of a physical education teacher, a high performance sport coach, a personal trainer and a health and wellness advisor. An advertisement for the position demonstrates the diversity of the skills needed to fulfil the role (NZ Police, 2020):

Skills needed:

- Deliver fitness testing for employment processes.
- Develop and deliver strength and conditioning programs.
- Identify risks, trends and opportunities through health and lifestyle interventions.
- Collaborate and engage with stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.
- Develop and maintain a wide range of positive relationships.

Qualifications needed:

- 1.5 years' experience in tactical strength & conditioning or exercise science or health/fitness delivery to tactical/emergency services personnel or diverse populations.

As this extract of the job description demonstrates, the role requires a multitude of skills (physiological and psychological) to ensure the group purpose is achieved. Most importantly, the interpersonal relationships between PEO and staff can directly influence the success of the business. Staff rely on the leadership of the PEO to educate and prepare them for their requirements relevant to job performance. A police officer's role encompasses numerous physical, mental and social wellbeing skills needed to serve the overall purpose of the NZ Police "to make NZ the safest country in the world" (NZ Police, 2020, p.1). Despite the vast number of variables associated with the relationship between PEO and staff, there is one particular element that historically is associated with the PEO role: the PCT.

2.7.1 PCT

We all have anxiety – I had to do my biennial PCT yesterday... I've never failed, I've never not gotten over that wall BUT every two years that blinken wall terrifies me... it's in my head, you grit your teeth and own that wall...whatever it is (Simon, NZ Police Sergeant, 2018).

The PCT test was introduced in 1986 to combat poor levels of fitness and health issues within the frontline staff of the police. The PCT test is a short, sharp, competency test designed to mimic the daily routines of a frontline police officer. It contains some challenging obstacles, for example the 1.8 metre fence, and there is a time restriction depending on age. Police officers must successfully complete the test within time every two years or face losing deployment, that is, being restricted to a non-frontline position. Furthermore, if the PCT attempt is successful, they will receive a bonus \$1200. Failure to pass the test has a knock-on effect for the entire business; a frontline staff member confined to a desk means other frontline staff have to cover, which can increase stress and potential liabilities to an understaffed and overwhelmed section. If a police officer has failed a PCT test, the next step is to engage in a remedial fitness programme designed by the PEO to ensure the next PCT attempt is successful. The future of the remedial to pass the next PCT test is reliant on developing a strong interpersonal relationship with the district's PEO.

2.8 EI and Leadership Contexts

EI has been linked with effective leadership since interpersonal relationships rely on empathy, optimism and morale building (Caruso & Wolfe, 2004; Goleman et al., 2002, Rahim et al., 2002). Empirical literature on EI in broader contexts support the significance of the relationships between EI and effective leadership. Gooty et al. (2014) specifically examined the role of emotions in ability EI, emotional self-awareness, and coping strategies within a law

enforcement setting. The authors suggested that leaders with high ability EI were associated with greater use of positive coping strategies in emotions such as anger, guilt and joy than leaders with low ability EI (Gooty et al., 2014). Moreover, these findings also positively related coping strategies with effective leader/employee task management (Gooty et al., 2014). Furthermore, Campbell (2012) found significant relationships between EI and transformational leadership approaches, but EI had no significant relationship with a laissez-faire approach within a law enforcement environment. Campbell (2012) analysed five transformational leadership style scores: (a) idealised influence attributed, (b) idealised influence behavioural, (c) inspirational motivation, (d) intellectual stimulation and (e) individualised consideration. He found a statistically significant relationship between all five transformational leadership measures and high EI. Campbell (2012) addressed the need to incorporate leadership training programs that catered to many leadership approaches and their relationships with EI. Despite the research dedicated to EI and the law enforcement field, currently, there is no research exploring the interpersonal relationships between PEOs and remedial staff. The relationships that share the greatest similarities with the PEO/remedial staff dyad are that of the coach/athlete and physical educator/student and this review now examines some of the key research in these areas.

Laborde et al. (2016) undertook a systematic review which sought to confirm the hypothesis that high EI contributed to effective coaching behaviour and successful interpersonal relationships amongst athletes. Furthermore, creating a positive and challenging emotional environment is an important element of developing successful coach/athlete relationships (Laborde et al., 2016; O'Neill, 2011). Interestingly, their findings found limited research exploring the coach/athlete relationship and they were unable to support their hypothesis. Whilst the lack of research is problematic in identifying the role of EI within interpersonal relationships similar to a coach/athlete dyad, it also highlights the knowledge gap that this thesis seeks to address.

As previously discussed, the PCT elicits emotions of immense pressure and stress in police officers; failure to complete the PCT successfully risks the loss of deployment, bonus pay (each police officer receives \$1200 for completing the test), not to mention the external pressure from colleagues, family and friends. Clearly, the emotional elements of the PCT bear many similarities to athletic performance and research into the emotional experiences of athletes in high-pressure situations. Conceivably, coaches and individual sport athletes may be the closest comparison in providing a useful platform to develop an understanding of the importance of EI in the PEO/remedial staff's relationship. Whilst athletes in immense pressure situations (i.e. final competitions) exhibit stress in both team and individual sports, extensive research has

concluded that individual sports rely on an high level of accountability due to greater internal attribution leading to feelings of shame (Nixdorf et al., 2016; Kajbafnezhad et al., 2011; Pluhar et al., 2019). Furthermore, sport research regarding individual sports has supported the idea that self-confidence before the competition is associated with low levels of anxiety (Craft et al., 2003; Pineda-Espejel et al., 2016).

A comparable individual sport that resembles similar dispositions to the PCT is competitive gymnastics. Martin et al (2008), explored the frequency of intensity of anxiety and fears amongst competitive gymnasts. Their results indicated that the balance beam and uneven bars generated the most anxiety amongst participants and their primary worry was being viewed as incompetent (Martin et al., 2008). Similarly, Pineda-Espejel et al. (2016) analysed the correlation between self-confidence and pre-competitive anxiety in elite gymnasts. Their findings revealed that high levels of self-confidence equate to moderate levels of intensity in the symptoms of anxiety (Pineda-Espejel et al., 2016). Moreover, sport researchers have found that the uncertainty of the outcome based on the athlete's perception of ability and importance of the event influences a person's state of anxiety (Martens et al., 1990; Craft et al., 2003). Comparing specific emotional elements of the PCT and athletic individual performance may contribute to a greater understanding of the importance of EI and the PEO/client relationship.

Crombie et al. (2009) investigated the elements of pressure and stress by implementing EI training and development on representative South African cricket players. Using the Mayer et al. (1999) ability model, they found that regulating emotions under pressure helps athletes to avoid poor task execution under stress (Crombie et al., 2009). Furthermore, an EI training and intervention programme contributed significantly to increasing ability EI (Crombie et al., 2009). The PCT is not dissimilar to an athlete approaching an important sporting event. Pressure and stress are associated with the PCT test and need to be acknowledged by both the PEO and the client if the outcome is to be successful. Whilst the EI research in the sporting context is growing, there still is a gap regarding the influence and context of EI practices within the PEO role. Clearly the connection between PEO and client parallels a similar interpersonal relationship context relevant to a coach/athlete. The expectations and perceptions of how EI correlates with the PEO role will serve to address this gap and contribute to the sporting context.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the theoretical foundations of leadership, EI and the role of the PEO. The literature reviewed supports the importance of effective leadership and the influence EI has on developing strong interpersonal relationships. Leadership is no longer considered cognitive focussed as the emotion paradigm is highlighting that it is just as important to understand how a leader feels as opposed to how they think. This chapter has also critically examined the EI traditional and emerging models and the EI constructs involved. Lastly, this literature review presented the relevance of the PEO and the comparable resemblance to sport leadership and a coach/athlete relationship. The following chapter presents the methodology employed for this qualitative study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Chapter three addresses the rationale for adopting a qualitative approach in attempting to understand the influences of context and EI practice in the PEO's role. It identifies the research methods employed including semi-structured interviews with an emphasis on respectful inquiry and purposive sampling. Following a discussion about issues of reliability and validity, the chapter concludes with an explanation of ethical considerations involved in the research.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This study adopts the general principles of naturalistic inquiry in its investigation of EI, which is guided by the five dimensions of Goleman's (2004) model and the recent Tripartite model that encompasses the elements of knowledge, trait and ability (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Peña-Sarrionandia & Mikolajczak, 2015; Wolfe, 2017). Naturalistic inquiry suits qualitative research as it seeks to understand a phenomenon through creating meaning from the participants' views and perceptions (Bradshaw et al., 2017).

The view or standpoint a researcher takes needs to reflect the dynamic nature of the processes of the researched context and comply with the researcher's epistemological and methodological assumptions to fully gain the rich data needed for the findings. How we obtain the knowledge from the research will be guided by our epistemological viewpoint. Objectivist epistemology is defined by Crotty (1998) as "meaningful reality [that] exists as such apart from the operation of any consciousness" (p.8). Crotty highlights the importance of taking an epistemological stance when researching; however, he also supports the notion that the three stances – objectivism, constructivism and subjectivism – are not watertight. A constructivist paradigm acknowledges both the participants' and the observers' own views and experiences (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Embedded in an interpretative dimension, constructivism contrasts with objectivism as it focusses on the subjective nature of experience rather than objective knowledge (Sparrowe, 2005). Moreover, subjectivism posits that the knowledge gathered is interpreted through the subject's meaning to the object that exists (Schwandt, 2007; Wener & Woodgate, 2013). To successfully address the proposed research topic it was important that the researcher had congruence between the research question, methodology and methods (Grant & Giddings, 2002). After examining the different epistemologies, it became clear to the researcher that whilst the objective truth needed to be retained, the subjective nature of experience and bias was inevitable therefore the participants' perceptions and interpretations

needed to be addressed. Whilst the primary stance of the study fell under objectivism, the researcher recognised subjectivities and their own personal bias. The researcher is a PEO and has in-depth experience in running the PCT test and working with clients. The researcher is also a lecturer at a NZ tertiary institute with expertise in sport leadership and sociology. It is important to acknowledge these aspects as the researcher accepts that there are multiple truths and a mutual influence of information presented between researcher and client (Krauss, 2005; Macionis, 2011). This stance allowed the researcher to stay true to the qualitative descriptive methodology and post-positivism paradigm.

3.3 Qualitative Descriptive Research

Qualitative descriptive is a methodology that investigates the who, what and where of events or experiences (Sandelowski, 2000, p.338). Unlike other qualitative methodologies that aim to develop a theory (grounded theory) or interpretive meaning of an experience (phenomenology), the final product of a qualitative descriptive approach is a rich description of an experience or event (Neergaard et al., 2009; Sullivan-Bolyai et al., 2005). Under the umbrella of objectivism, qualitative descriptive is guided by the post-positivism paradigm which caters to the desirability of objectivity yet recognises that bias is a reality and that researcher objectivity is impossible (Kayes et al., 2011). Post-positivism seeks to explore the social construction of knowledge and examine real world problems (Henderson, 2011). As PEOs engage in interpersonal relationships with their clients, this methodology served to build a rich description and greater understanding of how EI influences context and EI practice within the PEO's role.

The questions guiding the research were:

1. What is the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers?
2. How are PEOs expected to demonstrate EI when interacting with clients?
3. How do PEOs perceive they demonstrate EI, and how does this differ from client perspectives?
4. What interventions might be needed to enhance the EI of PEOs?

3.4 Research Method

3.4.1 Semi-structured Interviews

This study employed semi-structured interviews with a standard set of questions to uncover how EI influences context and EI practice within the role of PEOs. Semi-structured

interviews allow the researcher to use the interview questions as a guide with some degree of flexibility within the process (Gratton & Jones, 2010; Smith, 2003). Whilst the structured interview (the alternative to semi-structured interviews) requires less training and is purely objective in nature (Isaac & Michael, 1995; Wilmoth, 1982), semi-structured interviews allow for discussion to develop around the general questions (Dearnley, 2005; Gratton & Jones, 2010; Mojtahed et al., 2014). This inductive approach was chosen as it promoted development of trust and rapport between the researcher and participant through reflective listening. An empathetic style of questioning and listening was designed to enable the participant to feel like they were the expert (Britt et al., 2003). Imposing direction and judgement is considered counterproductive and would have likely caused a sense of distrust and deception (Britt et al., 2003; Gratton & Jones, 2010).

A combination of exploratory and inductive approaches were employed in this study. An exploratory approach provided the researcher with the ability to consider a previously formulated theory of Goleman's (2004) five dimensions of EI and the Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Nelis et al., 2009) to help guide the interview questions (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Reiter, 2007). Contrary to other EI performance-based models discussed in the previous chapter, Goleman's (2004) model and the Tripartite model together captured the non-cognitive elements of EI (self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social awareness and self-regulation) and highlighted the themes that connected them. The non-categorical codes that appeared in the process were analysed and identified later (inductive approach) to determine if they represented a new category (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Non-categorical codes can often offer a contradictory view on the predictive themes or might further refine and extend the existing theory (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this research, preparing a semi-structured interview guide based on the Tripartite model (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015; Wolfe, 2017) and Goleman's (2004) EI model to help guide the interviews enabled the researcher to focus on relevance and to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' views and perceptions of EI. Each dimension of Goleman's (2004) EI model (self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social awareness and self-regulation) was guided by the Tripartite model's element of knowledge, ability and trait.

Open-ended questions were used in the semi-structured interviews, followed by targeted questions around the pre-determined categories. The nature of open-ended questions aims to encourage depth and to allow new concepts to emerge (Dearnley, 2005). Open-ended questions like "tell me an experience when..." serve to maintain a supportive and explorative environment for both the researcher and the participant (Miller, 1996). The open-ended question format required a flexible approach on the part of the researcher when conducting

the interviews. A flexible approach allowed the researcher to probe spontaneously in response to particularly interesting answers by the interviewees. According to Cohen and Arieli (2011), the interview is a “flexible tool for data collection enabling multi-sensory channels to be used; verbal, nonverbal, spoken and heard” (p.409). A flexible approach by the researcher was designed to indicate to the participant that their contributions were valued and worth remembering (Bavelas et al., 2000; Pasupathi & Hoyt, 2010; Van Quaquebeke et al., 2007).

