
In-depth study of Emotional Competence Proficiency of Employees during Selling Encounters in Organized Retail

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The domain specific framework developed by Verbeke et al. (2004) has been applied in this research to identify the dimensionality of Emotional Competence (EC) Skills of employees during selling encounters in organized retail. An effort has been made to identify and differentiate the EC proficiency of employees during selling encounters. A sample of 200 employees in selling tasks was selected in Ahmedabad region. The factor loading was applied and seven Emotional Competence proficiencies named Empathy with Emotions of Customers, Self Representation, Character, Convincing Customers, Ethical Sincerity, Ethical Emotional Flexibility and Ironic Behaviour, were found, which represented the EC proficiency of employees during selling encounters. The mean analysis revealed that the EC proficiency of employees during selling encounters was found to be moderate. The analysis of Emotional Competency of employees during selling encounters in three different retail formats showed that the employees were less ethically sincere and more ethically and emotionally flexible, but up to certain limit during their selling encounters. The employees had empathy towards emotions of customers and ability to explore new perspectives, especially in employees of apparel stores and electronic stores. But, the employees were found less effective in terms of their self representations while managing emotions of customers.

Keywords: Emotional Competence, Organized Retail, Sales People

Emotional Competence (Saarni, 1999) and Emotional Capability (Huy, 1999) precisely capture the view that individuals and groups manage their emotions purposively, in the sense that they express people's individuality and the capacity to cope with emotionally challenging situations, while at the same time behaving in accordance with organizational goals and norms. A person's capacity to experience, manage and direct emotions within social situations should have a sense of appropriateness and purpose.

“Emotions are usually characterized as affective, short-lived, relatively intense and typically interruptive of thought processes”

Emotions are usually characterized as affective, short-lived, relatively intense and typically interruptive of thought processes (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Salovey and Mayer (1990) define emotions as organized psychological subsystems, including the psychological, cognitive, motivational and experiential systems. Mumby and Putnam (1992) define emotion as the

sensations and positive or affective responses to organizational situations. Emotions typically arise in response to an event, either internal or external that has positively or negatively valenced meaning for the individual. Emotions can be distinguished from the closely related concept of mood, where emotions are shorter and generally more intense. Emotions are experienced as feelings that often occur simultaneously along with our cognitive (conscious) thoughts. The emotional feeling may be subtle or powerful. Competency is the capacity or ability to engage in transaction with a variable and challenging social physical environment (Verberke et al., 2007).

Defining Emotional Competence

Although some researchers agree that emotional competence is the same as emotional intelligence (refers to abilities to recognize and regulate emotions), emotional competence resonates only to some extent with different perspectives on emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995). Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000) portray emotional intelligence in terms of the ability to perceive and express emotions, to understand and use them and to manage one's emotions so as to foster personal growth. Emotional intelligence is an innate personality trait and is a function of cognitive resources. On the other hand, Emotional competence is a capacity or skill that results from long-term efforts to integrate disparate emotional skills in ways that enable persons to manage their emotions appropriately within an organization. (Verberke et al., 2007). Goleman (1989) argue that emotional intelligence underlies emotional competence and that emotional competence is a required antecedent to performance. Emotional intelligence enhances potential for learning and emotional competence translates that potential into task-mastering capabilities.

Emotional Competence can be understood as an ability to create ideal emotional selves that guide emotional self-regulation and is goal directed or teleonomic (Bannano, 2001). Emotional Competence involves coping with ambiguity through integrating seemingly contradictory emotional skills into bounded emotionality (Mumby and Putnam, 1992). Bounded Emotionality involves individuals choosing appropriate organizational actions based on a system of tolerance and ambiguity rather than a system of reducing ambiguity through satisfying.

“An Emotional competence is a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding”

An Emotional competence is a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work (Verberke et al., 2007). Emotional competence is one’s learned abilities and knowledge building attitudes related to one’s cognitive, effective and social aspects of emotional intelligence in particular environment. On the interpersonal level, emotionally and

socially intelligent means to effectively manage personal, social and environmental change by realistically and flexibly coping with the immediate situation, solving problems and making decisions.

