

Research Article



Emotional Intelligence an Essential Cause for Mystery Shoppers

Dr.R.Angayarkanni^{1*}, Mr.Anand Shankar Raja M^{2**}

^{1*}Research Supervisor and Assistant Professor, Dept of Commerce, Faculty of Science and Humanities, SRM University, Chennai, India.

^{2**}Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Faculty of Science and Humanities, SRM University, Chennai, India.

*Corresponding author's E-mail: anandshankarrajabbm@gmail.com

Accepted on: 27-10-2015; Finalized on: 30-11-2015.

ABSTRACT

Health is an important component to be successful in life. For a profession like mystery shopping, Emotional Intelligence is an important component which has to be considered. Mystery shoppers handle rough customers throughout their assignments and thus, they have to have the ability to understand and experience others mentality and act according to the situation. Emotional Intelligence even helps the mystery shoppers to develop their professional trait and helps to develop them self personally too. Thus it is important to determine the emotional state of the mystery shoppers and recommend them valuable suggestions which can be implemented by them for their growth and betterment. The data were collected from Lead Cap ventures, which are a leading global research and consulting firm. The type of sampling plan used is simple random sampling. Independently the researcher has collected the responses from the mystery shoppers by approaching the head HR of the firm. The sample size is 80 for this research study. The validity, reliability and analysis of the data in this study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21.0). The paper ensures the importance of "Emotional Intelligence" of mystery shoppers which would help them to be successful in their profession. Emotional intelligence, if managed well would help the mystery shoppers to grow in leaps and bounds. Therefore mystery shoppers presuming the importance of Emotional Intelligence must take care of their Emotional State to be a successful mystery shopper. The researchers have taken efforts to study about the mystery shoppers Emotional Intelligence which is not an explored area and, this study would help the world wide mystery shoppers to balance their state of mind. The authors have concluded that, Appraisal of own emotions is considered to the most important and the same importance is felt even in case of appraisal of others emotions. Thus mystery shoppers must balance their emotional state and try to understand others state of mind to balance them self during worst times.

Keywords: Mystery Shoppers, Emotional Intelligence, Profession, Career success.

INTRODUCTION

Mystery shopping^{21,22} is a simple concept which deals with just silent observation but, the stress and pain which mystery shopper's face during each assignment is enormous. They are paid for just shopping but they face various problems such as Logical thinking, handling tough customers, powerful observation, self determination and above all payment for each assignment makes mystery shoppers get demotivated in their mystery shopping job which intends to spoil the level of Emotional Intelligence. Most of the time mystery shoppers being a normal human being are influenced by the demographic constructs and thus the state of emotion changes based on that.¹⁰ Salovey and Mayer (1990) EI as 'the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions.⁸ Most studies in organizational commitment that conducted in Asian cities employed the three-component model of Meyer and Allen (1991) and this rule applies to mystery shoppers because a well committed mystery shopper works hard for the organisation in which he works.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence

The term 'emotional intelligence' was mostly unknown to the public until Goleman (1995) wrote the best-selling trade book, Emotional Intelligence: Why it can Matter More than IQ. Goleman (1998) asserts that emotional

intelligence, not IQ, predicts workplace success and who transpires as a leader. Emotional Intelligence plays a key role in the life of each and every human being. Studies focusing on intelligence have increasingly begun to include the concept of emotion¹² (Abaci, 2002). One reason for this trend is that researchers have observed that there was not a good correlation between the lifetime achievements of individuals with a high IQ, which is considered to be indicative of classical problem-solving ability, and their actual intelligence¹³ (Cumming, 2005). Indeed, researchers have proposed that both rational and emotional factors contribute to problem-solving ability, and emotional intelligence has recently been investigated in more detail. Emotional Intelligence is the ability of a person to react and to be stable during each changing situation. As human beings are exposed to too many situations they meet various types of personalities who belong to various heterogeneous backgrounds and thus they have to have a balanced mind set, if not they try to push them self into a stress filled life. More over a "balanced mind takes good decision" is universally accepted truth.¹⁴ A person must think in a constructive way to balance his emotional state considering various factors related to him. Mystery shoppers handle tough customers throughout their assignments and thus they must have the ability to understand and experience others mind and they must have the capacity to act



according to the situation. Various dimensions of Emotional Intelligence such as self-awareness, Self-regulation, Self-Motivation, Empathy and social skill have to be well balanced in life. Emotional Intelligence has a strong and logical impact on the work place behaviour. For a mystery shopper there is no such fixed work place, they depend on the field area where the assignments are done. The place of assignments is filled with rigorous battle winning unexpected factors which have to be taken care of the mystery shoppers. For a tough job a proper balance of Emotional state will render ample Job Satisfaction and will motivate the employee to work better. Thus Emotional Intelligence has a positive impact on Motivation and Job Satisfaction. Each and every mystery shoppers have to take efforts to understand their Emotional state and to rectify the gaps in order to enjoy a positive life.