3.4.1.1 Respectful Inquiry

Respectful inquiry was another approach that guided the semi-structured interviews in this study. Respectful inquiry is a communication tool that enabled the researcher to ask questions in an open way and to subsequently listen in an attentive way (Van Quaquebeke & Felps, 2018). This approach served to preclude the participant from feeling that certain responses were expected of them by the researcher. The approach encouraged more candid responses from the interviewees on the premise that they did not feel pressured to say things that the interviewer was expecting them to say. Such an approach was designed to enhance feelings of equal worth and dignity on the part of participants (Carmeli et al., 2015; Van Quaquebeke & Felps, 2018; Van Quaquebeke et al., 2007). Respectful inquiry is defined by Van Quaquebeke and Felps (2018) as:

The multidimensional construct of asking questions in an open way and subsequently listening attentively, which, in their interplay, signal the degree to which a person invites an addressee to (continue to) share his/her thoughts on a subject during a conversational episode (p.7).

A communicative approach allowed the researcher to probe more deeply into the various issues raised according to the responses given by the participants so that the multifaceted dimensions of EI were explored. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews gave the researcher the ability to explore certain issues that were raised in the course of the interview which the researcher may have not anticipated prior to conducting the interviews. Meanwhile, the set questions provided a framework for ensuring that certain aspects of EI were covered with every participant. The spontaneous element of semi-structured interviews achieved a closer effect to natural conversations rather than a set interview where, regardless of what response the participant provides, the researcher moved on to the next question.

The semi-structured interview guide for the PEO and the clients are summarised in Table 1. The complete interview guide of questions is found in Appendix C.

Table 1

Semi-structured Interview Questions

Clients and PEO Questions:

Knowledge

-roles and definitions of EI

Self-awareness

-strengths of a PEO

-factors contributing to a confident PEO

-how these factors influence the relationship between the PEO and the police officer

Motivation

-importance of the PEO

-challenges leading up to the PCT

Empathy

-emotions present before embarking on the PCT test

- similar experiences with similar emotions

Social Skills

-maintaining a positive relationship between PEO and police officer

-working through problems and challenges with the PEO

Self-Regulation

-importance of emotional self-control leading up to the PCT

Improvements

-what improvements might be needed to enhance the emotional intelligence of PEO's?

Prior to conducting the interviews, necessary preliminaries needed to be addressed due to ethical requirements (Gillham, 2005; Wellington, 2015). Firstly, permission from participants to conduct the interviews needed to be sought (Wellington, 2015). The process commenced with an initial invitation to participate in the study emailed to potential participants (Appendix A). Secondly, certain procedures were introduced to ensure the participants' responses remained confidential (Wellington, 2015). Audio files of interviews were downloaded to a password-protected storage space that only the primary researcher and her supervising team had access to. All hard copies were transcribed electronically and destroyed. The transcriptions were sent out to the participants and they had a chance to verify the transcriptions of the interviews to ensure accuracy. Lastly, the researcher explained to the participant in practical terms what the purpose of the research was and why it was being conducted (Gillham, 2005; Wellington, 2015). This explanation was given prior to the interview via a participatory email and prior to the interview. The interviews were conducted in two ways, face-to-face in person and face to face via Skype. Due to the Christchurch mosque shooting on 15 March, 2019, the original dates set for the face-to-face interviews were delayed and Skype face-to-face interviews with three PEOs replaced the planned face-to-face interviews. The researcher also advised participants about the approximate duration of the interviews. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes per participant. Each interview was audiotaped and transcribed verbatim by the leading researcher.

3.4.2 Sampling

This study employed purposeful sampling, a common approach in qualitative research that identifies and selects data-rich cases related to the phenomena of interest (Palinkas et al., 2015; Patton, 1990, 2015). According to Marriam and Tisdell (2015) purposeful sampling is “an assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 96). Directly interviewing the PEOs provided first hand-accounts of what PEOs have to offer the research and helped to ensure that the information gathered was data-rich and insightful. Furthermore, Patton (2015) argues that information-rich cases derived from purposeful sampling emphasises the logic and power of qualitative research. Information-rich cases provided a deeper understanding of the purpose of the research and the issues of central importance (Patton, 2015).

- The selection of PEOs and clients was identified through the professional networks of the Physical Education and Wellness Manager. Five PEOs and five clients were

interviewed for the study. To ensure that rich data and insights could be generated from participants, two key selection criteria were employed for the PEOs: is employed by the NZ Police as a PEO; and

- have conducted a minimum of two PCT tests as a PEO.

Selection of the clients was based on the following criteria:

- sworn police officers;
- have conducted a minimum of two PCT tests while being a sworn officer; and
- have been labelled a 'remedial' due to lack of fitness required to complete the PCT in the dedicated time

The PEO selection process started through contact with the participants and Wellness Manager. NZ Police currently employs twelve PEOs and two assistant PEOs. Due to the criteria required for this study, all twelve PEOs fitted the criteria, therefore, all NZ PEOs received an email outlining the criteria and purpose of the research (Appendix E). The first five PEOs to confirm their willingness to participate and who matched the sampling criteria outlined earlier were then sent a further email introducing the researcher and the research project. The email included a participant information sheet (Appendix A), a consent form (Appendix B), an overview of timelines and an explanation of how the findings would be disseminated.

Once the PEOs were selected, the researcher sent a further email to the PEO participants outlining the criteria for the client participants (Appendix A). A snowball sampling method was employed due to the confidential nature of the work undertaken by employees in the police environment. A snowball sample method is preferred when the population is hard to reach and determining a list of potential participants is difficult for the researcher (Etikan et al., 2015). PEO participants were asked to nominate any clients that they felt fitted the criteria for the research. Invitation emails were sent by the researcher to all nominated clients. The clients who were the first to confirm their participation and who matched the sampling criteria were then sent a further email similar to the one sent to the selected PEOs in outlining the scope of the project. The process of emailing and securing participants took approximately two weeks. Pseudonyms were used in place of participants' proper names. Table 2 outlines the codes used to identify the participants.

Table 2*Pseudonym codes used for participants*

Participants in research	Codes used in findings
5 Clients= C	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5
5 PEOs= P	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5

Note. C= Client, P= Participant

3.4.2.1 Consent Forms

Participants signed consent forms following their agreement to participate in the study. Their privacy and confidentiality rights were adhered to and the participants were informed of the intended outcomes and nature of the project. Furthermore, risk elements that could be physical, psychological or social were minimised. The NZ Police place a strong emphasis on Code of Conduct with their employees. The *code* to which it is referred to asks police employees to consciously exhibit behaviour which is aligned to the values of professionalism, respect, integrity, commitment to Māori and the Treaty, empathy and valuing diversity (NZ Police, 2020). This constant emphasis is embedded into police employees' daily thinking and the researcher articulated clearly before and after each interview that they would be allowed to request any information be removed that they felt they revealed more information than they had initially intended (Miller & Boulton, 2007). This was a plausible situation as categories and sub-categories in the researcher's study emerged from the open-ended questions.

Although the researcher was aware of the identities of each participant, the following steps were taken to protect their privacy and ensure their anonymity:

- Codes were used instead of participants' names during analysis and reporting.
- Participants had the option to withdraw from the research project at any time prior to the completion of the data analysis.
- Within the Educational Leadership office, audio files of interviews were stored in a password-protected storage space that only the primary researcher and her supervisor had access

to. Participants were informed that all data would be stored for six years then destroyed.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of consolidating, organising and synthesising the information given by the participants and highlighting the key information that emerges (Smith, 2003). Following the interviews, thematic analysis was employed and guided by Braun and Clarke's (2013) six stages of thematic analysis.

Stage 1: Transcription and data preparation

The first stage included the transcription of the interviews and the data preparation. A set notebook was used as a means to keep all transcripts together.

Stage 2: Data familiarisation

Stage two consisted of the researcher familiarising herself with the data. Reading and rereading the transcripts repeatedly and listening to the audio recordings of the interviews allowed the researcher ample opportunities to review the data analytically, critically and to give meaning to the data. Notes were taken within the margins of the transcripts and colour coded to identify emerging themes.

Stage 3: Completion of coding across the data set

Stage three included the researcher coding across the entire data set. Coding began immediately after the interviews and was uploaded into NVivo 9. NVivo 9 is a qualitative data analysis software tool that assists researchers in organising and analysing the data acquired from interviews.

Stage 4: Searching for themes

Stage four consisted of sorting all the codes into potential themes. This involved searching for relevant relationships between the codes and themes as well as differentiating overarching themes from sub-themes. Mind mapping is a technique that uses diagrams and visuals to conceptualise relationships and allows the researcher to gain a more insightful understanding of the complex interconnections between ideas (Fernandez, 2017). Mind maps were useful tools to organise themes and codes in a graphical manner to highlight existing relationships between data sets and themes.

Stage 5: Reviewing themes

Stage five required two levels of reviewing and refining the collected themes. Level one included reading and revising all the collated data extracts within each theme and determining whether or not they formed a coherent pattern. Data within themes should have a connection between each other, whereas themes should be clear and distinct from one another (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Patton, 1990). Level two consisted of re-reading the entire data set to ascertain whether the identified themes clearly matched the data set and to ensure any missed data was appropriately assigned to a theme.

Stage 6: Defining and naming themes

Stage six commenced when the mind map was complete and the themes were further analysed to confirm their relevance to the research questions. Once the validity of each theme was confirmed, the themes were given names and the final stage of data analysis commenced.

Stage 7: Writing and final analysis

The final stage involved writing the report. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that this process should involve taking the complicated story of one's data and telling it in such a way that it convinces the reader of the validity and merit of the research. Extracts were used throughout the final analysis to provide an interesting and coherent narrative of the data and to demonstrate prevalence within the themes.

3.5.1 Rigour and Validity

Rigour in qualitative research can be strengthened by paying detailed attention to the quality of the data and by accurately representing the participants' experiences. The three concepts of rigour proposed by Beck (1993) – credibility, auditability and fittingness – and how they were applied to this project are discussed below. This project's discussion of EI could potentially add merit to a more general significance beyond the sporting context such as social sciences and the current leadership paradigm.

3.5.1.1 Credibility

Credibility, also known as internal validity, refers to how faithful and vivid the description of the phenomenon is (Beck, 1993). Diefenech (2007) argues that, sometimes, asking the questions is not enough and to effectively address credibility, the quality of the data must be adhered to. Quality of the data can be misled due to preconceived perceptions and thought patterns reflecting socialisation from both the researcher and the participant

(Diefenech, 2008). This has potential to create responses that do not accurately reflect the content. Prior to the analysis, a self-reflective bracketing mind map was performed by the lead researcher to prompt her to reflect on her personal experiences as a PEO role and to acknowledge any preconceptions or biases she may have held about the topic and how these might influence the content analysis process. Creating the mind map prompted the researcher to revise her questions and ensure both models, Goleman's (2004) five dimensions and the Tripartite model's three elements were reflected and interconnected within each question.

Further, to assist in developing a theoretical understanding of the emerging themes, this project employed triangulation as a mean of ensuring that its findings were robust.

Triangulation is "a primary strategy used in qualitative research that depicts the phenomena be viewed and explored from multiple perspectives" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p.556). This study used triangulation to broaden the interpretations of the lead researcher and to boost confidence in the conclusions reached within the study. Two alternative researchers independently coded a similar set of data chosen by the researcher and then communicated through email to discuss emerging themes and responses. The identification of themes from both alternative researchers matched the themes the researcher had identified.

3.5.1.2 Auditability

Auditability is "maintaining a comprehensive record of all methodological decisions, such as a record of the sources of data, sampling decisions and analytical procedures and their implementation" (Cooney, 2011, p.20). Beck (1993) describes auditability as the ability for other researchers to follow the methods and decisions of the researcher at every stage of the analysis. To enhance this project's auditability, the researcher proposed two methods of research practice, interviews and participant selection. Chiovitti & Piran (2003) suggest that enhancing audibility relies on criteria that is built on the 'how' and 'why' of the researcher and the participant.

Transcribing the interview data using specific questioning criteria built into the researcher's thinking helped to identify, develop and refine all of the codes that had emerged from the data. The specific questioning criteria focused on the research questions, and codes were organised under each research question. These criteria were then applied to a paradigm model that reflected the relationships between the overarching themes and the sub-themes.

Furthermore, the questions posed in the interviews had to reflect the concerns of the participants and therefore the terminology in the questions resonated with the participants. For example, when describing the PCT test, references were made to *the body*, a challenging

obstacle that many police officers struggle to drag the required distance. To the general public, the *body* appears as a physical obstacle that is two connected rectangular weights covered in carpet. By the interviewer using the names of the obstacles in relation to what they represent in a police environment, it created a sense of mutual understanding, trust and intimacy between the interviewee and the interviewer that encouraged candid disclosure by the participants.

A final method in establishing rigour within a qualitative approach is *memoing*. Memoing was used to record reflective notes while interpreting the data. Memoing was a useful tool for the researcher to understand emerging concepts and categories and for maintaining the integrity of the participants' disclosures through critical reflection (Martin & Barnard, 2013). This strategic tool was used during the interviews and in the transcribing process. All memoing was recorded in a notebook and revisited time and time again throughout the data analysis and helped to maintain the relevance of the data to the research questions.

3.5.1.3 Fittingness

Beck (1993) describes fittingness as "the extent to which the results of a study can be generalized to other populations" (p.45). Fittingness is the last concept of Beck's (1993) rigour model and it applies to the representation of the participants' experiences and how it can be applied to other contexts. Leadership and EI are significant research topics in the social sciences, and the current leadership paradigm has become a phenomenon that many sectors are looking to explore. Sport research has also evolved the structural viewpoint as professionalism and commercialisation have driven organisational change (O'Boyle et al., 2015). Gerrard (2015) argues that sport management and leadership is a field of study that is context-bound which limits it to its specific sector, therefore precluding its application to other fields and its capacity to merit academic publication. He highlights the need for the sport management sector to focus on a user-led approach with methodologies that approach the research in the form of evidence-based practice (Gerrard, 2015). Although these approaches involve a longer time frame because of the deeper relationships between academic researchers and participants, it will be the way forward to developing more general theoretical findings and altering its current subservient role to general management and business models (Gerrard, 2015).

3.6 Overarching Ethical Principles

Qualitative descriptive is an unassuming approach to research, therefore, it has a minimal effect on its participants (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The research questions were guided

by the three overarching key ethical principles: participation, protection and partnership (Hudson & Russell, 2009) and those principles are employed to discuss the ethics associated with this study.