Characteristics of Emotional Competence

Emotional competence has several distinct characteristics, some of them are: (1) Emotional competence is domain specific (Huy, 1999). (2) Emotional competence is learned and emerges from effortful actions over a longer period of time (Allport, 1937). (3) Emotional competence does not require emotional intelligence (Sternberg, 1990). (4) Emotional Competence has been defined with reference to ethical values (Saarni, 2002).

Emotional Competence as Emotional Skills

Saarni (2000) explains how individuals learn to flexibly apply a set of emotions management skills to their social environments (like in families, friends and schools), such that the person is conceived as maintaining their own individuality but at the same time is capable of handling different emotionally challenging situations in accordance with the norms of the particular social environment. Emotional competence is manifested as a working self, with different skills that function to regulate emotions (Weigert, 1991). The ability of employees to be emotional working self can lead to more fluently handling emotional laden situations and become successful and respected members of social community.

Emotionally competent employees purposively or actively seek to master and integrate various emotional skills such that they can handle typical or routine emotion laden situations within their profession. In doing so, they express their own individuality and also are perceived in their actions to be appropriate to organizational as well as their own norms and goals (Erickson, 1997).

Abilities to transcend all the proficiencies or integrate across divisions will differ among people in different situations. People low in their abilities to integrate the emotional proficiencies are expected to cope less well with emotional challenging situations than people high in their abilities, but the pattern of abilities can differ, depending on the person and situation (Verberke et al., 2007). But the fullest integration of skills will be achieved only by a fraction of people (McAdams, 1988). Different people have different abilities to integrate different skills in different environment (Cantor, 1990).

The ability to integrate contradictory emotional skills on the job is similar to the process of job crafting (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001) and role innovation (Ashforth, 2001). Emotional Crafting is the specific emotional competencies, which is the process in which people undergo to integrate seemingly contradictory emotional skills into a working self and in the process come to achieve a unique signature to their work (Verberke et al., 2007).

Types of Emotional Competence

Different researchers define emotional competencies differently. Boyatzis (1982) defined four different types of emotional competence clusters: (1) entrepreneurial cluster, (2) interpersonal cluster, (3) intellectual reasoning cluster and (4) socio-emotional maturity cluster. Boyatzis et al. presented three clusters of emotional competencies namely: (1) goal and action Management cluster, (2) People management cluster and (3) analytic reasoning cluster. Spencer et al. (1997) explains six emotional competencies: (1) influencing capacity, (2) team leadership, (3) organizational awareness, (4) self-confidence, (5) achievement drive and (6) leadership. Goleman (1998) presented twenty-five emotional competencies arrayed in five clusters: (1) self-awareness cluster included emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence; (2) self-regulation cluster included self control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation; (3) motivation cluster included achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism; (4) the empathy cluster included understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity and political awareness and (5) social skills cluster influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration and cooperation and team capabilities. Saarni (1999) defined eight different types of emotional competencies: (1) awareness of one's emotional state, (2) Skill in discerning others' emotion, (3)

ability to describe emotions, (4) capacity to empathize with other's emotional competencies, (5) skill to realize the difference between inner emotional states and outward expressions, (6) capacity for adaptive coping with aversive emotions, (7) awareness of role of emotions in the structure of relationships and (8) the capacity for emotional self-efficacy.

Need for Domain Specific Emotional Competence

Emotion management within social situations is full of uncertainties and ambiguities and contains seemingly personal contradictions. Emotional competence refers to employee abilities to cope with emotionally challenging situations while maintaining organizational norms. The same person can be emotionally competent in one domain but not in another domain. As different functions occur within organizations, which require different emotional competencies, a domain-specific conceptualization of emotional competence that applies specifically for customer boundary spanners is required. This study specifically focuses on how employees interact with customers during their selling encounters. Customer base is one of the most critical assets of any organization. It is very important for the employees to be emotionally competent during their selling encounters with customers to achieve the targets of the organization.

