

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Emotional competence in work life is significant as the effects of negative emotional will affect not only one's work performance and attitudes towards his or her colleagues, but also the relationship with customers. While some people manage their emotions well, some people tend to lose their temper easily. Certainly, those who are always in a good mood and express their feelings positively are well-liked. Goleman (1998) mentioned that emotional intelligence is a different way of being smart.

Emotional intelligence is highly needed in the service industries to enhance the capability of human resources in the organization. People tend to overdo and lose their emotional control easily. While customers are likely to become emotional, the awareness of emotional competence in employees should be well managed.

The following story is an example of what Goleman (1998) considers a state of possessing emotional intelligence. The situation occurred when a flight attendant smartly dealt with a stressful domestic flight on the Super Bowl Sunday, that sacrosanct day when most American men are to be found in front of their televisions. That flight had been delayed for 2 hours and the tension among the passengers -- almost entirely businessmen was palpable. After arrival, a mysterious glitch with the boarding ramp made the plane stop briefly about a hundred feet from the gate. In such an extremely hurried situation about being late, passengers leaped to their feet anyway. That flight attendant made a public announcement to make all passengers get back in their seats for their own safety as all passengers have to stay in their seat with their seat belt fastened when the airplane is taxiing on the runway, according to federal regulations. She did not announce, in a stern voice, "*Federal regulations require that you be seated before we can move to the gate.*" Instead, she warbled in a singsong tone, suggestive of a playful warning to an adorable small child who has done something naughty but forgivable, "***You're staaan-ding!***" At that everybody laughed and sat back down until the plane had finished taxiing to the gate. And, given the circumstances, they got off the plane in a surprisingly good mood. The difference

in competencies lies between the mind and heart, or, more technically, between cognition and emotion is what Goleman (1998) calls the above competency.

The emotional intelligence of flight attendants also affects the working environment in-flight. Even though all flight attendants are well educated and possess at least a bachelor's degree, there are so many times that they deal with passengers using aggressive manner and abusive language. Moreover, they are easily irritated once there are high demands for services in a busy flight. The worst is that they cannot control themselves and lose their temper, which the passengers are able to recognize obviously from their facial expression.

In Thailand, a few research studies have concentrated on emotional intelligence; however, there have been no studies focusing on the EQ measurement of flight attendants on JALways according to the administration department of JALways. The measurement of emotional intelligence and the study of the emotional intelligence of flight attendants in different job titles has been conducted in this research.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1.2.1 What is the level of emotional intelligence of JALways' flight attendants in different job titles?

1.2.2 Do the job titles of flight attendants affect their level of emotional intelligence?

1.2.3 Do flight attendants realize their self-awareness of emotional intelligence that is a requisite qualification of being a flight attendant?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research has the following objectives:

1.3.1 Main Objective

To measure JALways Thai flight attendants' emotional intelligence in different job titles in the organization.

1.3.2 Sub Objectives

1. To find out whether the job titles affect the level of emotional intelligence of flight attendants.

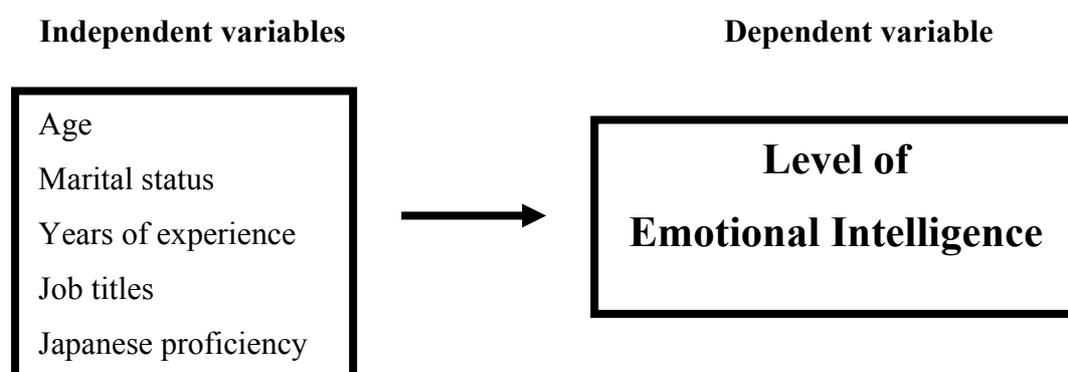
2. To find out the self-awareness of flight attendants towards the possessing emotional intelligence.

1.4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS / VARIABLES AND DEFINITIONS

1.4.1 Variables of the Study

The variables of this study are as follows:

Figure 1.1 Conceptual framework of the assessment of the EQ of flight attendants.



1.4.2 Definitions of Terms and Variables

The following table is the definitions of terms and variables.