Purpose of the Study

The ability to communicate and have power over ones emotions is important, but so is the ability to understand, interpret, and respond to the emotion of others. For some jobs, being in touch with emotions is essential. In others, it seems to be harm. For a tough job like mystery shopping, it is important to understand others because observation is a powerful tool which facilitates mystery shopping and the way a mystery shopper interacts with a field target is more important. Certain field assignments may have a good impact which may help to balance the emotional state but certain assignments may haunt the emotions and push the mystery shopper to a bad situation, more over the impact of the demographic profile on emotional state has to be considered. Hectrogenious factors may sometimes facilitate the mystery shoppers or may create a bad impact too. The environment in which a person prevails has a strong influence. Thus it is important to study the personal factors which influence the emotional state of the mystery shopper and to provide valid suggestions which can be used by them to lead and live a better life.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data were collected from Lead Cap ventures, which are one of the leading global research and consulting firm which has its headquarters in Bangalore and which conducts mystery shopping with eminent mystery shoppers who do mystery shopping assignments in all the fields. 80 respondents have been taken as sample size. The type of sampling plan used is simple random sampling. Independently the researcher has collected the responses from the mystery shoppers by approaching the head HR of the firm. Utmost care was taken to give necessary follow up tasks to the agency to answer as accurately as possible without my ambiguity. The filled up questionnaire were thoroughly checked and ensured accuracy, consistency and completeness of data. The data thus collected were categorized and processed manually and further it was crosschecked through computers. The primary data are collected through questionnaire survey.

The respondents were asked to give their opinion relating to mystery shoppers Emotional Intelligence.

Objectives of the Study

To assess the Emotional Intelligence of Mystery shoppers
To provide valuable suggestions to mystery shoppers to improve their state of emotions

Reviews on Emotional Intelligence

¹Emotional Intelligence (EI) Formal thesis of emotional intelligence has been offered by Salovey & Mayer (1990). They consider emotional intelligence as a kind of social intelligence, which includes the ability for controlling one's own and others' emotions and to discriminate them and to apply information for proceeding thought and action. Daniel Goleman (1998) has described emotional intelligence as follows: it is another kind of intelligence that consists of knowing one's own emotions and feelings and to use them in order to making appropriate decisions in life. It is the ability for ideal handle of temperaments and mental status and to control our impulses. It is a factor that makes hope and motivation in the individual when he cannot achieve the goal. Empathy that means being aware about feelings of people around us. It is a social skill that is assimilating with people and to control one's own emotions toward others and having ability to encourage and guide them. According to Howard Gaurdner (1983), emotional intelligence is formed by two components of "inter-personal intelligence" and "intra-personal intelligence". Intra-personal intelligence is about the individual's awareness about his own feelings and emotions, to express his believes and feelings, to respect him, to identify intrinsic talents, having independency in performing tasks and in whole, the degree of individual's control upon his feelings and emotions. Inter-personal intelligence refers others' understanding and wants to know what motivates people. Goleman in 1998, describe five elements of emotional intelligence as follows, **Self-awareness, Self-control, Social intelligence, Communication skills, Self-motivation. Salovey and Mayer (1990)** initially proposed a definition of EI as a set of skills and abilities contributing to the appraisal of emotions, the regulation of emotions, and the use of emotions in reasoning. Goleman (1995, 1998) has assessed the link between emotional intelligence and leadership ability. As stated previously, Goleman (1998) listed five components of emotional intelligence that an effective leader exhibits: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. According to ³Bedwell (2002), emotions may have some influences on decisions made, problem solving and the ways of interacting with others and the creativity and innovation within the education environment. Prior research on emotions in the workplace suggests that emotions may drive productivity gains, innovations and accomplishments of individuals, teams, and organizations (Cooper, 1997). Similarly, Bedwell (2003) have studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and



personality and job performance and found several of the EI subscales have a significant relationship with job performance after controlling personality feature anxiety.⁶ Eskandarpour and Amiri (2012) also studied the relationship between various dimensions of emotional intelligence and effectiveness of forty-four university managers and noticed a significant difference between different dimensions of EI and their effectiveness.