Emotional Competency and Selling Encounters

Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) explain that emotions in sales people can have an immediate impact on organizationally salient outcomes like immediate purchase, encore (willingness to return to the store) and contagion gains (willingness to pass positive comments to others). Sutton and Rafaeli (1988) examined positive relationship between store clerks' displayed positive emotions and store's annual sales. Rosci (1981) explains salespeople profit by combining the principles of body language with professional selling skills. He described a training course that teaches salespeople to employ non-verbal signals such as friendly, smiling, enthusiastic face, arms and hands that are relaxed and open to enhance sales. Brown and Suzler – Azaroff (1994) found positive relationship between bank teller's rate of greetings and level of customer satisfaction. Tsai (2001) has indicated that employees' positive emotional displays would increase customer willingness to purchase, willingness to return to the store and pass positive comments to friends. Verberke et al. (2007) presented the most comprehensive list of seven different types of competencies required in employees during selling encounters, namely: (1) Empathy, (2) Guilt, (3) Authenticity, (4) Self-representation, (5) Convincing others that one is genuine, (6) Irony and (7) Character.

Emotional competence is a part of relationship marketing. Success of selling encounters depends on emotional interaction with the customers. The emotional competencies of sales people are important to render customer value, satisfaction and continued loyalty.

Need for the study

It is well recognized in marketing that the relationship between market performance and marketing efforts is influenced by interaction mechanism during various selling encounters. These mechanisms form a part of certain identifiable organizational and sales people's emotional competencies. The emphasis in the work force is increasingly being placed on the soft skills that complement one's emotional competence. The experience and emotional connectivity results in sales people's ability to build and maintain long-term relationships.

“Developing emotional competence within individuals and organizations can help to enhance the quality of the customer's service experience”

The emotionally competent organizational environment bears a significant influence on the strategies that organizational leaders will craft and mould to achieve their short, medium and long term goals and objectives. A key factor in sustenance of organizational competitive advantage is the people that the organization employs. The people by the organization, based on their interest, knowledge,

perceptions, experience, attitudes and ultimately determine the culture of the knowledge, qualifications, experience, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs ultimately determine the culture of the organization. The employees' emotional competence is the most important factor influencing the organization structure and culture and performance. The aggregate of strengths and weaknesses of employees' emotional competencies is one of the most essential enhancers of performance in both corporate culture and individual careers. An emotional aptitude among employees means greater teamwork, initiative and relationships characterized by optimism, trust, resilience and wisdom. There is a need to investigate the ways of improving and developing the varieties of emotional competencies within organizational training and development programme. Hence, the purpose of this study is to determine emotional competencies of sales representatives creating positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Objectives of the study

1. To explore the importance of emotional competence of employees during selling encounters in organized retail
2. To explore the various components of emotional competence of employees during selling encounters in organized retail
3. To measure the emotional competence of employees during selling encounters in organized retail

Method

The sample was drawn using non-probability convenience sampling method. In total, 200 employees in selling tasks were surveyed for the study, who had direct contact with customers during selling encounters. All the respondents were above 18 years and had frequent interactions with customers.

Materials

A structured questionnaire was used, having close-ended questions. The questions contained the variables of emotional competence of employees during selling encounters. The 17 variables were taken from earlier work done by Verbeke et al. (2004). Respondents were asked to rank each item on Likert scale ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree).

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered through personal interaction with employees having direct selling encounters with customers. The contacts were made to respondents during their job hours. It has increased the accuracy of answers given by them due to recency effect of selling encounters with customers.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Factor analysis was conducted for analyzing the structure of the interrelationships among a set of variables by defining a set of common underlying dimensions. Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to assess the degree of consistency between multiple measurements of a variable. Mean analysis was conducted to measure the emotional competence of employees during selling encounters in organized retail. Anova test was conducted to find out the variations in emotional competency of employees during selling encounters on the basis of various demographic variables.

Factor analysis

The second objective of this research is to explore the various components of emotional competence of employees during selling encounters in organized retail. The 17 EC statements have been subjected to multivariate data analysis tool – factor analysis – to reduce them to a few uncorrelated factors. In order to test the suitability of the data for factor analysis, the correlation matrix was computed and examined. This revealed that there were enough correlations to go ahead with factor analysis. Anti image correlation were computed. These showed that partial correlations were low, indicating that true factors existed in the data. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (MSA) was calculated for both the entire correlation matrix and each individual variable evaluating the appropriateness of applying factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was calculated to find whether the number of correlations among the variables is statistically significant or not. The value of MSA was found to be 0.602, which is much higher than the minimum cut off rate of 0.50. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity showed the value of Chi-Square at 1142.304 with 136 degrees of freedom, which was significant at 0.05 level, indicating the suitability of data for factor analysis. Thus, all of these examinations revealed that data was fit for factor analysis.

