Bridging Emotional Intelligence: Applications in Psychology through the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) in Thai Private Hospital Customers

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the implications of emotional intelligence (EI) in marketing communication. The research aims to bridge these disciplines by applying the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) in service marketing. The study employs the 33-item SEIS, translated and culturally adapted for use in Thai. The multistage sampling of 600 respondents explores Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed four dimensions with acceptable reliability and validity: $\chi^2/df = 2.467$, GFI = 0.909, CFI = 0.961, RMSEA = 0.049, and SRMR = 0.029. This research bridges EI's theoretical and practical applications in psychology and marketing communication, emphasising EI's role in shaping consumer experiences and improving customer relationships. It also enhances its cultural relevance for future research and applications.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Schutte EI Scale, Service Marketing, Consumer Behavior
JEL Classifications: M1, M31

1. INTRODUCTION

Self-reported emotional intelligence (EI) varies significantly between psychology and marketing communication (Ahn, 2022), reflecting the distinct objectives and methodologies (Boateng et al., 2018; Prentice, 2019). Psychometric tools primarily examine emotional intelligence to understand the theoretical underpinnings (Sánchez-Álvarez et al., 2023), exploring the components and impact on mental health, interpersonal relationships, and work performance (Hjalmarsson and Dåderman, 2022; Joseph et al., 2015; Mérida-López et al., 2018). Moreover, EI influences therapeutic outcomes, patient satisfaction, and staff professional development (Asiamah and Danquah, 2019; Henning et al., 2021; Kadadi and Bharamanaikar, 2019; Khademi et al., 2021).

Emotional intelligence is leveraged in marketing communication to enhance consumer engagement, build customer relationships, and improve communication strategies (Tsarenko and Strizhakova,

2013). Despite the shared interest in emotional intelligence, psychology and marketing communication face distinct challenges (Dhawan and Kour, 2024; Sedlár and Gurňáková, 2024). In psychology, the subjective nature of self-report measures and cultural variations in the perception of EI pose significant hurdles. Additionally, accurately measuring EI remains a complex task (Orhan, 2024). In marketing communication, the primary challenges include applying EI concepts effectively across diverse markets or consumer targets, avoiding the manipulation of EI for commercial gain, and isolating the impact of EI from other variables influencing marketing success (Aslam et al., 2018; Babaei et al., 2017; Kim and Lee, 2016). The limitation of the psychology self-report scale has increasingly been discussed (Paap et al., 2023).

Emotional intelligence profoundly impacts consumer behaviour by shaping how individuals perceive, interact with, and make decisions about products and brands (Kankam and Charnor,

2023; Tariq, 2024). In service recovery strategy, EI influences social behaviours, such as sharing positive experiences and recommendations and amplifying word-of-mouth marketing (Wei et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2022). EI also strengthens trust and long-term relationships with brands, as consumers are better at identifying and connecting with trustworthy brands. This article explores broad implications by applying this well-validated scale; the research aims to bridge the gap between psychological EI assessment and practical marketing applications. The findings could inform the development of targeted strategies for improving customer service, enhancing customer satisfaction, and building long-term customer loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognise, understand, manage, and utilise one's own emotions and the emotions of others effectively (Igbokwe et al., 2023). Emotional intelligence is crucial in various aspects of life, including personal relationships, workplace dynamics, and overall well-being. People with high EI tend to have better mental health, exemplary job performance, and practical leadership skills. They are adept at managing stress, communicating clearly, and empathising with others, which helps build stronger, more positive relationships (Kanesan and Fauzan, 2019). In the workplace, EI enhances teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution, allowing employees and leaders to navigate the complexities of interpersonal relationships and organisational dynamics effectively (Desti and Shanthi, 2015; Zeidner et al., 2004). In the field of education, EI aids students in managing their emotions (Ayeni et al., 2024; Ulutaş and Ömeroğlu, 2007), which leads to better academic performance and improved social interactions (Ubago-Jimenez et al., 2024). In a service recovery strategy, the EI level of customers and employees impacts the chance to recall satisfaction, word-of-mouth communication, and choice of behaviour (Chokpiriyawat and Siriyota, 2024; Leonidou et al., 2019; Wei et al., 2023). High EI fosters more profound, meaningful connections in personal relationships by enhancing understanding, empathy, and communication. Overall, emotional intelligence is a vital skill set that enhances an individual's ability to effectively understand and manage emotions constructively.