Goleman, D. (2001), "An EI-Based Theory of Performance", In Cherniss, C., and Goleman, D. (Eds), The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace: How to select for, Measure, and Improve Emotional Intelligence in Individuals, Groups, and Organizations, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp. 27-44.

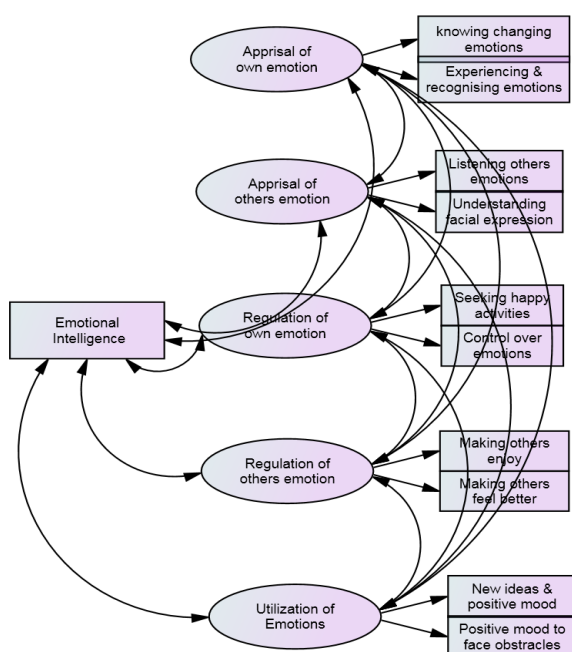
Goleman, D. (2001), emotional intelligence, translated: Parsa, Nasrin, Tehran: Roshd

Salovey, P., and Mayer, J. D. (1990), "Emotional Intelligence", Imagination, Cognition and Personality, Vol. 9, No. 3 pp. 185-211.

Conceptual Framework

The scientific knowledge is based on the empirically tested theories. In the field of social sciences, perspective changes with context and situation. Thus existing theories are constantly subjected to critical scrutiny, test, modification and rejection. These theories help the researcher to understand the existing relationship between variables and to connect variables to form new relationship. Thus such linkage would help the researcher to contribute towards the success of the frame work. This conceptual frame work (Diagrammatic representation) for this research was done by Dr.R. Angayarkanni and Mr.Anand Shankar Raja M.

Conceptual Framework showing Emotional Intelligence Variables



Demographic Characteristics

The Demographic Characteristics of the sample using the variables of Gender, Age, Education, Occupation and monthly household income are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.0: Showing the Demographic Variables

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percent %	
Gender	A. Male	60	75.0%
	B. Female	20	25.0%
	TOTAL	80	100%
Age	A. 15-30	Nil	0.00%
	B. 31-46	65	81.3%
	C. 47 -62	14	17.5%
	D. 63 and above	1	1.3%
	TOTAL	80	100%
Occupation	A. Professional	25	31.3%
	B. Business	46	57.5%
	C. Government servant	NIL	0.00%
	D. Student	NIL	0.00%
	E. Home maker	1	1.3%
	F. Fulltime mystery shopper	NIL	0.00%
	G. Others please specify	8	10.1%
	Total	80	100%
Marital status	A. Married	76	95.0%
	B. Un-married	4	5.0%
	Total	80	100%
Size of family	A.2	8	10.0%
	B.3	21	26.3%
	C.4	47	58.8%
	D.5	4	5.0%
	E. More than 5	NIL	0.00%
	Total	80	100%
Type of family	A. Nuclear	77	96.3%
	B. Joint	3	3.8%
	Total	80	100%
Locality of residence	A. Urban	64	80.0%
	B. Rural	5	6.3%
	C. Semi-Urban	11	13.8%
	Total	80	100%

Interpretation: Demographic Profile of Mystery Shoppers

From the above Table 1.0, it is clear that (75%) of the respondents are male genders and remaining (25%) of the respondents are female gender. From the analysed results it is clear that majority of the respondents (81.3%) of the respondents fall in between the age group of 31-46 years. It is observed that about (57.5%) of the mystery shoppers are doing business, (31.3%) of the mystery shoppers are professionals and remaining (1.3%) of the mystery shoppers are home makers. The marital status wise distribution brings it clear from the analysis that (95%) of the mystery shoppers are married were only (5%) of the mystery shoppers are unmarried. The results pertaining to the size of the family shows clearly that (58.8%) of the mystery shoppers belong to a family filled with four members. The analysis pertaining to type of

family indicates that **(96.3%)** of the mystery shoppers belong to nuclear family and remaining **(3.2%)** belong to joint family. The results with regard to locality of residence, clearly reveals that **(80%)** of the mystery shoppers belong to urban area.