3.6.1 Participation

Ethical implications for conducting this qualitative descriptive research were approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 31 October, 2018 (Appendix D) before commencing the study. The participant information sheet and the consent form/paperwork were sent to participants to obtain informed and voluntary consent. In addition, a participant-friendly information outline (Appendix A), that was easy to understand, allowed participants to fully comprehend the process in place and to feel comfortable to withdraw any time before the data was fully processed. Participants were given an email address as a means to contact the researcher if they had any questions that arose prior to, and after, the interviews. Miller and Boulton (2007) suggest that communication processes (for example, email) can offer researchers new opportunities to document the process of consent. Since the PEOs initially contacted were located all over NZ, emails provided a means of timely communication for obtaining the consent of participants.

3.6.2 Protection

Guidelines were followed to ensure respect between the researcher and participant. These guidelines included: 1) establishing rapport early on in the interview through introductions, 2) being non-judgemental in the researcher's reactions to the participants' responses, and 3) active listening to the responses with no interruptions (Fontana & Frey, 1998; Hannabuss, 1996). To ensure anonymity the participants' privacy was protected by the removal of their names and pseudonyms were used in the final presentation.

3.6.3 Partnership

New Zealand is an inter-cultural society, therefore, it was important to give particular consideration to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and cultural safety for appropriate consultation and research processes (Hudson et al., 2016). New Zealand Police currently employ 11.8% Māori, and minority groups equate to 31.1% of the business (NZ Police, 2019). Further, commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi is one of the six values that the police embrace, so it was important to ensure the relationship between the researcher and participants was built on an understanding of their whakapapa. Whakapapa refers to the quality of the relationship and the structures or processes that have been established to support these relationships (Hudson et al., 2016, p.6). Within the whakapapa framework, the

best practice level of relationship between the researcher and participant is one that empowers kaitiaki. Kaitiaki is displayed through truthfulness, transparency, good faith and fairness (Hudson et al., 2016). The idea of whakapapa aimed to connect the development and maintenance of meaningful relationships between the researcher and the participants (Hudson et al., 2016). Furthermore, as the research was conducted in NZ, referral to the Health Research Council of New Zealand guidelines for Researchers on Health Research Involving Māori was implemented due to the diversity of the NZ Police ethnicities.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented an overview of qualitative descriptive methodology and outlined how the interview method was applied in the research process. To understand the influences of context and EI practice within the PEO role, a post-positivist paradigm was employed. This chapter explained and justified methods employed through sampling procedures, semi-structured interviews and data analysis. Ethical considerations, as well as rigour and validity, were acknowledged and justified in relation to a qualitative approach. Furthermore, theory was embedded and discussed within this chapter to help promote an understanding of how the methodology was organised and the research carried out. In the following chapter, the findings will be presented.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from five client participants and five PEO participants within the NZ Police. The qualitative descriptive approach aimed to provide a rich description of the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers. The implementation of the study was guided by Goleman's (2004) theoretical framework of the five dimensions of EI and the Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009; Nelis et al., 2009) and therefore formed guiding theoretical concepts that were the forefront of the questions asked in the semi-structured interviews.

The questions guiding the research were:

1. What is the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers?
2. How are PEOs expected to demonstrate EI when interacting with clients?
3. How do PEOs perceive they demonstrate EI, and how does this differ from client perspectives?
4. What interventions might be needed to enhance the EI of PEOs?

The findings drawn from the guiding concepts have been organised into five sections. Each section presents themes relating to the research questions and the PEOs' and clients' differing perspectives linked to the themes. The first section includes a short description of both sets of participants and an overview on how they define EI. The second section describes the context of the testing environment and how pressure influences emotions. In the third section, themes relate to the expectations of PEOs to demonstrate EI. The fourth section presents themes that depict how PEOs and clients perceive PEOs demonstrate EI. The fifth section addresses the interventions needed to enhance the EI of PEOs. The final section examines the overarching research question with themes that relate to the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers.

4.2 Definition of EI

Participants in this study were divided into two groups of five; the clients and the PEOs. The clients were participants who were classed as remedials with the NZ Police system,

which meant that they had barriers associated with passing the PCT test. Three of the clients were classed remedial due to injury and two of the clients were classed remedial due to lack of fitness. The PEOs' role is to support these clients to achieve a passing grade on the PCT test. To safeguard the identity of all the participants, pseudonyms 'C' for 'client' and 'P' for PEO have been used. Furthermore, each participant has been given a 1–5 number attached to either 'C' or 'P'.

The definition of EI was given to the clients and PEOs before probing their understanding of the concept. The definition was:

Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions and emotions of others. Managing and identifying emotions are regarded just as important as traditional intelligences (IQ) (Goleman, 1995, p. 34).

Three of the five clients expressed limited exposure to the concept, and, within those three one had never heard of the term EI. However, four of the five clients described EI as a way to *deal with emotions*. This is highlighted in C1's definition of EI, "*EI is recognising how to deal with them (emotions)*" and C2's definition, "*Someone who is pretty intelligent and deal with a whole lot of emotions*".

However, the PEO's understanding of EI was quite varied but fruitful, with all five PEO responses emphasising the importance of understanding the emotions in others:

P1: *I guess read some cues that people show, facial cues, just their personalities and just through chatting with them understand some to the underlying emotional baggage that they may be carrying the issues that they may be dealing with that is affecting more than just the physical.*

P5: *I wouldn't have thought about understanding my own emotions, I would have given you an answer along the lines of others and hopefully navigating interpersonal relationships in a way that allows for on-the-spot. It means we are taking other people's emotions into account.*

It was evident that the PEOs employed a better understanding of the importance of EI within self and others and the clients focused more of their understanding on how a PEO should demonstrate EI.

4.3 Context of the Environment

Whilst the role of the PEO has many facets, the connection between the clients and the PEO is created due to a barrier preventing the client to pass the PCT test. To understand the context and pressures that the PCT creates, it was important to gain knowledge of the pressure associated with the test. Police officers are required to pass a PCT every two years and if they do not pass the test, the consequences are that they will become non-deployable. The pressures police officers face before embarking on the PCT are not always obvious (facing non-deployment). The pressure from family, colleagues, supervisors and self are all intertwined within their mental preparation going into the test. This is demonstrated in two of the following clients' responses:

C1: Pressure is a big one. Although when I say that my boss at the time and people around me wouldn't outwardly put pressure on me, it was more my mind and pressure, I've got a stepson and my son so I am juggling time. Yes pressures, mind, family some of, not my husband, but my extended family think 'what the heck' you know like? Making comments 'why can't you do it' like that and they have no idea what is going on.

C2: ...and I had to pass my PCT in order to book into my firearms stuff and be deployable because I have been off for a little while. You know, your colleagues are going 'God, hurry up and get your shit together' so once I knew the PCT came up, got through it and all the things followed.

And on the actual day of the PCT, other pressures such as colleagues watching and fear of failure are present. This is evident in P4's response to emotions present on PCT day:

P4: Yeah, I'd say fear is the biggest one, having people watching them seems to be something common. I don't know when you do it but when we do it we are usually dealing with pretty fit groups. There is usually a cross over with the groups so there still be one group there when one group arriving, so there can be a lot of people and a lot of people are embarrassed. They are embarrassed about their physical condition and where they are at the moment and they are embarrassed about being nervous.

The data revealed that pressure is evident within the context of the environment. External pressure from family, friends, colleagues and supervisors directly affect the emotional state of the client which, in turn, creates emotional pressure on self. These findings link directly to Goleman's (2004) fifth dimension of self-regulation.

4.4 Expectations to Demonstrate EI

The official requirements of the PEO are demonstrated below:

- Deliver fitness testing for employment processes.
- Develop and deliver strength and conditioning programmes.
- Identify risks, trends and opportunities through health and lifestyle interventions.
- Collaborate and engage with stakeholders at all levels of the organisation.
- Develop and maintain a wide range of positive relationships.

Although EI is not clearly mentioned in these requirements, it is assumed and expected that the PEOs incorporate the concepts of EI into the core skills of the role. This is exemplified in the last two bullet points in the PEO's role description. The main themes that were deduced from the research question pertaining to clients' expectations of PEOs to demonstrate EI were knowledge, communication and motivation. These main themes will be expanded upon in the next subsections.

4.4.1 Knowledge

Knowledge of the key elements associated with the role of the PEO may not be perceived as an element contributing to EI but it does, in fact, have a profound effect on self-confidence and self-regard. A deep understanding of the official requirements of the PEO (fitness testing, strength and conditioning programmes and risks, trends of health and lifestyle interventions) contributes to confidence. The Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009; Nelis et al., 2009) positions *knowledge* on the top and regards *knowing one's self* as the forefront to EI development. All five clients viewed knowledge and experience as the most expected requirement for the PEO role. Four of the five clients linked knowledge to confidence. The responses below are a demonstration of how the clients associated knowledge and confidence:

C2: Well obviously be confident, have the knowledge, the fitness, the knowledge in regards to health and fitness, and be able to provide some kind of level of certification to show that they know their stuff and they are able to deliver that information with confidence.

C5: *I would say [links to confidence] if they had some sort of background in PE, I keep thinking back in high school, sport science, some sort of background in sports science or sports psychology something like that.*

All five clients' interpretation of knowledge was associated with experience and a sport science context. The clients affiliated knowledge with the ability to design rehabilitation training programmes, design and lead fitness regimes, and an in-depth understanding of anatomy. Four of the five clients referred to certification as an affirmation of confidence and knowledge. Only one client linked both sport science and sport psychology to knowledge and confidence.

Interestingly, although all five PEOs nominated knowledge of core skills as one of the expectations of the role, confidence was viewed as a mixture of knowledge and regulating emotions. Three of the five PEOs stipulated the importance of regulating emotions during uncomfortable situations as demonstrating confidence within the role. P1 stated:

P1: *...stepping out of the comfort zone and actually saying 'do I need to say hello to these people?'. But not be the most easiest thing to do for someone like myself who is an introvert in nature to go in front of people in a situation like a classroom.*

P4 discussed the importance of *standing one's ground* as a sign of confidence when put in an uncomfortable situation:

P4: *I guess having a strong enough personality that you are comfortable or if not comfortable, just able to say 'Hang on a second, that's not my understanding of this' and pushing back a little bit. It's not easy, it's not easy when someone is your, I don't want to say, your superior, your boss or someone that is quite high ranking to turn around and 'No that's not right'. Standing your ground.*

All five PEO's discussed how the core basics were the primary focus in their role. The core basics ranged from fitness assessments, training programmes, rehabilitation programmes and health and wellness assessments. Knowledge of the core basics was considered fundamental in their daily role requirements:

P5: *I mean our main role is running our daily testing. We do the PCT and the recruit testing. And then next big piece of it is assisting people for whatever reason aren't able to complete the testing so remedial programmes illness or injury.*

P1: *First and foremost to do our core, the basics. It's obviously doing our fitness assessments of both staff and recruits to do to assist people to get back to work once that they come back from surgery illness and injury.*

Whilst all participants nominated knowledge as an expectation within the PEO role, the clients associated confidence as a by-product of knowledge whereas the PEOs attributed confidence to a blend of emotional regulation and knowledge. Nevertheless, the analysis clearly indicated that knowledge has a profound effect on the relationship between the PEO and the client.

4.4.2 Communication

One of the dominating themes within the study was the importance of communication. Communication was used both in written and oral modes and all five clients gained a greater understanding of the PCT process when communication was open and honest. As C1 stated, *“So you maintain open lines of communication”*. Furthermore, it was clear that clients valued the written communication provided by the PEO as C2 stated, *“and giving us the tools or setting up appointments or sending me emails”*. However, all five clients expressed that oral communication is essential and expected from their PEO. The clients felt that oral communication was the motivator to achieving their goals as captured in the response below:

C3: *...and it's obviously the way she talks and the way she gets involved, enthusiasm that she produces and she with the exercises, I could be on the treadmill doing different levels that she goes 'I know you can do level 13', Oh my god I'm going to die. I'm thinking, 'Oh man, I can do that I didn't know I had it in me'.*

Although the clients revealed that they were motivated by oral communication from the PEO, the previous quote alluded to an element of trust between the PEO and client. When faced with adversity, and in this case a faster pace on the treadmill, the client trusted that the PEO understood what level the client could push themselves towards.

All five PEOs also stated the importance of communication in both written and oral forms as P3 explained, *“It's the communication. You can learn everything you want to learn and finish top in the class but if you don't have the communication skills it's really a waste.”* Whilst all five clients highlighted oral communication as a pushing motivator, four of the five PEOs described that the most important element of oral communication is reassurance. As P2 stated:

P2: *So I say to her, 'Hey you turned up that's the hardest part. You are here now, just do the warm-up, see how you feel. Don't touch any piece of equipment that you don't want to. Don't do anything you don't want to.'*

The differing perceptions of communication as a motivator is demonstrated in P5's response below:

P5: I find motivating people to go harder is not a big part of it at all it's very rare that I get someone who is not giving enough effort. I spend much more of my time trying to calm people down then and get people to take things easy and slow down then I do having to get anyone to do more.

Regardless of whether communication is used as a reassurance tool or as a motivating tool, both allude to the ability to self-regulate emotions and trust the person giving the communication. As noted in P5's response previously, the ability to *calm people down* is an important skill related to the dimension of self-regulation in EI. Interestingly, whilst the PEOs viewed communication as a means to reassure the clients, the clients viewed reassurance as self-talk on the day. All five clients expressed times when they used self-talk as internal and external communication to help reassure themselves in the situation. As C4 stipulated, "*You know just reassuring (myself) I suppose that I was still in the remedial group it was 'It's no biggie,' 'Just do it', 'You can do it' and 'It's all in the mind'.*" Emotional regulation was present leading up to the test (self-talk, breathing, etc.) and as soon as the stopwatch started, the reassurance communication was passed on to the PEO.

Between the two groups, three clients and three PEOs described the aspect of *time* as an important motivator while performing the PCT on the day. Breaking the test down into *time slots* throughout the test proved to motivate the client to either run faster or slow down their pace to conserve energy. The importance of time through communication is described below:

C2: It was like she was there beside me, supporting me, guiding me through it and letting me know the time, 'This is you, got plenty of time don't overdo it'. So I knew where I was going around the PCT that I was on track and what my timing was.