Principle component analysis was employed for extracting factors. The number of factors to be extracted was finalized on the basis of latent Root Criterion. Orthogonal rotation with Varimax method was used for factor analysis. Rotations converged into 6 iterations. In orthogonal rotation, each factor is independent of or orthogonal from all other factors. The correlation between the factors is determined to be zero. As, the sample size taken for data analysis was 200 respondents, all factor loadings greater than 0.40 were considered for the analysis.

Table 1 shows the communality values of all variables. Communality is the amount of variance an original variable shares with all other variables included with analysis. Large communality indicates that a large amount of variance in the variable has been accounted for by the factor solution. As shown in the table ..., all the variables are having the communality values above cut off value of 0.40, which indicate that all the variables should be considered for further analysis. The results of Principle Component Analysis with Varimax rotation for sample are shown in Table 1. It shows that 7 factors have been extracted which together accounted for 68.852% of the variance. Eigenvalues for the factors 1 to 7 are 3.334, 2.056, 1.629, 1.457, 1.200, 1.024 and 1.003 as revealed by the anti-penultimate row of the table. The percentage of the variance explained by individual factors is shown in the penultimate row of the table. It is observed that the percentages of variance explained by factors 1 to 7 are 19.612, 12.095, 9.585, 8.571, 7.061, 6.025 and 5.903.

Table 1: Factor Analysis

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Communality
EC 7	0.702							0.598
EC 14	0.687							0.648
EC 1	0.661							0.544
EC 2	0.665							0.560
EC 5	0.466							0.413
EC 12		0.930						0.887
EC 3		0.897						0.833
EC 4			0.978					0.975
EC 15			0.962					0.964
EC 9				0.756				0.672
EC 10				0.717				0.636
EC 8					0.824			0.696
EC 11					0.519			0.446
EC 13						0.887		0.836
EC 6						0.570		0.685
EC 17							0.854	0.755
EC 16							0.493	0.556
Eigenvalue	3.334	2.056	1.629	1.457	1.200	1.204	1.003	
% of Variance	19.612	12.095	9.585	8.571	7.061	6.025	5.903	
Cumulative %	19.612	21.707	41.292	48.864	56.924	62.950	68.852	

Table 2: Factors extracted

Factors	Variables	Factor Name	Reliability Cronbach Alpha
Overall Scale	All	Emotional Competency Scale	0.713
Factor 1	EC1, EC2, EC5, EC7, EC14	Empathy	0.686
Factor 2	EC3, EC12	Self-Presentation	----
Factor 3	EC4, EC15	Character	----
Factor 4	EC9, EC10	Convincing	----
Factor 5	EC8, EC11	Ethical Authenticity	----
Factor 6	EC6, EC13	Emotional Flexibility	----
Factor 7	EC16, EC17	Irony	----

The seventeen variables with seven factors are summarized in table 1. The names of the factors, statement labels and factor loadings have been summarized in table 2 above.

1. **Empathy:** This factor is the most important explaining 19.612% out of the total variance. In total five statements load on to this factor. Highest loading is for the statement “my expressed emotions are a part of what I see as my truthful way of dealing with people (0.702)”, followed by, “I feel that people can quickly feel my emotions (0.687)”, “I can easily put myself in the place of my customers and their needs (0.661)”, “others have learned to accept the way I manage my emotions (0.665)” and “I can tune my emotions to those of the customers (0.466)”. Empathy is the skill of placing oneself in the place of customers. It is an affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of customer’s emotional state or condition and that is identical or very similar to what the customer is feeling or would be expected to feel. **Empathic employees are better listeners and tend to perform better** (Pilling and Eroglu, 1994 and Spiro and Weitz, 1989). So, **empathy refers to the competencies of understanding others and helping others to develop and engaging in the art of effective listening, being able to discern customer needs and then supplying the product that meets those needs.**