2.1. The Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS)
A self-report measure to assess individuals' EI developed by John D. Schutte consists of 33 items that gauge various aspects of emotional perception, understanding, and regulation (Schutte et al., 1998). The measure of how well individuals perceive and manage their emotions and how effectively they can understand and respond to the feelings of others covered by:
1. Perceiving emotions: The ability to accurately perceive and identify emotions in oneself and others.
2. Facilitation emotions: How effectively individuals can express their feelings in appropriate ways.
3. Understanding emotions: Understanding the complexity of emotions and their impact on behaviour and relationships.
4. Managing emotions: The ability to regulate and manage emotions, including coping with stress and negative emotions.

Scores on the SEIS can provide insights into an individual's emotional strengths and areas for improvement, making it a valuable tool in research and applied settings where emotional intelligence is relevant, such as leadership development, counselling, and organisational psychology. The interpretation of the 33 items is based on a score of 165, calculated by multiplying each item's Likert scale rating (ranging from one to five). The cut-off scores have been explicitly categorised for Nigeria, with the score for males being 44.9 or higher and for females being 43.9 or higher in other countries; the cut-off points varied (Musonda et al., 2013).

Psychological scales and reflective scales serve distinct purposes in measuring constructs (MacKenzie et al., 2011a, 2011b). Psychological scales are designed to assess various psychological constructs, such as emotions, attitudes, and personality traits, through multiple items that capture various behaviors, thoughts, and feelings (Loewenthal and Lewis, 2020). The scales typically use Likert-type items and are employed in clinical, research, and organizational settings to evaluate mental health, emotional intelligence, and job satisfaction, including the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and the Self-Report Scale for Emotional Intelligence (SSEIT). In contrast, reflective scales focus on measuring a single latent construct with highly correlated items that reflect the same underlying trait (Aniemeka et al., 2020). These scales are used in psychometrics and structural equation modeling to validate constructs, ensuring they accurately represent the latent variable (Elfenbein and MacCann, 2017). The scales used in confirmatory factor analysis for constructs lie in their measurement approach: psychological scales may capture complex constructs with diverse dimensions, while reflective scales measure a single latent trait with interchangeable items that reflect the same factor (Simms, 2008).

3. METHODS

The study involved several methodological steps to adapt and validate the Schutte Emotional Intelligence (EI) scale for use in a Thai context. The researchers translated the scale from English to Thai based on the methodology outlined by Douglas and Craig (2007), ensuring linguistic and conceptual equivalence of the 33 items (Schutte et al., 1998). Subsequently, the IOC was performed, involving feedback and revision by five service marketing experts to refine the scale's content and relevance. Following this, a pilot test was conducted with 30 respondents to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the translated items. For the main study, using G-forms, a multistage approach with purposive sampling was employed to recruit 600 respondents from private hospital users in Thailand between 1 October 2024 and 31 October 2024. Finally, all collected data underwent Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to validate the structure and measurement properties of the adapted scale within the Thai context, ensuring its reliability and validity for future research and application in assessing emotional intelligence.

4. RESULTS

The researcher employed content validity to evaluate the congruence between the questions and the research objectives, using a formula