P5: Trying to be a calming influence. Talking through each obstacle and saying 'Ok now get back up to pace, you are going really well, just keep this consistence pace, you are going fine.' So as soon as they get over the hurdle, gate or whatever, you want to call that, and they are heading into their first zig zag, I look at my clock and I subtract 5 seconds of the clock and then double it, so if they are 1.05 then they are on a 2.10 pace. And it is really accurate.

These comments illustrate that time was used as an effective tool to reassure and calm the clients down during their PCT. Again, the element of trust was apparent in three of the clients' responses as they trusted the PEO's knowledge of the test and the times needed to successfully pass.

4.4.3 Motivation

One of the most dominant themes within the clients' expectations of the PEO role was extrinsic motivation. Clients who are classed as remedials are often in this situation because of injury or lack of fitness. The two clients that demonstrated lack of fitness expressed the importance of PEOs' extrinsic motivators to help push them through the build up to the PCT. This is highlighted in the following response:

C3: ...and XXXX really was the sort of PEO that took an interest in me. He took an interest into me, he actually worked with me he worked me bloody hard, I had to do the shuttle run, 500m shuttle, and I was overweight.

Alternatively, the three injured clients expressed extrinsic motivation as the PEOs' understanding of when not to push and the importance of a slow recovery. An example of this notion is expressed below:

C4: ...and that's the good thing as well is that you know with that whole rehab plan with XXXX she actually understood the severity of the injury and that's that she didn't push me. You know what I mean? She made the plan to suit me so I could, you know, I could extend it if I wanted to.

The injured clients' responses demonstrated the link to extrinsic motivation and knowledge. Significantly, the type of extrinsic motivation, whether it be pushing the client or holding back, was credited to the knowledge of the PEO.

In contrast, all five PEOs found their role to be challenging in enhancing intrinsic motivation within their clients. PEOs expressed that factors such as calming them down, encouraging them and building their confidence were ways of building their intrinsic motivation. Whilst all five clients highlighted extrinsic motivation from the PEOs as a necessity to achieve their goals, the PEOs placed more value on intrinsic motivation as a means to achieve success rather than purely extrinsic. The difference in the two perspectives is illustrated in P4's challenges she faces as a PEO:

P4: I don't think that someone else can give someone motivation. I just don't think that is possible. I can't gift you motivation. I might be able to give you a bit of a rack up that will probably only work once or twice, but if you don't have it internally it will always be a chore.

P4's response clearly indicated the value the PEO has on developing intrinsic motivation within the client. Whilst the clients placed emphasis on the importance of short-term extrinsic

motivation to pass the PCT, all five PEOs viewed motivation as a long-term process and placed importance on the intrinsic aspect rather than extrinsic.

4.5 Perceptions of Demonstrating EI

As the clients discussed their challenges leading up to and including the PCT, it became apparent that there were some dominating emotions present during the process. The PCT no longer represented an *I'm not fit enough* challenge; there was a definite shift from a physical challenge to a mental challenge. This shift became more apparent as the test neared. All five clients and all five PEOs concurred that the most important factor for demonstrating EI is to have a strong emotional understanding of the client's mental state when fronted with the approaching PCT. The inductive themes that presented themselves under perceptions of EI within the PEO role were anxiety, judgement, fear of failure, self-confidence and mindset. These five inducted themes are outlined in the following subsections.

4.5.1 Anxiety

All five clients discussed how anxious they felt before the PCT test. Heart palpitations, lack of sleep the night before and nervousness were all examples of how they felt before the test. Four of the five clients all seemed to direct their reason for this anxiety towards a particular skill on the test. Three out of four clients blamed their anxiety on the wall. Their perceptions of the wall are displayed in the examples below:

C5: I get really anxious? My god, the wall feels so high that I'm sure it's the same height as my fence next door, my neighbour's fence. Sometimes I go and say 'It's only this' [shows height with hand] and so I think just the grey makes it look like it's the biggest thing on earth and each time it gets higher and higher.

C2: ...even though I've done the PCT eight times now, I think with anyone we still get that anxiety and nervousness. And for a lot it's the wall. The wall seems to be the demon or the one that we always believe that we can't always get over.

These two examples highlight how the wall is perceived as a distorted image preventing them passing. The clients also admitted that this image is a mental perception and when they had gone over the wall, the anxiety disappeared. C2 captured this perception in the following comment:

C2: Yeah the thing was the wall and I just, I always run at it and climb over it but mental right? I'm not running at it and pulling myself I just run at it and put myself over. I know, when you get over it you are like, 'What was I so worried about?'

All five of the PEOs named nervousness or anxiety as one of the primary emotions associated with the PCT test. Three of the five PEOs stipulated that this anxiety and nervousness could be managed if the test was every year and not every two years. As P2 stated:

P2: Talk about stress, some of the habits are reactive emotionally through diet, nutrition, lifestyle, they are all factors that are in the mind of being actively deployed and two years is just too far. It should be annual, it should be on their graduation.

P4 exemplified the importance of more regular testing to combat anxiety as she stated, *"Anxiety is the biggest thing, well actually that's probably the biggest uncontrollable thing. And I almost think that two years is long enough that I think we are creating some of that anxiety, it is too long"*.

4.5.2 Judgement

The influence the PCT has on the officers was epitomised in this statement:

P3: I had a guy who had come to me and has just recently died, about three years ago he came to me and he had a tumour. And he said to me, "Don, I don't want to die non-compliant".

To an outsider, the PCT test may look like an obstacle of obtainable challenges, however, as demonstrated above, the underlying issues that officers bring to the test are far deeper than what an outsider may perceive. One of these underlying issues, judgement, was present in three of the clients' interviews. Judgement from family, peers and management position were all contributing factors to the pressure they felt. Moreover, on the actual PCT day, clients were faced with performing in front of number of peers and instead of overcoming one internal struggle, the client faced 20 peers watching that internal struggle. C2 compared this feeling of pressure to an analogy of previous public speaking experiences as she stated, *"...and it's also if having to public speak, knowing that when you are going around a room and you gotta introduce yourself and it happens in anything where the attention is on you"*. C3 demonstrated how he avoids judgement by running through the PCT last in line with the hope no one is watching as he stipulated, *"The other ones will go cause they actually go and try to pass the PCT. Yeah, so I'm quite happy to be the last"*.

The rule implemented in 2013 that required officers to have a current PCT or be withdrawn from frontline also contributed to anxiety. Before this change of rule, officers were required to run through the test but there were no strict guidelines in the follow-up if the officer failed. The repercussions of failing the test now relies on co-workers to cover the shifts the non-

compliant officer can longer cover. Guilt, pressure and judgement all escalated as the PCT result became critical. The PEOs presented judgement as a strong driver to the clients' anxiety as all five PEOs discussed how judgement from their support networks was contributing highly to their anxiety. P3 linked guilt and judgement as a precursor to their nervousness on the day as he stated, *"...and they don't want to let their colleagues down on their shift and section. Beforehand, they were like, 'Just deal with it', they didn't worry too much about it. Now you are off the streets. You are non-compliant."*

Interestingly, P5 saw judgement as a contributor to anxiety largely due to the shift in cultures within the police. He stated:

P5: There is honour culture and there are dignity cultures. Typically honour cultures are like rugby teams where your prestige accepts you standing in culture, and the dignity culture is the most left-wing university campus where everyone has their own personal dignity and that can't be violated and so making fun of someone shouldn't really even be an insult cause you are your own person and you see how prestigious you are essentially.

The PCT was seen by several as an object that challenges not only their abilities, but also their status. As P5 stated, *"If you don't pass it's really that's a black mark against you and you might think that is and therefore it's much more important in a culture like this"*. P1 shared how he would change the environment if judgement was an issue. He stated, *"If we need to get everyone else to leave the area, apart from some for safety reason, then we'll do that. We adapt to how everything goes."*

4.5.3 Fear of Failure

Interestingly, fear of failure was only a dominant theme within the PEO responses. Only one of the five clients associated their anxiety with the emotion of fear. This is stipulated in C2's comment, *"the emotions are the anxiety, the fear of failure, the fear of not getting through it"*. However, all five PEOs presented the link between anxiety and nervousness and fear of failure. P1 stated, *"It is always nervous, scared, the other emotion would be fear, those are the main ones that they have when they come along to the PCT"*. Similarly, P4 noted, *"I don't think it's 'I'm going to lose my job anxiety, I think it's just the fear of failing"*.

An intriguing managing technique used by three of the PEOs was to lessen the anxiety and fear of the test by playing down the importance of the result through communication. This was done by either distraction or focussing on the process rather than the result. As P1 stipulated:

P1: ...start talking about work and they are not as nervous. Talking about kids or their family or something. Just taking a little bit more time than you would with the someone who is nervous but not the same with the emotional state.

P4 and P3 both seemed to downplay the test to their clients as a managing technique for their client's anxiety and fear of failure, as shown in the following comments:

P4: ...when people are really nervous I say, 'Tell me what is the worst thing that could happen?' and the response is usually, 'I don't pass'. And I just stand there and go 'So what? So you come back and do it again?'

P3: ...so you are trying to build up their confidence rather than their fear of the bloody PCT is coming up. Everybody sweats in it, when they are, when they have their hands on the trailer and I say, 'Bet you are nervous' and they say, 'We are' then you are no different to anyone else, I was nervous when I did it.

All five PEOs recognised that emotions were involved when clients were PCT testing. They all recognised that the physical obstacles, like the wall, were barriers to passing the test, however, the largest barrier of them all was psychological.

4.5.4 Self-Confidence

To become a police officer, the applicants must complete a fitness test called the Physical Assessment Test (PAT) that ensures they are fit enough to last through the four months of Police College. The PAT is different to the PCT in that it requires the applicant to run 2.4km, a minimum number of press-ups, a vertical jump and a grip strength test. This test is considered harder than the PCT test and, when completed, the applicants feel like they are at the fittest point of their life. This is demonstrated in C5 and C1 recounting of their earlier PAT days:

C5: So every Tuesday I used to get smashed. You know I'm running 16min and showing up every Tuesday and I'm meeting people that run 8min, 9min, 10min and demoralising every week eh. Yeah, then one day 'C5, 9s, C5e 9s' so I just keep going then by the end I dropped the weight.

C1: I found it (PAT) a lot easier cause you train for it and that's what you do whereas the PCT there are a few more variables but with the PAT I was always excited by it because I knew I had done the training and all I had to do is run.

In C3's case, he reminisced about his earlier days as an athlete, *"You know, I was fit in my younger days, but I was, I played good sport I was quite fit I did lots of sport... I don't like my shape at the moment."* The comparison of how fit they were and what they are at the moment demonstrated their lack of self-regard and confidence in the present context.

Reinforcing this lack of self-confidence was the use of *weight* as the most common physical word (other than injury) that the clients associated with the PCT. Four of the five clients described their weight being a contributor to not passing the PCT test:

C4: *...yeah, and that was another thing as well cause I had been you know like because of my injury I had been sitting around and not being doing exercise like I had put on weight as well and so that was one of the things that XXXX had put in the remedial process was I had to weight to lose.*

C3: *And as a result of that um I've put on a bit more weight, quite a big person anyway so yeah I'm feeling a pinch at the moment joint-wise... but I've never recovered weight-wise and my other joints are gone.*

Further, C1 presented the correlation between weight gain and her mindset towards the PCT:

C1: *...then of course when I had a baby and put on a shit ton of weight so... um, so yeah, so a combination of putting on weight my head is completely stuffed from PCT. I think that my intention as it always it is pass it first time, next few times and then it might start to come right but um but ah combination of putting on weight then combination of home pressure and shit, life.*

Three PEOs recognised weight as a factor in lack of performance but did not emphasise it. If anything, they used weight as a focal point to deter the client from addressing the underlying emotional issues. This was demonstrated in P3's response:

P3: *...you got to find a way that you are not going to piss them off, I need you to drop an extra 5kg. Remember what you were like when you come through before and this is where you are now. When they go away they 'It's the wall and it's this, this and this' you say, 'No you are totally capable of doing it, the reason you are carrying of 10kgs of spuds on your back'.*

4.5.5 Mindset

Four of the five clients believed their mindset was the most important barrier to achieving a passing grade on the PCT. As stated by C1, *"Yeah, main pressure, my mind, no one*

thinks that from the outwardly.” Specific obstacles were discussed as impediments, however, three of the responses favoured the real reason to be the mind or mindset. Two examples of this are found below:

C4: ...the challenges? Um I think well, a mind thing, am I going to be able to do it? You know what I mean? It really gets into the mindset and the belief that you can cause actually your mind is like you know 80% of it.

C2: ...the programme helped me get through most of my PCT and it was all mind, it is all mindset at the end of the day. I didn't even feel exhausted like I normally do. I think I was in most cases I usually push myself to the point I'm going to collapse or vomit but I actually had a little bit more energy left and I thought why didn't I run my ass off a little bit faster rather than that 200m.

Contrastingly, the word mindset did not appear in any of the PEOs' responses. However, the majority of the discussions were attributed to the psychological state of the client relating to, or a variable of, mindset. The term *counsellor* or *confidence* appeared three times in the PEOs' responses to what they perceived their role was. For instance, P1 recalled, *“but to be honest the more often now it's coming to the fore that we are almost pseudo counsellors and that just with talking with people there is actually some underlying factors going on”*. Further, P4 also stipulated the connection to being a motivator in the following comment, *“You are their go-to, you're their confidence, you're their motivation”*. Although the clients did not mention the word counsellor, many of their responses symbolised a counsellor-client relationship as stated by C5, *“and I always tell her how I feel down after like, cause I've been going through the PCT.”*

4.6 The Influence of Context and EI Practice in Leading a Physical Fitness Testing Situation for Police Officers

All participants agreed that EI was essential in the PEO role. Goleman's (2004) theoretical EI framework based on the dimensions of self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social skills and emotional regulation were discussed throughout this study. It was evident from the findings that the interpersonal relationship between the PEO and client had an immense impact on achieving the goals. Trust was discussed as a central part to the client and PEO relationship.