2. **Self-Presentation:** The second factor consists of 12.095 % of the total variance. Two statements are loaded on to this factor. The highest loading for the statement “I feel some guilt while showing my enthusiasm during a sales interaction (0.930)”, followed by “I can easily show a variety of emotions when the situation asks for it (0.897)”. Self presentations are capable of dealing enthusiastically with the customer during sales interactions. **The control of emotional expressions can be linked to acting and has been called emotional dissemblance because it often involves dissociation between what is felt and what is communicated** (Saarni, 1999). Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) implicitly refer to guilt as a consequence of emotional regulation when they speak about a person role-conflict or a clash between personal values and role requirements. Hochschild (1983) found continuous feelings of guilt from employees that may result from emotional labour.
3. **Character:** This factor is accounted for 9.585 % of the total variation. Two statements are loaded on to this factor. The highest loading is for the statement “Although I am flexible with my emotions, but it is only up to a limit (0.978)”, followed by “when I laugh, I am relieved of the worry – if my emotions are adequate for the given social contact (0.962)”. Sales people have to act in accordance with company norms, as well as their own customers. Character involves moral character and ethical values, which deeply influence one’s emotional response in ways that promote personal integrity (Saarni, 2000). Huy (1999) accepted the importance of character for fostering change processes within organization. **Sales people must reconcile pressure from superiors with their own codes of conduct if they want to sustain their integrity in the organization.**
4. **Convincing:** This factor consists of 8.571 % of the total variation. This factor includes two statements. The highest loading is for the statement “People accept how I manage my emotions (0.756)”, followed by “when I laugh at myself – it helps me in not getting too emotional (0.717). A considerable effort is required to show emotions that differ from what one actually feels on an on-going basis. This is common in sales transactions and great efforts are required from salesperson to keep up one’s self-presentations. So, it is sometimes better strategy to help others come to accept one’s emotions instead of trying to change or dissemble one’s own emotions in every instance. **Effective salespeople not only have the ability to dissemble their own emotions in a strategic way but also to impose their genuine emotions on others and make other people feel comfortable with them.**
5. **Ethical Authenticity:** This factor accounts for 7.061 % of the total variance. This factor includes two statements. The highest loading is for the variable “I feel that my expressed

emotions are a part of my sincere and deeper self (0.824)”, followed by “I manage my emotions keeping in my certain social/moral norms. **Authenticity refers to skill or ability to put together the sales objectives and displayed emotions with feeling of authenticity. Salespeople high on this proficiency strongly feel that their expressed emotions are part of their sincere and deeper self at the same time keeping certain social norms into consideration.** Saarni (2000) found mature emotional competence as that moral character and ethical values deeply influence one’s emotional response in ways that promote personal integrity. Goleman (1998) states that the maintenance of standards of honesty and integrity is a determinant of trustworthiness and therefore a consequence of emotional competence.

6. **Emotional Flexibility:** This factor is accounted for 6.025 % of total variation. This factor consists of two statements. The highest loading is for the factor “I am acquainted with creating emotions to facilitate the process of a sales interaction (0.887)”, followed by “I feel little or no guilt about the way I manage my emotions (0.570)”. Goffman (1969) addresses the causes and consequences of expressed emotions and focuses on how people manipulate emotional expression to promote their own interests. **Salespeople who are able to avoid guilt or feel less guilty about their emotional expressions or who have been able to overcome their negative feelings, should feel more satisfied and relaxed and hence more effective than salespeople who feel guilty when contemplating the use of emotions as strategic tool** (Verberke et al., 2007).
7. **Irony:** This factor consists of 5.903 % of total variation. This factor includes two statements. The highest loading is for the statement “I can easily laugh at myself when my emotions get too strong (0.854)”, followed by “whatever happens, I have learned to accept my emotions and look at them with some humor/irony (0.493)”. Irony empowers the salespeople to disassociate themselves from negative feeling. Irony is the ability to view the experiences from newer perspectives (Hatch, 1997). Ironic perspective enables salespeople to tolerate emotionally ambiguous situation and redescribe the situation. Irony creates ability in employees during selling encounters to better equip to handle contradictory emotional and mental states. Irony help employees to put into perspective negative feelings (Vaillant, 1998) because similar to humor, it produces a dissociation from negative feelings and as a consequence, laughter often shifts toward more positive emotions. (Bananno, 2001). Humor is defined as any remark followed by laughter, although humor may not always be followed by laughter (Hatch, 1997). But humor involves emotions. Kant (1951) explains the connection between humor and emotion. Schopenhauer define irony as deliberately subsuming something directly under the

concept of its opposite. Irony involves more than mental and vocal contradiction of a statement. Brown (1997) argues that to render something ironic is to take it from its conventional context and place it in an opposite one. Irony is strictly dependent upon interpretation and therefore on its interpreters. (Hatch, 1997) So, **ironic perspective enables salespeople to handle better contradictory demands of their profession.**