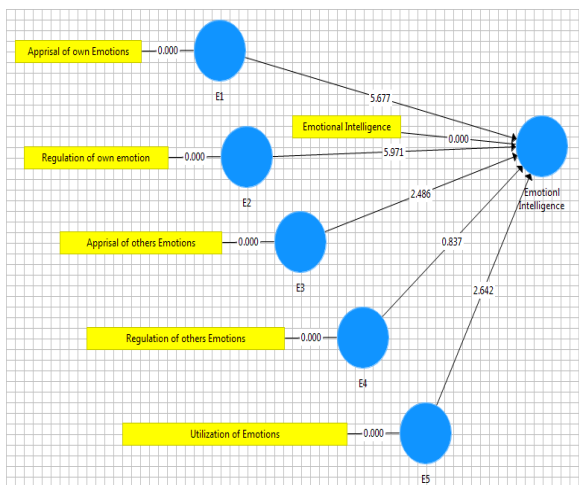


Chart No 1.1(a): Path Analysis Modelling

Table No 1.1(b): Boot Strap Analysis

	Original Sample	Sample MEAN	Standard Error	T-Statistics	P-Values
E1- Emotional Intelligence	0.483	0.490	0.085	5.677	0.000
E2- Emotional Intelligence	0.381	0.379	0.064	5.971	0.000
E3- Emotional Intelligence	0.192	0.190	0.077	2.486	0.013
E4- Emotional Intelligence	0.063	0.063	0.075	0.837	0.403
E5- Emotional Intelligence	0.169	0.168	0.064	2.642	0.009

Interpretation for the above boot strap table and path diagram

The above path diagram 1.1(a) and the above table 1.1(b) clearly states the impact of the highest and lowest impact of various Emotional Intelligence constructs on the overall Emotional intelligence. The “t” value is seen highest in case of **(Regulation of own Emotions)** with a value of (t=5.971) followed by (t=5.677) which indicates the variable **(Appraisal of own emotions)**, (t=2.486) which indicates the variable **(Appraisal of others emotions)** and (t=2.642) indicating **(Utilisation of emotions)**.

Key Recommendation

Health is considered to be the most important factor above all the other factors which make a human Life. Health when gets terrible leads to a stressful situation. Emotions of each and every human being play an

important role in keeping one’s own life happy and cheerful. Doctors have clearly suggested worldwide keeping the mind young and energetic which may control all the whole human body. A cheerful mind with cherished joy all the time will make a person to be balanced even during the worst times. Mystery shoppers being important professionals must take efforts to well balance their emotions in order to be successful in their own life as well as their professional life.

CONCLUSION

The theory of appraisal in psychology plays a vital role in Emotional Intelligence concept because emotions are extracted from various evaluations and estimates. Interpersonal intelligence and Intrapersonal intelligence are important factors to be considered along with Emotional Intelligence.¹ These estimates can be drawn on self or on others emotional state.¹¹ Thus it is common for a human to evaluate and appraise one’s own emotion as well as others with whom he is dealing with in his daily life. Mystery shoppers being normal human beings pass through various stages in life just like other species. During various stages they face hard battles and shape up as they grow mature. But still some people have difficulties to manage them self during their hard times. Thus successful men are those who manage their emotional state during various stages of life in reality. State of Emotions is provoked by motivations either by self or by others.² it is even important to get along with others and this concept is called social intelligence which is a part of Emotional Intelligence which has to be given importance.

The emotions are creations of mind. To improve one’s EQ the foremost important factor is to develop the ability to observe one’s own emotions and to observe others emotions also. It also necessary to realize that every emotion is the habit of mind formed over the years of life and must develop the ability to judge whether the emotion is appropriate for the situation one faces, but this is not an easy task it depends upon the efforts taken by a person to balance his emotional state and to act accordingly. Only experience teaches this and sometimes a very tragic event could change all the perspective. Developing this consciously is quite a challenging endeavour and it cannot be acquired by any training. EI or EQ is not just a score. It’s a state of constant and dynamic balance. Emotional skills (which lead to "Intelligence") surely could be improved. After all, they are just skills. But one shouldn't forget the balance and most of all its dynamic character. For a mystery shopper every day schedule is filled with a lot of emotions and the mystery shopper must take efforts to first Co-operate with others to ensure whether the mystery shopping assignment objectives are achieved and the mystery shopper must follow the tasks committed to and must act in a manner consistent with the organizational values and his personal values.