4.6.1 Building Interpersonal Relationships

The emphasis on the interpersonal relationship was a prominent theme discussed amongst all five clients. The five clients perceived the PEOs demonstrated EI through listening

and supporting them through their challenges. The clients often referred to the PEO as someone who they could connect with and they had their best interests at heart. In C3's description of his PEO he stated, *"And we get on really well too. She knows I'll never lie, fudge anything or cause the respect in her as a person and as a trainer"* and *"she has such invested interest in me that I just don't want to disappoint her and I know that she has my interest at heart too"*. C2 believed her connection to the PEO was paramount in the relationship as she noted, *"I have always had a good relationship with my PEO because she is just someone that I can connect with apart from being totally awesome"*. Throughout conversations with all five clients, they regarded the connection between them and the PEO as paramount in helping them to succeed. As previously discussed, trust between client and PEO is significant and can directly impact the outcome of the situation.

4.6.2 Understanding Emotions

While discussing the importance of empathy, all five PEOs shared stories about how they each demonstrated empathy with a client. All five stories included one-on-one verbal communication and four of the five stories involved the PEO taking the client away from the environment to have an empathetic conversation. P1 stated:

P1: *...yes I've had a few who have come along and say 'I've had a few spits today' I've [been] really nervous. And then that's for me to take them offsite, the others are doing their warm-up and I'll take them aside and have a quick chat with them, 'Hey look you can do this, I'll be there right with you'.*

P4 recalled an uncomfortable situation with a client when she displayed an unusual amount of anxiety and she too separated her from the stressful environment. P4 stated, *"I told her that I would meet her in the carpark and go for a walk beforehand and keep her quite separate from everything else"*. Taking her out of the pressure environment had a positive impact on the client's emotions and the PEO was able to calm her down before attempting the test. This example highlighted the impact of the testing environment and the client's lack of ability to self-regulate the emotions when in pressure situations.

One of the PEOs demonstrated his empathy skills by using previous experience and relating it to the emotions within the PCT environment. P2 was able to recognise the emotions displayed by his client and compare them to his previous bike accident. P2 stated:

P2: *I can compare it with my own experience, it's like coming off a bike at a speed you know, being in hospital for a couple of days because of that, and having the courage to*

get back on the bike again, do I get back on the bike again or do I take it slow take it steady?

This comment illustrated the influence of using previous experiences to overcome anxious and fearful emotions. Moreover, it supported the previous notion from P2 that PCT testing should be run every year. The longer the length of time between testing, the more habitual emotions like anxiety and fear could build up. Having more practice or experiences with the PCT was apparent in relieving anxiety and fear of the testing day.

4.6.3 Building Trust

The PEOs had an interesting relationship with the clients in that they were the ones supporting them to achieve their goals, yet they were also the ones failing them if they did not pass the test. P5 compared these conflicting elements to a similar situation that a teacher may have. He stated:

P5: It's a real conflict within our role that we are both the person that who is helping them to get to the point where they need to get to and the one failing them when they don't. I used to think that was a real problem and then someone said to me when I brought that up they said 'Teachers are exactly the same'. And I thought good point. There is heaps of teachers out there that have to do the same thing.

Therefore, building these interpersonal relationships between the PEO and client relied on a greater understanding of how EI leads to building trust. The majority of the clients discussed how they trusted their PEO because he/she *showed interest in them* and *had their back*. According to C3, his trust in his PEO started when the PEO actually took an interest in him as he stated, *"And XXX really that was the start of PTI that someone took an interest in me. And again I didn't want to disappoint him cause XXX would actually I would go see him in town the gym in town and the old one and he took an interest in me."*

C1 discussed how the PEO having her back was an important element in the relationship but it had to be a bit of give and take. C1 stated, *"...then having your back if it comes to your boss, which she does. But only in the case if you are doing the work."* She then later reiterated the *give and take* element when discussing the important and positive relationships with the PEO. C1 stated, *"Then obviously the importance of the PEO having your back if needed and again if you deserve it"*.

Three of the five PEOs' responses were not as subtle as the client responses to trust, as they stated outright that the key to building positive relationships was trust. A common theme

amongst the PEOs regarding trust was that the PEO's were non-threatening which presented the clients with a safe environment to disclose more emotions than they normally could otherwise. P3 shared his views on trust within the role as he stated:

P3: And managers and the constables they need somewhere to go where they feel comfortable, and to be there to have that talk, you know, so little things like that and I said trust is the thing that they come to you. You are almost neutral.

Feeling comfortable with a person that feels non-threatening can be a nurturing environment for trust. P1 stipulated:

P1: Because we are, to a great degree a non-threatening employee, then there is others that go 'I can't talk to my supervisor, I can't talk to another blue shirt', whereas what are we? We are people that are just dealing with the PCT, however, cause they see us all around the place all the time.

P4 highlighted that trust is what underpins a positive relationship. She reported:

P4: I think if you can maintain that positive relationship then what underpins that relationship there is trust. If they trust you they will do what you ask them to do. Simple as that. And you can establish that really quickly with some people. Other people not so much. But with some people you can establish that real quick.

4.7 Improvements to Enhance EI in the PEO Role

Two clients who responded to the notion of EI improvements within the PEO role highlighted the importance of PEOs' ability to understand their background and why they ended up where they are. Communication in the beginning of the relationship was nominated as essential in creating trust. The EI dimensions of empathy, social awareness and motivation were all key themes that the clients felt could be incorporated into EI training for PEOs. Whilst C4 already viewed her PEOs as having high EI, she stipulated that improvements to enhance EI in the PEO role could be focussed around, *"being empathetic and understanding, motivated and good communication."*

Two PEOs discussed how important EI was to the role, yet there was no formal training to develop the EI dimensions. The exclusion of EI training is apparent in P1's response, *"None of our compulsory training modules cover any of the key aspects around emotional intelligence or maturity."* Furthermore, P3 supported the clients' notion of building trust through communication. He stated:

P3: I often think that emotional trust by our staff is paramount for us to do our job. If we lose this we are nothing more than stopwatch holders...a 20-minute discussion gave us more answers to issues than we could get anywhere else."

Workshops that provide ongoing training and development of EI were also considered significant for building EI and developing the trust needed to maintain a positive relationship with the clients.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from questions aligned with the definition of EI, the context of the pressure environment and the themes relating to the four research questions. Whilst the definition of EI was mostly unfamiliar to the clients, the PEOs had a better understanding of what EI entails and the influence emotions have on interpersonal relationships. Further, pressure from self, family and colleagues presented as common themes within the context and environment. The participants' expectations for the PEO to demonstrate EI were linked to: levels of knowledge, communication and motivation. The data revealed that the perceptions of EI within the PEO role was demonstrated through: anxiety, judgement fear of failure, self-confidence and mindset. Additionally, suggested improvements to enhance EI with the PEO role revealed that there is a need to incorporate EI development training with the PEO role. Finally, the question of the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers revealed three themes: building interpersonal relationships, understanding emotions and building trust. The following chapter will outline and discuss the themes presented in this chapter alongside the relevant literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers. This chapter presents the discussion of the main findings that were drawn from the semi-structured interviews guided by Goleman's (2004) theoretical framework of the five dimensions of EI and the Tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009; Nelis et al., 2009). The chapter begins by discussing the context of the environment. Next, the three major research questions will be outlined, and the key themes associated with these questions will be discussed in detail and compared and contrasted with existing literature. Finally, improvements that would enable PEOs to enhance their EI will be discussed.

5.2 Themes

The interview process was guided by two existing EI models noted earlier. Goleman's (2004) theoretical framework of the five dimensions of EI as discussed in the literature review is a popular model used to explore effective leadership. Table 3 below restates Goleman's (2004) five dimensions of EI and summarises the major themes presented from the findings in relation to the research questions.

Table 3

The major themes presented from the findings in relation to the research questions and Goleman's five dimensions of EI.

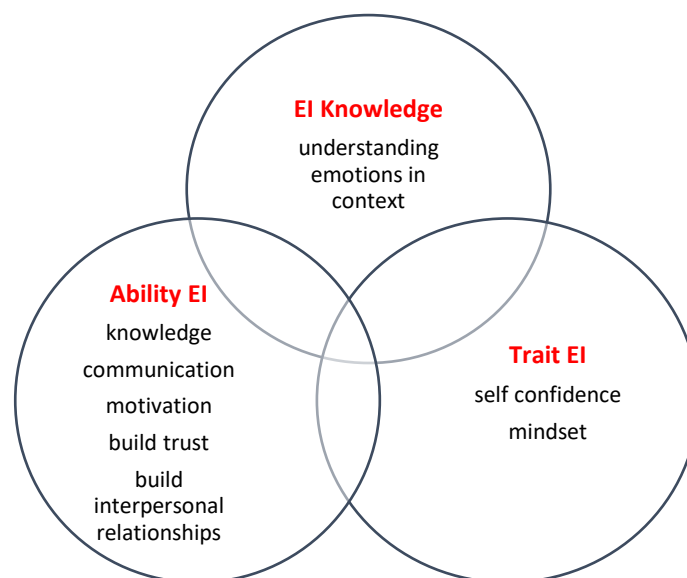
Goleman's (2004) 5 Dimensions of EI	Findings of major themes in current study			
	Expectations for PEOs to demonstrate EI	Perceptions of PEOs demonstrating EI	Influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers	Improvements needed to enhance EI in the PEO role
Self-awareness	<i>Knowledge</i> Clients expected the PEOs to have a certain level of specialist knowledge	<i>Self-confidence</i> Comparison between what the clients used to be to what they are now (e.g. increased weight) was a contributor to low self-confidence and PEOs helped to increase their confidence <i>Mindset</i> Clients admitted that passing the test was more mental than physical. PEO's described their role more as a 'counsellor' than a physical trainer	<i>Building interpersonal relationships</i>	Workshops and continuing educational trainings focusing on EI, communication, building interpersonal relationships and trust
Motivation	<i>Motivation</i> Clients expected PEOs to be able to extrinsically motivate them		<i>Understanding emotions in context (pressure, shame and culture)</i>	
Empathy		<i>Understanding of emotions</i> All participants named anxiety or nervousness as the main emotions associated with the PCT; they also understood that these emotions were caused by pressure to pass, judgement and fear of failure	<i>Building trust</i>	
Social awareness	<i>Communication</i> Clients expected PEOs to communicate openly and honestly through both written and oral communication			
Self-regulation		<i>Communication</i> All clients described how the PEO would use communication as a tool to combat negative emotions (self-talk, emphasised time). PEOs used distraction or focussing on the process rather than the result		

As demonstrated in Table 3, clients in this study expected PEOs to demonstrate EI skills through knowledge, motivation and communication. Moreover, the perceptions of clients and PEOs and the PEOs' ability to demonstrate EI were not too dissimilar. PEOs perceived they demonstrated EI by developing their clients' mindset, increasing their self-confidence, using communication as a motivational tool and awareness of the emotions involved in the PCT process. Therefore, the influence of context and EI practice within the role of the PEO was seen to strengthen the already existing EI skills and gain deeper knowledge on how to build interpersonal relationships through understanding emotions in context and building trust. These themes will be discussed in detail within this chapter.

The second model, the Tripartite model, a three-part model, combines the dimensions of knowledge, abilities and traits (Mikolajczak et al., 2009; Wolfe, 2017). As discussed in the literature review, the Tripartite model loosely connects the three dimensions of knowledge, ability and trait. Figure 2 below summarises the findings of this study under the three dimensions of the Tripartite model.

Figure 2

Overlapping EI Concepts



Note. Illustration of the overlapping EI concepts and key themes adapted into the Tripartite model (Mikolajczak, Petrides, Coumans, & Luminet, 2009).

Figure 2 displays an alternative way to see how the major themes of this study overlap. Of relevance is the heavily weighted ability EI which highlights the importance of the

interpersonal aspects of the role as opposed to the intrapersonal skills. However, as demonstrated, understanding the emotions in context first should set the stage to ensure these abilities and traits are supported.

5.3 Definition of EI

Whilst the client's understanding of EI was limited and their definition was primarily guided by the researcher's EI definition introduced beforehand, the themes presented in the findings were all within the EI context. The term EI alone presents a discourse of intelligence with combining the two words emotional and intelligence. The clients were not too familiar with the term and therefore were more inclined to associate intelligence with IQ. Such discourse is evident in C1's definition of EI, who described EI as a combination between IQ and emotions. In contrast, the PEOs' definition of EI placed more emphasis on the emotional context and navigating an understanding of the clients' emotions associated with the context.

The clients' interpretation of the definition of EI supports literature exemplifying the lack of differentiation between general intelligence and EI. Gardner (1983) was the first to shift the intelligence paradigm when he questioned the idea that intelligence was not a single entity. He argued that there exists a multitude of intelligences and every intelligence has its own strengths and weaknesses (Gardner, 1983). Moreover, separating emotion from cognition has proven difficult even in most recent times as the majority of people still traditionally view the two constructs as incompatible (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Mayer et al., 2003).

5.4 Context of Environment/Culture

The findings of this study clearly signify the importance of pressure associated with the PCT testing environment. Pressures coming from family, colleagues, supervisors and self were all evident in the clients' responses. For P1 pressures from self and family were a challenge to overcome. Not only did she feel the immediate pressure from her immediate family, she also felt the pressure from her extended family. She explained how her extended family could not grasp how she could not pass the test. Whilst the clients felt pressure was a dominant aspect of the PCT environment, of even more importance was the emotions that were present when pressure was placed upon them. Fear of failure, fear of being judged by peers and anxiety were the common emotions present when pressure was placed upon the clients.

A pressured environment and the emotions involved are demonstrated in Lewis's (1992) research on the emotions present when participants were situated in a context of rejection and criticism. Her participants felt pressures from outside influences which in turn created anxiety and fear. Further, this pressured context is not too dissimilar to an athlete preparing

for an important sporting event. There is a significant body of literature supporting athletes' performance under pressure and their ability to regulate their emotions to ensure successful task execution under stress (Crombie et al., 2009; Laborde 2016; Petrides & Furnham, 2003). The notion of emotions present under pressure and a testing environment will be explored in more depth in the following sub-themes.

5.5 Expectations to Demonstrate EI

Evidence from both the literature and this study findings confirm that effective leadership relies on a strong interpersonal relationship between the leader and follower. This was evident in the themes extrapolated from the interviews. However, it soon became clear that to maintain a strong relationship between the PEO and client, the PEOs were expected to have high levels of knowledge, good communication skills and provide extrinsic motivation when necessary.

