

Bernard Jones, Sc.D., CBCP

Assistant Professor - Emergency Management, Homeland Security &
Emergency Management Department, St. John's University

COMPETITIVE DIVISION – ACADEMIC

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Perceived Decision Making among Emergency Managers

This research project aims to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on decision-making effectiveness among emergency personnel and first responders. Decision-making under stress in emergency response has received scarce attention in the emergency management literature in terms of how the emotional response of the operators impacts the effectiveness of their decisions. Stress is a factor in everyday life that affects an individual's mental state and ability to handle life at home and in the workplace. For example, stressed individuals suffer a plethora of physical, mental, and social ailments. Interestingly, some thrive under stressful situations.

While first responders and emergency personnel balance stress as part of their employment tasks, little is known about how this employment-induced stress affects their level of emotional intelligence and making the best decision for that emergency situation. Too often, developing and training more effective emergency managers has not focused on critical soft skills like EI. As disaster events become more frequent and complex, it is imperative to understand emotional intelligence competencies and required

training to help build effective emergency managers because of the complexities of modern-day disaster events like the Covid-19 global pandemic.

Presentation Theme: This presentation theme reflects on research findings targeting emergency management experts and practitioners. The objective is to identify desirable/essential emotional intelligence competencies for emergency decision-making and the feasibility of providing training in these EI competencies.

Collaborators, Advisor(s) and Department(s) that assisted with this research: Collaborator: Nancy DiTunnariello, Ph.D., Assistant Professor - Program Coordinator of Comm. Arts – SI Campus- St. John's University; Advisor: Debra A. Fisher, Ph.D., MS Ed., President/Owner, CastleBridge Research Consulting