Table 1: Mean, SD, IOC and items coding

Dimension and items		Mean	SD	IOC	Coding
Perceiving emotions: Mean 3.604 (Items=10) Alpha=0.967					
C5	I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.	2.81	1.185	1.0	PE1
C9	I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	3.97	0.870	0.6	PE2
C15	I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.	4.05	0.884	0.8	PE3
C18	By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	3.83	0.930	1.0	PE4
C19	I know why my emotions change.	4.01	0.897	1.0	PE5
C22	I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	4.03	0.928	0.6	PE6
C25	I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	4.08	0.869	0.8	PE7
C29	I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	3.85	0.947	0.8	PE8
C32	I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	3.91	0.911	1.0	PE9
C33	It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	2.65	1.116	1.0	PE10
Managing emotions: Mean 3.491 (Items=9) Alpha=0.914					
C2	When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	4.02	0.915	0.8	ME1
C3	I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	4.17	0.836	0.8	ME2
C10	I expect good things to happen.	4.24	0.874	1.0	ME3
C12	When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	4.06	0.880	1.0	ME4
C14	I seek out activities that make me happy.	4.23	0.888	1.0	ME5
C21	I have control over my emotions.	4.05	0.864	1.0	ME6
C23	I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	4.09	0.900	1.0	ME7
C28	When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	2.96	1.337	1.0	ME8
C31	I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	4.11	0.882	0.8	ME9
Facilitation emotions: Mean 3.604 (Items=8) Alpha=0.967					
C1	I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	4.14	0.851	1.0	FE1
C4	Other people find it easy to confide in me.	4.09	0.919	1.0	FE2
C11	I like to share my emotions with others.	4.08	0.892	1.0	FE3
C13	I arrange events others enjoy.	4.13	0.915	1.0	FE4
C16	I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	4.09	0.918	1.0	FE5
C24	I compliment others when they have done something well.	4.08	0.861	1.0	FE6
C26	When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	3.99	0.941	1.0	FE7
C30	I help other people feel better when they are down.	4.12	0.860	1.0	FE8
Understanding emotions: Mean 3.604 (Items=6) Alpha=0.967					
C6	Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	4.14	0.932	1.0	UE1
C7	When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	4.17	0.881	1.0	UE2
C8	Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.	4.17	0.856	1.0	UE3
C17	When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	4.26	0.864	1.0	UE4
C20	When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	4.22	0.915	0.8	UE5
C27	When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	4.10	0.939	0.8	UE6

to calculate the Index of Item Objective Congruence (IOC) from the assessments of five experts. Three service marketing experts and two hospitality professors provided their evaluations and recommended revisions to ensure the accuracy and coherence of the questionnaire structure and content validity. All the items have passed over 0.50, as illustrated in Table 1.

Confirmatory factor analysis has been done across the cut-off to adjust the model fit indices according to the theoretical construct of emotional intelligence, which consists of four components encompassing 33 items. The analysis revealed that the model fit indices, standardised residuals, and factor loadings fall within acceptable ranges. These findings validate the model's appropriateness. The detailed results of the second-order confirmatory factor analysis of emotional intelligence are summarised in Table 2.

The evaluation of the model fit indices determined that the model aligns well with the empirical data, as all five fit indices meet the accepted standards. The specific values are $\chi2/df = 2.467$, $GFI = 0.909$, $CFI = 0.961$, $RMSEA = 0.049$, and $SRMR = 0.029$.

Table 2: Confirmatory factor analysis by second-order constructs

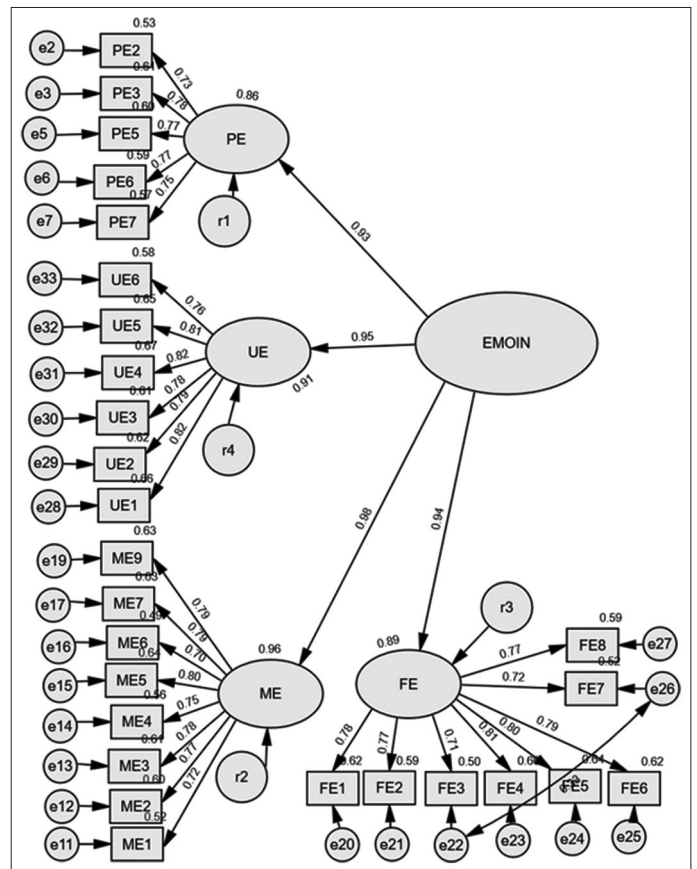| Model adjustment	χ2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Unconstrain model	4.115	0.809	0.891	0.072	N/A
Delete PE10	3.564	0.830	0.913	0.065	N/A
Delete ME8	3.216	0.846	0.929	0.061	N/A
Delete PE1	3.176	0.856	0.934	0.060	0.038
Add e22 - e26	3.030	0.864	0.939	0.058	0.037
Add e4 - e8	2.905	0.875	0.943	0.086	0.036
Add e3 - e9	2.821	0.878	0.946	0.055	0.036
Delete PE8	2.761	0.885	0.949	0.054	0.034
Delete ME6	2.732	0.892	0.952	0.054	0.033
Delete PE4	2.467	0.909	0.961	0.049	0.029