5.5.1 Knowledge

Knowledge in the form of qualification or competence was identified as a major expectation in the PEO role. Whilst all participants stipulated the importance of knowledge in a sport and recreation context, knowledge and how it links to confidence was vastly different. Interestingly, the clients associated knowledge with hard skills (exercise science terms) and the PEOs' referred knowledge to a combination of hard skills and soft skills (being approachable, understanding emotions, etc.). All five clients expected the PEOs to have the health and fitness knowledge acquired through some sort of certification. For C2, PEO knowledge represented a practical understanding gained through certification. To the clients, PEO competence in these hard practical skills was associated with confidence. However, all five PEOs mentioned that a confident PEO is one who displays a combination of cognitive and emotional skills. The PEOs believed knowledge was required as a core competency for the role (i.e. certification), however, knowledge did not define confidence. The PEOs' emphasis on the soft skills (being approachable, emotional regulation, etc.) highlighted the importance of affective influences to obtain trust and confidence in their client. They relied on experience, understanding the soft skills and their ability to deliver the core skills to demonstrate their competence. The differing interpretation between the clients and PEOs' understanding of how knowledge is defined and how it associates to competence is significant. There was an underlying notion from the PEOs that knowledge combined with confidence and openness leads to an interpersonal relationship based on trust.

As previously discussed in the defining of EI, shifting the perception of intelligence to an emotional focus versus a cognitive focus has proven to be difficult. It was evident from the participants' responses that associating the word intelligence with cognition is still apparent. Williams (2001) proposed that knowledge acquired through multiple pathways – cognitive, motivational and behavioural – in turn, influences interpersonal trust. Furthermore, a leader whose knowledge is primarily drawn from hard skills may find it difficult to recognise the limits to their ability to fully understand their followers' capabilities (Argyris & Schon, 1974).

5.5.2 Communication

All the clients in this study expressed the belief that communication was essential and expected within their relationship with the PEO. The specific mode they preferred to be communicated with came in both forms of written and oral. Emails, phone calls, open and honest verbal communication were all discussed as important communication tools. After the first couple of client interviews, it became evident that open communication between the PEO and clients was key to maintaining a positive relationship. One client in particular credited his improvement in fitness and wellbeing to the openness and genuine relationship he has with his current PEO. He referred to his previous PEO as someone who was not interested in him and did not give him any help when he needed it. For his current PEO, he repeatedly mentioned that she took an interest in him because she cared about him. Significantly, there were no comments that would depict a defensive stature between any of the PEOs and clients. In fact, the feelings of being threatened or embarrassed were not evident in any of the relationships.

The connection between openness and positive relationships is consistent with what has been found in previous interpersonal relationship research. Organisational learning theory states that extremely complex interactions lead to openness when problems are detected and errors are addressed (Argyris, 2002; Boreham & Morgan, 2004; Piggot-Irvine, 2015; Senge, 2006). As Argyris (1991) stated, feelings of being threatened or embarrassed lead to defensiveness. When defensiveness is low, one can only assume that the leader has stayed low on the ladder of inference by attempting to understand the root of the threat and trying to shift the behaviour attached to the problem (Argyris, 1991; Piggot-Irvine, 2015).

Reassurance was another significant key communication tool used by all PEOs as a means to aid the clients in self-regulation to be used in preparation and during the test. De-escalating the test situation was predominately the main purpose of offering reassurance to the client on the actual day. The act of trying to calm people down and normalising the situation were common strategies used by the PEOs. In particular, P2 explained how she always breaks up the

PCT in chunks and tries to focus on one part at a time. She used communication as an emotional self-regulation tool to reassure the clients at every part of the PCT and would only move on to the next part when the clients felt calm and ready to move on.

These findings are in accordance with Zakrajsek et al.'s (2017) study on athletic trainers' psychological approaches with their athletes. Similar to the PEO focusing on normalising the situation, the athletic trainers reassured the athletes by building their confidence and lessening self-doubt by focussing them on the process and all the hard work they have put in to ensure a successful return to sport (Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Reassurance and normalising the context of the situation are both effective communication strategies in ensuring a successful outcome (Tracey, 2008; Zakrajsek et al., 2017). Furthermore, the study findings are in accordance with Goleman's (2004) self-regulation dimension. Self-regulation in an unpleasant environment requires an openness to change and a trusting relationship with the leader who is directing this motive (Goleman, 1995, 2004).

5.5.3 Motivation

Although the study findings clearly support communication as a key strategy for open and honest relationships, it also creates stimulation through motivation. After interviewing all five clients, it became evident that the clients expected the PEOs to motivate them. There was a consensus amongst the clients that the type of motivation relied on the situation the client was in regarding poor fitness or injury. The two clients who lacked a competent level of fitness expected the PEO to extrinsically motivate them through pushing the boundaries of their capabilities. In contrast, the three injured clients commended the PEOs' understanding of how to use motivation only when needed and to use it if relevant to their rehabilitation. Understanding and recognising when to motivate and what type of motivation is a clear indication of ability EI.

Motivation is one of the key dimensions of Goleman's (2004) EI model. Interestingly, Goleman's (2004) definition of motivation heavily addresses a leader's trait EI but fails to define the importance of *how to* motivate others: "A person with high motivation has a high desire to achieve goals and is optimistic even in the face of failure" (Goleman, 2004, p.88). Chase (2010) highlighted the importance of how coaches can directly influence the performance and motivation of the athlete. She attributed this motivational influence to an effective leadership mindset which in turn will lead to success as a leader (Chase, 2010). The ability to recognise the correct motivational tool to apply to the situation is in line with Brannick et al.'s (2009) study which noted that people who demonstrate high levels of ability EI are able to span the border between reason and feeling and take appropriate action.

Of particular importance in the study findings was the aspect of time as a motivating tool. Both the clients and the PEOs expressed how they were motivated by knowing the time breakdown while performing the PCT. P1 described in detail the checkpoints of the PCT where he would look at his watch and he would know if the client was on track to pass or to fail. At the checkpoints he would communicate with the client about whether they would need to speed up or maintain pace. Similarly, the clients explained how they liked to be told the time during a test as it helped ease their anxiety and the communication acted as a motivator. Using time as a frequent communication tool demonstrated the PEOs' need to include extrinsic motivation due to the context of the pressured environment.

The findings of this study parallel the literature supporting the self-determination theory stating that controlled motivation is apparent in environments that involve demand in others or self-imposed pressures (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Communication as a motivator supports research exploring controlled and constrained environments requiring higher levels of extrinsic motivation (O'Neill & Hodge, 2019; Weiss & Weiss, 2003, 2006). In particular, one of the key findings in Lindwall et al.'s (2016) study on goal content and motivational climate was that the sole group who had goals based on image and social recognition found that they needed more controlled motivation than autonomous motivation. Contrary to Goleman's (2004) definition of motivation as "a passion to achieve beyond expectation. A person with high motivation has a high desire to achieve goals and is optimistic even in the face of failure" (p.45), Lindwall et al.'s (2016) study suggested that understanding the goal content and applying the best motivational approach (controlled versus autonomous) would be a more evident marker of EI.

The expectations of the PEOs in this study to demonstrate EI through knowledge, communication and motivation were heavily reliant on ability EI. As previously discussed in the literature review, ability EI is a learned capability that spans the spectrum between reason and feeling (Brannick et al., 2009). The connections between recognition based on knowledge and motivation through communication clearly signifies the role of ability EI in the interpersonal relationship between PEO and client.

5.6 Perceptions of demonstrating EI

The perceptions of the PEO demonstrating EI and the clients' perception of how PEOs demonstrate EI seemed to converge more around the emotional side of EI. Anxiety, self-confidence, judgement, fear of failure, self-confidence and mindset were all identified as key emotional findings. Whilst the clients and the PEOs both expressed the emotions associated with the PCT, the findings revealed some differentiating perceptions of interpretations of the emotions.

5.6.1 Anxiety

Across all ten interviews, anxiety was discussed by both groups as a primary emotion associated with the PCT test. From the clients' perspective, the reason for their anxiety was directed towards a particular skill or component of the PCT, not the actual test itself. Of particular importance was the distorted perceptions three of the clients had of the wall. Perceptions such as height (*"I'm sure it is the same height as my fence next door"*), colour (*"the grey colour makes it look like the biggest thing on earth"*), and finally personification (*"the wall seems to be the demon"*) all created a negative perception regarding the PCT. It was clear that once the wall was scaled, uncertainty diminished and anxiety vanished. The anxiety and uncertainty seemed to revolve around the ditch jump (1.6m), the wall and the balance beam.

Uncertainty in an important event like the PCT is in keeping with Craft et al.'s (2003) research on raised anxiety levels due to uncertainty and perceived ability. Interestingly, Martin et al.'s (2008) study on elite gymnasts and anxiety levels associated with the balance beam and high bars also bears resemblance to the anxiety levels linked to the wall, balance beam and ditch jump in the PCT. Both the elite gymnasts and the clients in this study connected their anxiety with particular components of the event and not to the event itself.

In this study, all five PEOs declared anxiety to be a primary emotion associated with the PCT. They all acknowledged that anxiety was present on the day of the PCT, however, whilst the clients blamed their anxiety on the components of the PCT, the PEOs connected levels of anxiety to the frequency of the test. Three of the five PEOs believed that if the test was run more frequently, then the levels of anxiety would be lower. P4 expressed that the clients' anxiety is uncontrollable and could be lessened if the PCT was run every year instead of every two years.

Trying to suppress anxiety supports Bechky's (2011) research which also found that individuals do not directly respond to situations, rather, their interpretation of their local situation is what creates the emotional bond. Increasing the frequency of challenging situation could potentially develop institutional processes that nurture and promote positive culture that will in turn create emotional bonds based on memorable meaning (Creed et al., 2014; Grey et al., 2018). Further, more successes and positive experiences in challenging situations equates to higher self-confidence and lower levels of anxiety on the testing day (Pineda-Espejel et al., 2016).

5.6.2 Self-Confidence

For C3 in this study, the balance beam was his main struggle as he continually attempted to get up on the beam only to fail over and over again. After a few weeks of

practice and relevant strength training, C3 succeeded in getting up on the beam only to find himself shaking once up and had to succumb to not completing the task by asking the PEO to help him down. He blamed his failure on his lack of self-confidence when on top of the beam. Whilst there was only one client who specifically mentioned self-confidence, four of the five clients indirectly linked their low self-confidence to weight gain. The term *weight gain* was proceeded by stories regarding how fit they used to be. The majority of the PEOs mentioned weight gain as a deterrent to the clients' success, however, it was not emphasised as a factor of low self-confidence. However, P3 noted the association between low self-confidence and weight gain by indicating to his client that they needed to lose 10kgs if they wanted to successfully climb the wall. Whilst his intention was to separate the client's mind from the body by encouraging his client that he could climb the wall, he followed up with "*the reason you are [failing] is you are carrying 10kg of spud on your back*". P3 made no attempt to stay low of the ladder of inference (Argyris, 1990); he assumed that failure was directly due to weight gain when, in fact, there could have been other underlying issues like low self-confidence and shame that attributed to the client's unsuccessful outcome.

There are many studies linking low EI to high levels of anxiety and lack of confidence before performance (Elliott et al., 2011; Lu et al., 2010). According to Brown's (2006) shame resilience theory, blame placed upon self or others is often a strategy used to conceal the subconscious emotion of shame. As discussed previously in the literature review, the taboo of shame may indirectly be a way of upholding status quo by avoiding shame altogether through blaming other indirect sources (eg weight gain) (Cooley, 1996; Scheff, 2003).

5.6.3 Judgement

The clients in this study perceived the PEOs had a good understanding of the pressured environment they were placed in and the feeling of judgement associated with it. Management, colleagues and family perceptions were all factors contributing to their anxiety and stress and the PEOs were aware of the impacts the testing environment had on their clients' outcome. Whilst on the actual PCT day many of the clients had examples of how they avoided judgement from their peers (waiting until last and testing before anyone got there), the judgement that followed after the PCT from management and family weighed heavily on them. One of the PEOs described the police environment as an organisation of two cultures, one based on honour and one based on dignity. Due to the police organisation structure being historically hierarchical, the element of honour is in many ways embedded in the culture. These findings highlight the importance of the EI dimension of social awareness for a PEO

when trying to understand why a client fears being judged and what the source of these emotions is.

Goleman (2004) described the EI dimension of social awareness as a contributing factor to building and maintaining rapport within relationships. Further, links can be made to social awareness, trust and emotions. Williams's (2001) study portrayed the need to address both the cognitive and the affective influences of social group membership on trust. This links closely to the ladder of inference, as the clients fear that they are being judged by a culture that skips the middle rungs of the ladder and goes straight to the top rung (conclusions) without taking into account their perspective (Argyris 1991, Senge, 2006).

5.6.4 Fear of Failure

Interestingly, only one of the clients in this study revealed their emotions were linked to fear of failure. However, all five PEOs discussed fear of failure as the underlying psychological element hindering their client's ability to pass the PCT. Furthermore, communication was used as an attempt to downplay or reduce the fear through distraction. One PEO in particular would try to distract the client by asking them how their family was or what they had on at work. Distraction was a common technique amongst the PEOs and proved to be an aid to reducing negative emotions.

There is a significant link here to Goleman's (2004) dimension of self-regulation and the importance of EI ability. These study findings are also supported by Crombie et al.'s (2009) investigation of self-regulation techniques by coaches on athletes. Using the Mayer et al. (2003) ability model, the latter authors found that regulating emotions under pressure (anxiety, fear) helps athletes to avoid poor task execution under stress (Crombie et al., 2009).