Table 1.1 Definitions Term of Variables of the Study

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Indicators
Age	The number of years someone has lived or something has existed.	The age of flight attendants is from the age 21 to 55.	1. 21-25 years 2. 26-30 years 3. >31years
Marital Status	The official status that one is married or not.	Whether or not flight attendants are married.	1. Married 2. Single
Work Experience	The experience one has had of working in a	The number of years that the flight attendants have been	1. 1-5 years 2. 6-10 years

(table continues)

Table 1.1 (continued)

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Indicators
	particular type of job.	working in the organization.	3. >11 years
Job Title	The name that describes someone's job or position	The rank that states the position of the flight attendants.	1. Flight attendant 2. Orchid wing & Temporary contract 3. Supervisor 4. Diamond wing, Senior supervisor & Director.
Orchid wing Flight Attendant	In-house 1 st level of promotion to be in-charge of the compartment. (from 3 years~)	The selected Flight Attendants who are promoted to be in-charge of the compartment in flight. (Optional, flight attendants' choice to apply for the position)	
Temporary Contract Flight Attendants	In-house one year contract each for 1 st contract (from 5 years~)	Orchid Wing who are not able to be promoted to be supervisor or willing to become Temporary Contract.	
Supervisor flight attendant	In-house position starting from the 2 nd contract (from 5 years ~)	The selected Orchid Wing who are promoted and offered a 2 nd contract to be in the higher position but the job description is still in-charge of the compartment in flight. (Optional, flight attendant choice to apply for)	

(table continues)

Table 1.1 (continued)

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Indicators
Diamond Wing Flight Attendant	In-house promotion to be in-charge of the flight. (from 8 years~)	The selected Supervisor Flight Attendant who are promoted to be a chief purser in the flight. (Optional, flight attendants' choice to apply for the position)	
Senior Supervisor Flight Attendant	In-house position with starting from the 3 rd contract (from 10 years ~)	The selected Diamond Wing who are promoted and offered a 3 rd and 4 th contract to be in the higher position but the job description is still the chief purser in flight. (Optional, flight attendants' choice to apply for the position)	
Director	In-house position in the 4 th year contract newly introduced from OCT'09 (from 17 years~)	The selected Senior Supervisors who are promoted to become a part of management in the organization	
Japanese Proficiency Grade	Japanese grade from the Test of Japanese as a Foreign Language A test that students can take if their first language.	Company Japanese language ability's grading system and the in house or domestic grading system used for leveling flight attendants' Japanese ability.	S= 1 st level A= 2 nd level B= 3 rd level C4=4 th level C, D, E, F= In house grading system

(table continues)

Table 1.1 (continued)

Variable	Conceptual Definition	Operational Definition	Indicators
Level of Emotional Intelligence	The indicators of one's emotional Intelligence	The score after conducting and calculating the emotional intelligence test	1. Lower than normal range 2. Normal range 3. Higher than normal range
Emotional Intelligence sub-components	Competencies of emotional intelligence	The characteristics of behavior related to emotion	-Self control -Empathy -Responsibility -Self-motivation -Decision making/ Problem solving -Social relationships -Pride in oneself -Self satisfaction -Peace of mind

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is limited to the flight attendants department of JALways and focuses only on Thai Bangkok based Thai flight attendants. Flight attendants in all positions in the organization should be targeted to be the subject of the study as they are the representatives and image of the organization in the front line to directly contact customers while travelling in flight.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study of the emotional intelligence of JALways flight attendants in different job titles is significant in several respects.

1.6.1 The study will be useful for other airlines and other customer service organizations in which the emotional intelligence is integral.

1.6.2. The findings of the research might help those who are interested in adopting Emotional Intelligence in their organization process such as recruiting, training and human resource information.

1.6.3 The result can be a guideline for applying the measurement or the application of the importance of Emotional Intelligence in their organization.

1.6.4 As the subjects are Thai, Bangkok based flight attendants, the use of the questionnaire from the reliable organization like the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health is very dependable.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study of Emotional Intelligence of JALways flight attendants in different job titles in this paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is the introduction which consists of the background or the rationale of the importance of emotional intelligence, statement of problem, objectives of the study, variables and definitions of terms, scope of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter Two consists of emotional intelligence's definition and components, misconceptions of emotional intelligence, emotional intelligence journey, emotional intelligence at work, emotional intelligence in Thailand, and relevant research. The research methodology is in Chapter Three which are subjects, materials, procedures, and data analysis. The procedures of how to calculate the score of the questionnaire from the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health are included. The result of this study is in the Chapter Four. Chapter Five which is the last chapter of this research, contains conclusions, discussions, and recommendations.