Mean and ANOVA Analysis

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation

Variables	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Empathy	3.71	0.53
E1	My expressed emotions are part of what I see as my truthful way of dealing with people.	3.65	0.81
E2	I feel that people can quickly feel my emotions.	3.69	0.77
E3	I can easily put myself in the place of the customers and their needs.	3.78	0.80
E4	Others have learned to accept the way I manage my emotions.	3.63	0.84
E5	I can tune my emotions to those of customers.	3.83	0.76
	Self-Presentation	2.84	0.90
S1	I feel some guilt when showing my enthusiasm during a sales interaction.	2.77	0.92
S2	I can easily show a variety of emotions when the situation asks for it.	2.91	0.96
	Character	3.72	0.76
CH1	Although I am flexible with my emotions but only to a limit.	3.62	0.79

CH2	When I laugh, I am relieved of the worry – if my emotions are adequate for the given social context.	3.82	0.78
	Convincing	3.64	0.60
C1	People accept how I manage my emotions.	3.67	0.68
C2	When I laugh at myself – it helps me in not getting too emotional.	3.61	0.81
	Ethical Authenticity	3.68	0.70
EA 1	I feel that my expressed emotions are part of my sincere and deeper self.	3.67	0.68
EA 2	I manage my emotions keeping in mind certain societal norms.	3.69	0.82
	Emotional Flexibility	2.37	0.85
EF 1	I am acquainted with creating emotions to facilitate the process of a sales interaction.	2.60	0.96
EF 2	I feel little or no guilt when showing my enthusiasm during a sales interaction.	2.13	1.15
	Irony	3.25	0.53
I 1	I can easily laugh at myself when my emotions get too strong.	3.10	0.80
I 2	Whatever happens, I have learned to accept my emotions and look at them with some humor/irony.	3.41	0.56
	Overall Emotional Competence	3.25	0.36

Table 4: ANOVA analysis

Variable	No. of Samples	Overall Mean	Empathy	Self	Character	Convince	Sincerity	Flexibility	Ironic	EC
Outlet										
Malls	75	3.07	F = 3.794 0.024*	F = 19.462 0.000*	F = 14.389 0.000*	F = 6.706 0.002*	F = 0.797 0.452	F = 3.595 0.029*	F = 2.095 0.126	F = 18.264 0.000*
Apparel Store	75	3.36								
Electronic Store	50	3.36								
Total	200	3.25								
Age										
18 to 25	85	3.33	F = 6.092 0.003*	F = 7.615 0.001*	F = 11.412 0.000*	F = 6.475 0.002*	F = 3.594 0.029*	F = 0.478 0.621	F = 1.245 0.29	F = 12.711 0.000*
25 to 35	66	3.31								
35 and Above	49	3.04								
Total	200	3.25								
Education										
Post Graduate	47	3.56	F = 3.026 0.050*	F = 14.265 0.000*	F = 11.276 0.000*	F = 6.055 0.003*	F = 0.333 0.717	F = 2.970 0.050*	F = 1.696 0.186	F = 13.166 0.000*
Graduate	78	3.33								
Below Graduate	75	3.09								
Total	200	3.25								
Experience										
> 5 years	35	3.39	F = 3.032 0.050*	F = 10.645 0.000*	F = 1.165 0.314	F = 1.564 0.212	F = 2.065 0.072	F = 1.282 0.28	F = 0.244 0.784	F = 3.041 0.035*
1-5 years	85	3.24								
< 1 year	80	3.21								
Total	200	3.25								

(* significant at 0.05 level of significance)

The ANOVA test was conducted to find out difference in emotional competencies of employees during selling encounters on the basis of various demographic variables (refer table 4).