5.6.5 Mindset

Although the physical obstacles of the PCT were common themes discussed amongst the participants in this study, four of the five clients acknowledged that their mindset was the largest barrier to passing the PCT. One client believed that 80% of the PCT could be accomplished through a positive mindset. Contrastingly, the word mindset in relation to the client was not present in any of the PEO discussions; however, their ability to use their own growth mindset within their leadership role was evident. As previously discussed, the PEOs modelled their behaviours through knowledge, inspired and challenged through motivation and enabled through self-regulation and social awareness. Importantly, this is summarised in the P1 recollection, *"it's coming to the fore that we are almost pseudo counsellors and that just with talking with people there is actually some underlying factors going on"*. Positive mindset is

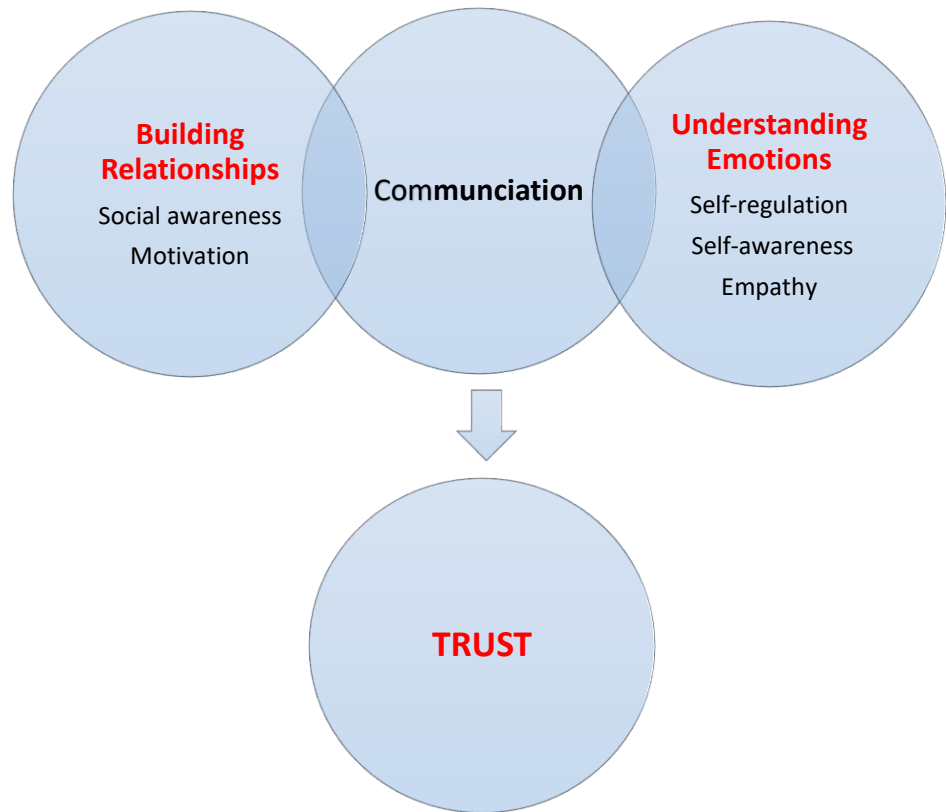
Dweck's (2009) concept of *growth mindset* which assumes that intelligence and abilities can be developed through effort, learning and persistence. Effort and persistence were what one client referred to when explaining that the PCT was 80% mindset. Mindset is a concept that refers to individuals' internalised beliefs that determines one's behaviour, outlook and mental capabilities (Dweck, 2009). Kouzes and Posner (2019) further developed a mindset theory that explored the mindset of leaders and how this influences their leadership behaviour. The growth mindset leaders regularly engaged in were associated with five positive leadership behaviours (modelling, inspiring, challenging, enabling and encouraging) (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Furthermore, Kouzes and Posner (2019) state that a growth mindset leader believes that skills and abilities can be developed through understanding emotion and collaboration.

5.7 The Influence of Context and EI practice in Leading a Physical Fitness Testing Situation for Police Officers

The influence of context and EI practice in the PEO role in this study was significantly linked to Goleman's (2004) five dimensions of EI with a mixture of ability EI and trait EI to add strength to each dimension. Influence of context and EI practice in the PEO role was showcased through three key themes: building interpersonal relationships, understanding emotions and creating trust. The ability to communicate served as an influential link to connect all three themes together. Figure 3 shows the consolidated illustration of the influence of context and EI practice in the PEO role.

Figure 3

Overlapping EI Concepts and Key Themes Needed to Create Trust



Note. Illustration of the overlapping EI concepts and key themes needed to create trust in the PEO-client relationship.

5.7.1 Building interpersonal relationships

Goleman's (2004) EI dimension of social awareness was essential when building the relationship between client and PEO. Feeling connected to the PEO proved to be an essential element in building and maintaining a positive relationship between the client and the PEO. All five clients regarded the connection between them and the PEO as paramount in helping them to succeed. This connection was illustrated through motives of listening, taking an interest in them and feeling respected. Moreover, C3 repeatedly discussed how his PEO always had his best interest at heart. Likewise, C2 revealed how her connection to her PEO was a good relationship and she thought her PEO was *totally awesome*.

A feeling of being connected supports Graen's (1976) final mature phase of the LMX theory in which the relationship between leader and follower is highly developed and factors such as trust and respect are at the forefront of the relationship. Contrastingly, this key connection finding is contrary to Maslyn's (2006) suggestion that the LMX third phase (maintaining an acquaintance relationship) is more beneficial for achieving outcomes than the final mature phase. Whilst the acquaintance phase is necessary for building rapport and sharing information and resources (Graen 1976), this current study has demonstrated that the clients interpret success to be a relationship involving trust and respect, thus the need for the final mature phase.

5.7.2 Understanding emotions

One of the PEOs description of his client not wanting to be non-compliant before dying was exceptionally moving. This client could not pass his PCT and he had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. For this client, being a police officer was his identity and culture, and not passing the PCT meant that he may lose this. Furthermore, the PEO felt that it was his right to ensure that his client passed the PCT. The PEO listened to his client, saw his perspective and he acted accordingly by running the client through the PCT. Although the clients did not openly discuss the culture of the police, it was evident from the PEOs' discussions that understanding the emotions caused by the police culture was essential in regulating the clients' emotions and building trust within the relationship.

Understanding other people's perspective is also evident in the underpinnings of Brown's (2006) shame and resilience theory and supports her notion that understanding how to connect to people and empathise will help minimise the feeling of shame. Further, this finding supports Goleman's (2004) EI dimension of empathy and how important it is for the PEO role. Empathy is an ability to step into another person's shoes, see their perspective and act accordingly (Krzmaric, 2014). Additionally, these findings resemble Lewis's (1992) research on the shame markers associated with participants who were situated in a context of rejection and criticism. She conducted hundreds of psychotherapy sessions and the word shame was rarely mentioned (Lewis, 1992). However, she found a high frequency of shame markers which included anger, anxiety, fear and grief that served as indicators of shame (Lewis, 1992). Significantly, Lewis's (1992) findings are echoed in the current study where the word shame was not present in any of the interviews, however, the shame markers (anxiety and fear) presented as key themes.

5.7.3 Building trust

The present study revealed that trust was a key indicator if the relationship between PEO and client was going to be successful. Whilst the clients did not use the actual word trust, other phrases like *having my back* and a willingness to *give and take* alluded to the notion of trust. Contrary to the client's subtle responses to trust being a key finding, the majority of the PEOs frequently discussed the importance of building a positive relationship based on trust. Interestingly, the PEOs felt that the clients viewed them as non-threatening and because of this, it created a safe environment in which the clients could be more vulnerable in exposing their emotions.

The key finding of trust ties well with Argyris's (1991) notion of defensive behaviours that occur when faced with a threatening or embarrassing situation or a feeling of being incompetent or vulnerable. Creating a safe environment allows a leader to foster an open and trusting relationship with the purpose of preparing the client to achieve success (Larsson, 2017; Larsson & Vinberg, 2010; Piggot-Irvine, 2007). Further, an open and communicative relationship leads to less defensive behaviours and a gateway for the leader to detect the source of the problem and address the errors within it (Argyris, 2002; Boreham & Morgan, 2004; Piggot-Irvine, 2015; Senge, 2006). This in turn leads to a trusting interpersonal relationship.

The clients in this study never associated the PEOs as a threat to their success. They regarded the PEOs as influencers or confidants to help them achieve their goals. All five dimensions of EI, self-awareness, motivation, empathy, self-regulation and social awareness, contributed to creating a positive non-defensive relationship that eventually led to trust. Due to the pressure associated with the context of a testing environment, it was evident that the clients relied on the PEOs to create this safe environment for them and to be with them side by side throughout the whole process of passing the PCT.

5.8 Improvements to enhance EI in the PEO role

Both the clients and the PEOs in this study acknowledged that EI was essential within the role of the PEO. However, there was no formal personal development or workshops dedicated to enhancing the PEOs' EI. As P3 revealed, communication and an emotional understanding of the situation are paramount in building trust between PEO/client.

Crombie et al.'s (2009) research on EI training and intervention programmes showed that when athletes participate in EI training, their ability EI improved. The athletes within the study regulated their emotions under pressure which served to avoid poor task execution under

stress (Crombie et al., 2009). The pressure environment that the athletes in the Crombie et al. (2009) study were exposed to is not too dissimilar to the PCT environment. The positive outcomes of implementing EI training demonstrated in Crombie et al.'s (2009) research supports the need for EI training in the role of the PEO. Furthermore, it is evident from prior literature that leadership and EI research in pressure situations could advance the current EI literature specifically pertaining to trust. For this trust to be established, EI interventions through personal development and workshops will serve to enhance the EI skills needed to develop trust within the relationship.

5.9 Conclusion

The findings of this study illustrate the expectations and perceptions the clients and PEOs have of demonstrating EI within the role of the PEO. Knowledge, communication and motivation are all considered an expectation and are demonstrated through the PEOs' ability to deliver these expectations whilst leading a positive relationship between the client and PEO. Whilst the clients clearly indicated that there were emotions associated with the context of the PCT, the PEOs understood that there were more underlying factors, like culture, contributing to the emotions linked to the PCT. Whilst the PEOs are members of the police organisation, they are perceived as non-threatening to the client, which enables them to lead a relationship based on openness and trust. Furthermore, the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers is clearly influenced by the use of communication to build connections and understand emotions that ultimately lead to trust. It is clear that there is a lack of EI professional development on EI within the PEO role despite the notion of how relevant EI is to the relationship between the PEO and client. The following chapter draws a number of conclusions and identifies recommendations, limitations and possible areas for future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter will draw conclusions about the findings of the study based on the four research questions that guided it. Contributions to research and practice and the strengths and limitations of the study will be presented. The chapter concludes with recommendations for future research opportunities.

6.2 Expectations to Demonstrate EI

The findings reveal that the three EI dimensions, social awareness, self-regulation and motivation, were expected to be demonstrated by the PEOs. The PEOs' ability to build rapport with the client relies on strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate. It was clear from the findings that a significant mode of communication was reassurance and was used as a self-regulatory tool for the PCT environment. Further, the clients in this study appeared to be motivated by communication and expected the PEO to be able to decipher which type of motivation, intrinsic or extrinsic, was needed for the right context of the environment. These findings are consistent with research indicating that EI plays an important role in determining success from the development of strong interpersonal relationships with the personnel they are testing (Chan & Mallet, 2011; Pearman, 2011; Schneider, 2013). Further, whilst leadership research is consistently focussed on developing the intrinsic values within their team members (Goleman et al., 2001; Larsson, 2017; Larsson & Vinberg, 2010) this study advocates for a need to understand when to use intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation.

6.3 Perceptions of Demonstrating EI

The PCT has numerous challenges and pressures associated with the test. A key contribution of this study is its demonstration of the influence of pressure on leadership and EI capabilities. The pressures and coping strategies vary between individuals, but, for the clients who have failed the test before or are returning from injury, the test brings about many challenges and emotions that hinder their process to succeed. It was clear that the PEOs relied on EI skills to understand the emotions associated with these challenges. However, whilst the PEOs expressed a need to find the root of the cause, the clients looked to find blame. A significant example of this was the feeling of anxiety towards the PCT. The clients blamed physical obstacles like the wall as a reason for their anxiety. Consequently, the PEOs believe that the clients' anxiety was created due to a lack of frequency of the test. Moreover, clients'

self-confidence was linked to weight gain, whereas the PEOs linked low self-confidence to underlying emotions like shame. The PEOs' relevance to searching for underlying issues reinforces Svenson and Levine's (2017) research approaching sport leadership from an holistic perspective including the emotional state rather than the western view of performance and physical based approaches. Additionally, this study illustrates the importance of investigating the underlying emotions like shame to truly understand the context of the pressured environment. The latter finding supports Brown's (2006) empirical research on shame and the shame resilience theory which suggests that future interpersonal relationships between PEO and client need to foster an open and honest relationship to enable the investigation of the underlying emotions present in the context of the environment.

6.4 The Influence of Context and EI Practice in Leading a Physical Fitness Testing Situation for Police Officers

Finally, the factors needed to build trust were important findings in this study. Understanding the emotions associated within the context of the environment, and building the relationship between the PEO/client, was reliant on communication. When the communication linked both aspects together, trust was formed. Whilst Goleman's (2004) EI dimensions allude to communication as an important aspect of EI, it is not considered as relevant as this study suggests. This finding illustrates the importance of creating a safe environment to ensure defensive behaviours are limited when the client is feeling vulnerable (Argyris, 1991; Larsson, 2017; Larsson & Vinberg, 2010; Piggot-Irvine, 2007).

Goleman's (2004) EI dimensions of self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social awareness and self-regulation are instrumental in achieving the PEOs' purpose of fit for purpose, fit for life. This study illustrates the importance of using these EI skills to strengthen interpersonal relationships between the PEO and clients and for PEOs to understand the emotions associated with the clients' process and the PCT. These findings are consistent with other leadership and EI research (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Laborde et al., 2016; Mayer et al., 2003; Stough et al., 2009) which suggests that EI skills are essential in building interpersonal relationships.

6.5 Improvements to Enhance EI in the PEO Role

Both the clients and the PEOs clearly illustrated that EI was essential within the role of the PEO. The clients emphasised the need for a PEO to have strong communication skills and

understand the emotions associated with their situation. Currently, there is no formal personal development or workshops dedicated to enhancing the PEOs' EI. The NZ Police would benefit from implementing EI training and intervention programmes into the PEO role. Due to the impact EI and communication have on building trust, the following internal and external recommendations should be implemented within the PEO role and the NZ Police.

6.5.1 Internal and External Recommendations

- The PEO role should enhance their EI skills through psychometric-based assessments to measure their own EI.