Consequently, the emotional intelligence measurement model is considered appropriate, as illustrated in Figure 1.

The results from Table 3 illustrate convergence validity. The factor loadings for the observed variables indicate that all factor loadings exceed.50, confirming high data validity (Hair et al., 2019). The

Table 3: Factor loading, CR, AVE, Cronbach's alpha

Items	Factor loading	CR	AVE	Alpha
Perceiving emotions		0.888	0.569	0.885
PE2	0.627			
PE3	0.622			
PE5	0.675			
PE6	0.631			
PE7	0.699			
PE9	0.744			
Managing emotions		0.912	0.599	0.917
ME1	0.715			
ME2	0.779			
ME3	0.786			
ME4	0.744			
ME5	0.804			
ME7	0.791			
ME9	0.793			
Facilitation emotions		0.921	0.592	0.923
FE1	0.784			
FE2	0.767			
FE3	0.710			
FE4	0.812			
FE5	0.799			
FE6	0.790			
FE7	0.721			
FE8	0.767			
Understanding emotions		0.911	0.631	0.911
UE1	0.815			
UE2	0.788			
UE3	0.778			
UE4	0.821			
UE5	0.805			
UE6	0.759			

Figure 1: CFA Emotional Intelligence; EI

Table 4: Discriminant validity

Construct	PE	ME	FE	UE
PE	0.754	-	-	-
ME	0.710**	0.774	-	-
FE	0.693**	0.747**	0.769	-
UE	0.657**	0.720**	0.738**	0.794

composite reliability (CR) analysis and average variance extracted (AVE) corroborates this finding, with both metrics surpassing the .50 threshold. The reliability analysis using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, as detailed in Table 4 0.27, reveals that the highest Cronbach's Alpha is 0.979 and the lowest is 0.944, well above the 0.70 benchmark, thus indicating robust data reliability (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994).

The discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the square root of the AVE of the observed variables with the correlation coefficients between the observed variables. The analysis revealed that the square root of the AVE for each factor was higher than the correlation coefficients between the observed variables, which ranged from 0.657 to 0.747, with statistical significance at the 0.01 level (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The discriminant validity test ensures that each latent construct is distinctly measured without any overlap with other variables. The fact that the square root of the AVE for each variable exceeded the correlations between the latent variables in the same row confirms that the measurement model possesses discriminant validity, as illustrated in Table 4.

5. CONCLUSION

This study defines four dimensions of emotional intelligence scales applied to the SSET (Self-Report Scale for Emotional Intelligence). Emotional intelligence consists of four main components. The six items of Perceiving Emotions involve recognising one's emotional states, understanding nonverbal communication, knowing the reasons behind emotional changes, discerning others' feelings by their tone of voice and the seven items of Managing Emotions assessed through recalling and solving past issues, expecting positive outcomes, sustaining positive emotions, seeking happiness, and self-motivation. The eight items of Facilitation Emotions are evaluated by knowing when to discuss personal problems, being approachable, enjoying sharing feelings, creating happiness for others, impressing others, praising others, empathising with significant life events, and helping others feel better. The six items of Understanding Emotions involve assessing the importance of life events, seeing new possibilities with emotional changes, valuing emotions, finding problem-solving easier when in a good mood, and generating new ideas during emotional shifts. In conclusion, these components collectively measure an individual's ability to perceive, manage, utilise, and understand emotions effectively.

Adapting the Schutte EI scale to the Thai language and culture is a valuable contribution to both research and practice in Thailand. It enhances the accuracy and relevance of emotional intelligence assessments, facilitating a better understanding and application of EI in consumer behaviour and service marketing. This adaptation

benefits businesses and researchers and contributes to the broader goal of fostering emotional intelligence in the Thai population.

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