- 1. Outlet wise:** The anova test was conducted to find out the differences in emotional competencies of employees during selling encounters among different types of organized retail outlets. The results showed that the emotional competency of employees, among three different types of retail outlets, during their selling encounters was found to be different ($F = 18.264$, $p = 0.000$). The mean analysis showed that employees in electronic store and exclusive apparel store were the most emotional competent people (3.36), followed malls (3.07). The difference was also found for the factors, namely, empathy ($F = 3.794$, $p = 0.024$), self-presentation ($F = 19.642$, $p = 0.000$), character ($F = 14.389$, $p = 0.000$), convincing ($F = 6.706$, $p = 0.002$) and Emotional flexibility ($F = 3.595$, $p = 0.029$). The employees in busy convenience stores (malls) – those with high rush and long lines – were less likely to display emotions to customers than employees in electronic stores and apparel stores. The employees in apparel stores and electronic stores displayed good cheer due to low rush of customers and the absence of such a display among employees in malls due busy times (rush hours). During low rush in electronic and apparel stores customers expected more integrity from employees during selling encounters. In contrast, due to high rush in malls, expressing positive emotional competencies was risky because it encouraged customers to extend transactions, which made other customers waiting in line crabby. These findings are similar to the findings of the work done by Rafaeli and Sutton (1990). The employees in mall used less emotional competency skills with customers, who were not demanding, because there was less risk of losing control over a person who made a small purchase, asks a few questions and request no favors. A demanding customer is one who requires a prolonged and complex response from service employees. The field work indicated that employees in electronic store and exclusive apparel store often express greater positive emotion to demanding customers because it helped them gain control over the long and complex transactions (Whyte, 1946). The importance of demanding customers and displaying emotions are equally important. During low rush, a long and complex transaction can also provide entertainment for a service employee. Thus, when a store is slow, as in case of exclusive apparel stores and electronic stores, displaying positive emotion as a means of obtaining control is consistent with an employee's inner feelings and creates positive impact on customer satisfaction.
- 2. Age wise:** The anova test was conducted to find out the differences in emotional competencies of employees during selling encounters among employees, with different

age groups. The results showed that the emotional competency of employees, among different age groups, during their selling encounters was found to be different ($F = 12.711$, $p = 0.000$). The mean analysis showed that employees in age group 18 to 25 were the most emotional competent people (3.33), followed by employees in age group 25 to 35 (3.31) and employees in age group 35 and above (3.04). The difference was also found for the factors, namely, empathy ($F = 6.092$, $p = 0.003$), self-presentation ($F = 7.615$, $p = 0.001$), character ($F = 11.412$, $p = 0.000$), convincing ($F = 6.475$, $p = 0.002$) and Ethical Authenticity ($F = 3.594$, $p = 0.029$).

The employees in high age groups were found high in terms of authenticity. The people with high age were found to be less flexible in terms of displaying emotions due to their evoked mind set. Lack of flexibility among older employees also resulted in low empathy of employees towards customers and convincing power. During study, it was also found that the attrition rate were very high among employees in selling function. So, more of young employees were included in survey, which contributed major part of the total workforce in selling function in organized retail.

- 3. Education wise:** The anova test was conducted to find out the differences in emotional competencies of employees during selling encounters among employees with different education level. The results showed that the emotional competency of employees, among different education level, during their selling encounters was found to be different ($F = 13.166$, $p = 0.000$). The mean analysis showed that employees having post graduate degree were the most emotional competent people (3.56), followed by employees having only graduate degree (3.33) and employees who are undergraduate (3.09). The difference was also found for the factors, namely, empathy ($F = 14.265$, $p = 0.050$), self-presentation ($F = 11.276$, $p = 0.000$), character ($F = 11.276$, $p = 0.000$), convincing ($F = 6.055$, $p = 0.003$) and Emotional Flexibility ($F = 2.970$, $p = 0.050$).

The results showed that education has significant impact on emotional competencies of employees in selling encounters in organized retail. The more educated employees were found good in terms of their self-representation and character due to their confidence and knowledge to handle the customers. They also knew the importance of empathy towards customers, which is one of the most important functions in selling encounters. The educated people were more convincing to customers and showed greater emotional flexibility in terms of altering their emotions under varieties of customers. On the other hand, low educated employees were less empathic, low in terms of their self-

representation and convincing power and also showed less flexibility, especially in malls, where most of the employees had education up to under graduate level only.

4. **Experience wise:** The anova test was conducted to find out the differences in emotional competencies of employees during selling encounters among employees on the basis of their experience. The results showed that the emotional competency of employees, with different level of experience, during their selling encounters was found to be different ($F = 3.041, p = 0.035$). The mean analysis showed that employees having more than 5 years of experience were the most emotional competent people (3.39), followed by employees having 1 to 5 years of experience (3.24) and employees having less than 1 year of experience (3.21). The difference was also found for the factors, namely, empathy ($F = 3.032, p = 0.050$) and self-presentation ($F = 10.645, p = 0.000$).