The most important task is to respond to situations based on common understanding, and not just mere assumptions because emotional balance has nothing to do with assumptions.

REFERENCES

1. Armstrong, T. Seven kinds of smart: Identifying and developing your much intelligence. Plume, New York; 1993.
2. Bar-On, R. Emotional and social intelligence: Insights from the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i).in: R. Bar-On, J. Parker (Eds.) Handbook of emotional intelligence. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA; 2000, 363–368.
3. BEDWELL, Emotional Intelligence, Personality Revisited or Something Else. Proceedings of Symposium at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Orlando, Fl. 2003.
4. COOPER, R. K, Applying Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace. Training and Development, 51, 1997, 31-38.
5. DAVIES, M., STANKOV, L., & ROBERTS, R. D. Emotional Intelligence: in Search of an Elusive Construct. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75(4), 1998, 989-1015. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.75.4.989>
6. ESKANDARPOUR, B., & AMIRI, M, Survey of relationship between dimensions of emotional intelligence and effectiveness of managers of Ardebil Universities. International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences, 3(7), 2012, 1369-1374.
7. GOLEMAN, D. Emotional Intelligence: issues in paradigm building. IN C. CHERNISS & D. GOLEMAN (EDS.), The emotionally intelligent workplace: How to select for, measure, and improve emotional intelligence in individual groups and organizations 2001, (pp.13-26). New York: Jossey Bass.
8. MEYER, J. P., & ALLEN, N. J.A Three Components Conceptualization of Organizational Commitment. Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 14, 1991, 224-247, Meyer, J. P.
9. STANLEY, D. J., & HERSCOVITCH, L, Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment to the Organization: A Meta Analysis of Antecedents, Correlates and Consequences. Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 61, 2002, 20-52. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1842>
10. SALOVEY, P., & MAYER, J. D. Emotional Intelligence. Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9, 1990, 185-211, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2190/DUGG-P24E-52WK-6CDG>
11. BOOKS REFERED
12. CON STOUGH, DONALD H. SAKLOFSKE, JAMES D. A. PARKER ,Assessing Emotional Intelligence: Theory, Research, and Applications ,The Springer Series on Human Exceptionality, Springer Science & Business Media publisher, 2009, ISBN:0387883703, 9780387883700
13. ABACI R, The qualification of life (In Turkish). 2002, Sistem Publications, Istanbul, Turkey
14. Cumming, An Investigation into the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Workplace Performance: An Exploratory Study. Master's thesis, Lincoln University, New Zealand, 2005
15. Seymour Epstein, Constructive Thinking: The Key to Emotional Intelligence, Edition illustrated, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1998, ISBN: 0275958841, 9780275958848
16. Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ, Publisher A&C Black, 2009, ISBN: 1408806207, 9781408806203
17. Travis Brad berry, Jean Greaves, Emotional Intelligence 2.0, Edition illustrated, Publisher Talent Smart, 2009, ISBN: 0974320625, 9780974320625
18. Hendrie Weisinger, Emotional Intelligence At Work, John Wiley & Sons publisher, 2006 ISBN: 8126507918, 9788126507917
19. Gerald Matthews, Moshe Zeidner, Richard D. Roberts, Emotional Intelligence 101 Psych 101 series, Springer Publishing Company, 2012, ISBN: 0826105661, 9780826105660
20. Goleman, D. Emotional Intelligence. New York: Bantam Books, 1995.
21. Cathy Stucker, The Mystery Shopper's Manual: How to Get Paid to Shop in Your Favourite Stores, Eat in Your Favourite Restaurants and More, revised Publisher Special Interests Publishing, 2004 ISBN1888983302, 9781888983302
22. Ilisha, Mystery Shopping Made Simple, Newhouse Edition illustrated Publisher McGraw-Hill Professional, 2004 ISBN: 007144002X, 9780071440028
23. Deedee Moore, Paid to Shop - The Secrets of Mystery Shopping Exposed, Lulu Press, Inc, 2013 ISBN: 1300332492, 9781300332497

Source of Support: Nil, Conflict of Interest: None.