Findings from this study show that ability and trait EI are essential for the PEO role and, therefore, implementing models such as the MSCEIT and EQ-i 2.0 should help PEOs enhance their EI understanding and consequently improve their leadership effectiveness. The MSCEIT ability model sufficiently highlights the cognitive and emotional aspects as complementary systems in a *can do* approach (Arribas-Galarraga et al., 2017; Chan & Mallet, 2011). The EQ-I 2.0 covers the *will do* trait approach through self-assessment (Stein & Book, 2011). Implementing both assessments would serve to cover both the *why* and the *how* of EI and provide a more thorough and relevant evaluation of a person's EI. Moreover, given the physical context of the PEO environment, the interpersonal interaction with the client requires a certain degree of governed EI (Laborde et al., 2016; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Petrides & Furnham, 2001). An in-depth understanding of one's own EI capabilities through assessment should indicate areas for EI improvement and help to develop the skills needed to strengthen interpersonal skills and enhance leadership development.

- The NZ police and the Safer People team need to address the development of interpersonal skills that focus on communication and building trust.

Knowledge of how to communicate effectively through authentic collaboration and dialogue is essential in building trust. A one-day workshop focusing on developing skills on authentic collaboration and dialogue should be a start to leadership development but by no means a short-term solution. Creating opportunities for enhanced practice in authentic collaboration needs to be incorporated into a continuing education programme. Understanding high trust, communication and EI could be extended further by educating employees with dialogue skills associated with reflection, advocacy and inquiry (Argyris, 1991; Schon, 1983; Senge, 2006). This recommendation

also supports Piggot-Irvine's (2015) research on the effectiveness of long-term approaches in creating high ownership, dialogue, collaboration and transparency and openness within interpersonal relationships. Continual leadership development including EI and authentic collaboration needs to be implemented in an effort to develop relationships that are based on trust.

6.6 Contributions to Research and Practice

Whilst the PCT is a physical assessment measuring a police's ability to perform tasks relevant to police work, the pressures and mental challenges associated with the test proved to be more influential on the result than the actual psychological fitness. This police qualitative descriptive study provides insight into leadership contexts faced with a testing situation that requires a win/lose or pass/fail outcome. More specifically, the findings suggest that to build trust, PEOs require effective communication skills to ultimately link and strengthen the EI dimensions of self-awareness, motivation, empathy, social awareness and self-regulation. Whilst previous research has examined the three constructs of leadership, EI, and pressure situations, this study demonstrates how communication positively contributes to a relationship based on trust (Crombie et al., 2009; Gooty et al., 2013). The ability to build trust through strong communication skills has implications for the PEOs and is a necessity in their leadership role. While research has proven that trust is a contributing factor to group performance (Benamati et al., 2010; Colquitt et al., 2007; De Jong & Elfring, 2010), there is still a lack of empirical evidence in conceptualising and measuring how trust develops over time within interpersonal relationships (Burke et al., 2007; Spence et al., 2010). Further, due to the variable findings from the vast amount of empirical work conducted on the concept of EI in recent years, the progress of conceptualising EI has been difficult (Gutierrez-Cobo et al., 2017; Mayer et al., 2003). The findings from this study suggest that using communication as a link to understanding emotions and building interpersonal relationship should lead to trust. Linking EI and communication contributes to a far greater context than solely the PEO role. For example, educational organisations are continually faced with testing contexts. The pressures in writing an exam or performing a practical assessment can be extremely daunting for a student. An educational leader who builds the relationship through effective communication and EI skills should in turn create a safe environment based on trust. Moreover, sporting organisations should implement EI training with the added element of communication to ensure that coaches can build relationships based on trust with their athletes.

6.7 Strengths and Limitations of the Study

It is important to acknowledge the strengths and limitations of this small scale research study. Firstly, the researcher accepted that there were multiple truths and a mutual influence of information presented between researcher and the participant (Krauss, 2005; Macionis, 2011). Whilst the primary stance of the study fell under objectivism, the researcher, a PEO herself, acknowledged her own subjectivities and personal bias towards influencing the interpretation of the data. Triangulation with two other researchers was used as a primary strategy to help reduce bias in the researcher's interpretation of the results.

Whilst the researcher's background as a PEO was potentially a limitation, it also served as a strength. A background in the role hopefully enabled the researcher to demonstrate strong degrees of rapport and respect towards all the participants. This connection may have assisted the participants to respond in greater depth knowing that the researcher understood the context.

The third limitation is one that applies to the majority of qualitative research: a lack of generalisability. Whilst the results of the study are broadly applicable to other organisations and situations, it cannot be proved that every finding will be relevant or transfer to other similar organisations. However, outcomes from this study may prove relevant to specific contexts and environments.

The final limitation reflected the ever changing police environment. Unfortunately during the interview processes, the Christchurch mosque terrorist shooting occurred. It was a devastating terror attack that has fundamentally changed how NZ views racism, bullying, harassment and discrimination (Ardern, 2020). Due to this fatal situation, three of the five PEO interviews had to be changed from face-to-face to Skype interviews. Face-to-face interviews allow interpersonal contact, contact sensitivity and flexibility that enables the researcher to enhance the research logic of respectful inquiry (Van Quaquebeke & Felps, 2018). The contextual richness and confidentiality that face-to-face interviews provide can potentially be lost when interviewing through the internet as happened in this study as a consequence of the Christchurch mosque attack.

6.8 Future Research Opportunities

As mentioned, there is a current lack of published research on the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers. Furthermore, whilst the research into leadership and EI is abundant, scholars argue that the construct of EI has become so broad that it lacks theoretical clarity (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Daus & Ashkanasy, 2003; Hugh & Evans, 2018; Locke, 2005; Mayer et al., 2000; Zeidner et al., 2008). Even Goleman's (2004) EI model has been criticised for a lack of emphasis on why and how EI works (Barrett, 2016). Based on this study's findings, future research could benefit from exploring further how communication is delivered within Goleman's (2004) EI model and which EI dimensions are affected by the different means of communication.

Further, more research is needed to see how and why ability and trait EI affect pressure situations. The PCT is just one example of how a test can influence so many facets of one's situation. Understanding when to address different levels of ability and trait EI at appropriate times during the relationship could benefit not only the PEO role, but any other leadership position that relies on a challenging situation to determine success. The PCT environment closely resembles an athlete about to participate in a gold medal match or a university student about to take a final exam. Leaders can influence these situations, and having the right tools to apply to the context could ultimately change an outcome.

6.9 Conclusion

This study has captured key findings which can influence future PEO leadership roles. It has highlighted the influence of context and EI practice in leading a physical fitness testing situation for police officers and it has proposed communication as a concept to link the EI dimensions together to build stronger relationships and trust between the PEO and client. As such, implementing EI training into the role of the PEO should allow the interpersonal relationship between client and PEO to flourish and result in successful outcomes. As the leadership sector continues to change, so too does the need to investigate how EI influences more effective relationships. Whilst EI will continue to support effective leadership for many years to come, how and why it will support leadership will depend on future research exploring the links, like communication, to connect all the EI dimensions. It is therefore critical that future leadership development implements EI and communication training to help ensure that the final successful outcome is one that is based on trust. An interpersonal relationship based on trust is a result of feeling safe. As the NZ police priority mission states "making NZ

the safest country in the world” (NZ Police, 2020, p. 1), the aspect of feeling safe is of utmost importance, but to ensure it becomes an overall outcome, it must start at the micro level where relationships are formed through EI, communication and trust.

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Appendix A

Participant Information Sheet

Physical Education Officers

Date Information Sheet Produced:

20/09/2018

Project Title

The Value and Relevance of Emotional Intelligence in Physical Education Officers in the New Zealand Police

An Invitation

My name is Kelly McCallum and I would like to invite you to take part in my research study which is exploring the value and relevance of emotional intelligence in Physical Education Officers. This research is being conducted as part of my Masters of Educational Leadership. In this project my research supervisor is Prof Eileen Piggot-Irvine. I am also currently a Physical Educational Officer for the Northland police.

Please note that your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of the data collected by (date TBA). Choosing to participate or not will neither advantage nor disadvantage you if there are any potential conflict of interest issues.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of the research is to take a closer look at the value and relevance of emotional intelligence within the role of a PEO.

My objectives for this research are:

- identifying the value and relevance of EI within a PEO's role
- defining the expectations of the PEO to demonstrate EI and
- analysing how the perspectives of the PEO differ from the perspectives of the client.

Furthermore, understanding the value and relevance of emotional intelligence in the Physical Education Officer's role will help contribute to the overall wellness of the business and help to serve their purpose fit for work, fit for life. I am looking to use this extended knowledge to present in workshops and journal publications.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You were chosen for this research as you are a Physical Education Officer in the New Police who has conducted a minimum of two PCT test as a PEO over the past two years. You are one of five PEO's that have been selected in discussion with a wide variety of authorities who are within the New Zealand Police.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to participate in this research, please sign the following consent form and email me at kelly.mccallum@police.govt.nz and we can organise a future meeting time.

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been summarised removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

If you agree to the research, I will conduct a face-to-face interview for approximately 45 minutes with audio recording and note taking. With your permission, the recording will then be transcribed word-for-word.

What are the discomforts and risks?

We anticipate that there are no risks associated with taking part in the interview. A disadvantage would be the time taken to complete the interview, but this is done during your work hours. However, if at any stage you feel uncomfortable or want to stop the interview, you may do so.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

At any point of the interview you have the choice to stop talking or 'pass' on the question. Personal responses that have been stated and are not part of the public content information required for the research will not be used. Any information passed on in interview is kept confidential.

AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research, and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling>.

What are the benefits?

As a research participant, the benefits include an opportunity to have a voice and contribute to developing the role of the Physical Educational Officer. Your contribution will contribute to future effective interpersonal relationship between PEO and client.

How will my privacy be protected?

Confidentiality is important to us and we will follow recommended ethical and legal practice and all information about you will be handled in confidence

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost, other than the time taken for the interview.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Once you receive this invitation, you will have two weeks to respond.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The final goal is to write a journal article for publication in an academic journal. I will gladly provide you with a copy of this or a summary of the research findings if you wish.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Eileen Piggot-Irvine, eileenpiggotirvine@aut.ac.nz.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Researcher email: kelly.mccallum@police.govt.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Project Supervisor: Prof Eileen Piggot-Irvine

Contact email: eileenpiggotirvine@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on **31st October 2018 AUTEK Reference number 18/381.**

Appendix B

Consent Form

Project title: *The Value and Relevance of Emotional Intelligence in Physical Education Officers in the New Zealand Police*

Project Supervisor: *Prof Eileen Piggot-Irvine*

Researcher: *Kelly McCallum*

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 07 March 2019.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details:

.....

.....

.....

Date:

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 31st October 2018
AUTEK Reference number 18/381.***

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix C

Interview Guide: Police Officers Questions:

Knowledge

Emotional Intelligence is defined as the ability to recognise and understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others. Managing and identifying emotions are regarded just as important as traditional intelligences such as IQ.

Describe the role of the Physical Educational Officer.

How would you define Emotional Intelligence?

Self-awareness

Ability

What strengths do you perceive a PEO should have?

Describe what factors contribute to a confident PEO.

Trait

Describe how these factors affect your relationship between you and the Physical Education Officer

Motivation

Ability

Describe the importance of the PEO.

Trait

What are some of the challenges leading up to the PCT test?

Empathy

Trait

What emotions are present before embarking on the PCT test?

Have you experienced similar emotions in a previous life experience?

Ability

Describe a similar experience when you have had to respond to these emotions.

Social Skills

Ability

Describe the importance of maintaining a positive relationship between you and the PEO.

Ability/Trait

Describe a time when you have had to work through a problem with a PEO.

Self-Regulation

Ability

What is the importance of emotional self-control leading up to the PCT?

Trait/Ability

Was there a time when the PEO helped you control your emotions under pressure? What did they do?

Improvements

What improvements might be needed to enhance the emotional intelligence of PEO's?

PEO Questions:

Knowledge

Emotional Intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others. Managing and identifying emotions are regarded just as important as traditional intelligences such as IQ.

Describe the role of the Physical Educational Officer.

How would you define Emotional Intelligence?

Self-awareness

Trait

What are your strengths and limits as a PEO?

Ability

Describe what factors contribute to a confident PEO.

Motivation

Ability

Describe the importance of the PEO.

What are some of the challenges leading up to the PCT test?

Empathy

Ability

What are the emotions that a client has before embarking on the PCT test?

Ability/Trait

Describe an experience where you have had to respond to these emotions.

Social Skills

Ability

Describe the importance of maintaining a positive relationship between PEO and the client.

Trait/Ability

Describe an experience when you have had to work through a problem with a client.

Self-Regulation

Trait/Ability

What is the importance of emotional self-control within the role of the PEO?

Improvements

What improvements might be needed to enhance the emotional intelligence of PEO's?

Appendix D:

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology
D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ
T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316
E: ethics@aut.ac.nz
www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics

10 December 2019

Eileen Piggot-Irvine
Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Eileen

Ethics Application: **18/381 The value and relevance of emotional intelligence in Physical Education Officers in the New Zealand Police**

At their meeting of 2 December 2019, the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) received the report on your ethics application. AUTEC noted your report and asked me to thank you.

On behalf of AUTEC, I congratulate the researchers on the project and look forward to reading more about it in future reports.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact me by email at ethics@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 6038.

Yours sincerely



Kate O'Connor
Executive Manager
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: kmccallum@northtec.ac.nz

Appendix E:

Email to Participant

PROJECT TITLE: The Value and Relevance of Emotional Intelligence in Physical Education Officers in the New Zealand Police.

Dear participant,

You are invited to take part in an interview that asks questions regarding your ideas and opinions on the value and relevance of emotional intelligence of Physical Education Officers (PEO) in the New Zealand police. This project is being conducted by Kelly McCallum who is completing her AUT Masters in Educational Leadership. The information collected from this interview will contribute to understanding the value and relevance of EI and the PEO role. Furthermore, your participation will help contribute to the overall wellness of the business and help to serve the PEO's purpose of fit for work, fit for life. The interview will be audiotaped and transcribed. Your responses will remain private and confidential and you will not be identifiable in any presentation or publication of the results.

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and your participation is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time prior to the completion of data collection without giving a reason or being disadvantaged in any way. If you choose to withdraw then all relevant tapes and transcripts will be destroyed.

If you would like further information please contact:

Project Coordinator: Kelly McCallum

Email: kelly.mccallum@police.govt.nz

Project Supervisor: Prof Eileen Piggot-Irvine

Email: eileenpiggotirvine@aut.ac.nz

Please see the attached Consent form and Information Sheet for further information.

Regards,

Kelly McCallum