The employees who are having good experience to handle selling encounters are high in authenticity. Their experience created a particular mindset for them, beyond which, it is very difficult for them to display empathy and emotions. But, the employees having good experience are found more empathic and confident in terms of self-representation than people having less experience. The experience taught them how to deal with employees under varieties of conditions thereby showing varieties of emotional competencies. During study, it was also found that employees with lower experience were also equally competent in terms convincing power and flexibility as compared to more experienced people.

Conclusion

“Emotional competency is partly a social skill which creates capacity to monitor and evaluate customers’ feelings and emotions and to use that knowledge to guide”

The evidences are available that the job prospects are brighter for interviewees who convey positive emotions and hide negative feelings. Job analysis techniques also imply that displayed feelings are one of the basic job requirements. A more rational conception of emotion should be developed in the study of organizations. By encouraging emotional intelligence and awareness through training

amongst sales people, as well as measuring their relative importance with customers, sales managers can determine the most suitable competencies for their market. The organization whose offering consists of competencies best matching the needs and wants of customers enjoys the considerable benefit of differential advantage over competitors. Effecting implementation of

emotional competency requires two things: Coping and Adaptation. Coping is an outcome of emotional experience that emerges when employees strive to manage themselves and customers and adaptation is required to manage contextual demand with self-regulation. The emotional competence of sales people require certain skill-sets developed through training and development.

Recommendations

1. Managers can expand their efforts toward implementing human resource practices in terms of evaluating appropriate displayed emotional competencies of employees and to remove obstacles to employees displaying positive emotional competencies.
2. Training can be provided to employees to improve their emotional literacy, which creates ability to exceed impulsiveness in favour of more rational approach to emotion. Training programmes for developing emotional competencies of sales people should focus on various competencies rather than specific single competency. It will be more effective to take the grounds of various competencies while the firms are designing training programs for their employees.
3. Organizations should consider differences depending on the tasks for their staff while designing training programs in terms of developing emotional competencies.
4. Organizational commitment and a systematic approach with a focused approach will be required to build emotionally competent organizations.
5. A strategic cycle of assessment, learning, practice and feedback over time will enable organizational members to build the competencies which that be helpful in personal success as well as develop high performing leaders for the organization.
6. Occupation of positions in an organization with persons with requisite emotional competencies, knowledge, qualifications and experience is critical to the success of that individual. However, these attributes are not the only criteria that determine the successful employment of job seekers. Different companies use numerous ways to assess candidate suitability for certain roles that respective employees, upon successful recruitment will be required to perform. Instituting emotional competence training programs through specific focus on emotional adaptability is required due to varying demands from customers.
7. The employees should be trained to be empathetic which facilitates individualization as they develop cognizance of customers' individual needs for developing long term relationship. Developing empathetic employees require effective training and mentoring from organization with a genuine desire to guide and develop employees (Goleman, 1989).

8. Listening and maintaining self-control, judging the emotional cues of the speaker, modifying one's own response based on those emotional cues and focusing on positive outcome and being open minded are important emotional competency skills. It follows that the employees should be trained to develop conflict resolution and negotiation skills because the ability to judge emotional cues permits an individual to take a position and modifying responses may allow him or her to make concessions that lead to partial victories.
9. The organizations should try to develop group cohesiveness in terms of building consensus and empathized with other members among employees, which creates harmony in terms of sharing of skills within groups that leads to improve ironic skills of group members.
10. The organization should provide employees with management support, clear expectations, freedom of expression, coherence between their work and organizational goals and recognition for their efforts, which also connect employees cognitively and emotionally to the job. Such emotional connection leads motivated employees to respond to psychologically meaningfulness and safety with deeper job involvement and ultimately to performance.
11. Feedback delivered to employees in an informational style with the emotional competencies of self-awareness and self-confidence will improve their performance, provided that they have the job autonomy to implement suggestions. Amabile and Gitomer (1984) and Shalley (1991) demonstrated that employees with the greatest job autonomy exhibited the greatest improvements in creative performance.

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