

A study on relationship between emotional intelligence components of sales managers from Goleman's viewpoint and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises

Kamal Ghalandari* and Soheila Shakoori Yadegari

Department of Business Management, Payame Noor University, Iran

CHRONICLE

Article history:
Received January 14, 2014
Accepted 10 June 2014
Available online
June 12 2014

Keywords:
Emotional Intelligence
Sales Promotion Activities
Marketing Mix
Food Industry

ABSTRACT

Winners of the future competition are managers who communicate their human resources in an effective and rewarding way. In this respect, emotional intelligence is an advanced form of focusing on humans in organizational environment and it is a new and suitable instrument for business managers and market theoreticians to direct and satisfy organizational employees and external customers. This paper investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence dimensions and components including self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relation management and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises. Present research was an applied one with respect to its purpose and a correlational descriptive-survey one with respect to data collection method. Statistical population of the study comprised of 534 managers operating at firms located at West Azarbaijan province in food industry. Among them 225 managers were selected using random sampling procedure based on Krejcie and Morgan's table. Data on emotional intelligence variable were collected using Goleman's Emotional Competence Inventory. In addition, sales promotion variable was evaluated using an author-developed questionnaire and reliabilities of these two scales were respectively 0.92 and 0.89. Given the normality of data according to Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, Pearson's correlation test was used to identify the type of relationship between variables and results suggested a direct significant relationship between all emotional intelligence components including self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relation management and sales promotion activities at significance level of $p \leq 0.05$.

© 2014 Growing Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

There are several studies suggesting that winners of the future competition are those managers who are able to communicate with their humane resources in an effective and rewarding way. In this context, emotional intelligence is one of the skills greatly contributing to relationship between managers and organizational members and according to Goleman (1998), it is considered as an inevitable requirement in the organization. Indeed, successful managers emphasize enhancement of

*Corresponding author. Tel: +98-9141885288
E-mail addresses: kamal.ghalandari@gmail.com (K. Ghalandari)

emotional intelligence and cultivation of emotional capabilities and this important fact implies significance of emotional intelligence and employment of it in organizations.

Today, emotional intelligence is a new tool available for managers to direct and to satisfy their employees as well as their customers. According to relevant research, in 7.0 percent of cases, loss of employees and customers is due to weak emotional intelligence. During the recent decades, this concept has become very prevalent because of its capability to anticipate success (Goleman, 1998) and its role in improvement of communications in work environment and organizations. Performance of employees is the result of employee relationships and individual interactions appropriate management and technical knowledge. Evaluation and improvement of emotional intelligence should be considered as one of the most important responsibilities of top management in organizations. The concept of emotional intelligence is associated with the assumption that many people who have not a high level of education but a high level of emotional intelligence experience a happy and successful life. People with a high level of emotional intelligence are very skillful in recognizing their own and others' emotions. Whenever these people operate as managers in organizations, they may exploit their high level emotional intelligence to achieve organizational goals and play better role in organizational management.

On the other hand, reaching extensive markets and business success requires movement towards open economy, employment of marketing strategies and adoption of managerial perspective towards meeting various customers' needs and requirements in various markets. Promotional activities such as marketing mix encompass advertising, personal sales, sales promotion and public relations help us reach sales objectives. In this context, sales promotion includes short-term incentives and motivators to encourage buying or selling the intended product or service and covers an extensive range of promotional tools designed with the aim of inducing faster and stronger market reactions (Rousta et al., 1989). Thus promotional and encouraging activities are efforts taken towards establishment of communications and given appropriate knowledge and awareness promotional plans can be managed and run in a better way. In addition, based on the above-said discussion, in present research, we measure emotional intelligence of sales managers and more importantly, find the reasons for presence of a relationship between emotional intelligence of sales managers and sales promotion activities in business enterprises in Iran. In other words, present research seeks to find out whether there is any significant relationship between emotional intelligence of sales managers and sales promotion activities.

2. Research Literature and Hypotheses

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

Meyer and Salovey (1990) are believed to be the first who introduced and defined emotional intelligence construct. These two researchers and theoreticians indicated that emotional intelligence was the capability of people to deal with their emotions. They defined emotional intelligence as a sub-set of social intelligence including capability to recognize and to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, capability to distinguish between one's own feelings and emotions and those of others and using this information to direct one's own thoughts and actions (Ghalandari et al., 2012a). During the recent years, there are various definitions provided for emotional intelligence category and each one tries to further clarify this concept. Goleman (1998) defined emotional intelligence as "Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth." According to Gardner (1993), emotional intelligence consists of two components "intrapersonal intelligence" and "inter-personal intelligence". Intrapersonal intelligence is an intelligence, which helps us give meaning to all we do, our thoughts and feelings and the relationships existing among all these elements. Employing it, we can learn to harness ourselves and our emotions and direct them towards achieving our goals. Interpersonal intelligence is an intelligence, which helps us our relationships with others, show

empathy towards them, develop transparent relationships with them, motivate them and understand the relationship between them (Ghalandari et al., 2012b). With a little thought it is revealed that all above-mentioned definitions agree to a common point, which is the ability to understand and to control emotions and manage them and also the fact that emotional intelligence may be a critical factor for success in personal relationships and in the workplace.

2.2 Emotional Intelligence Components

Bar-On (1997), Meyer and Salovey (1990) and Goleman (1998) are among the most famous scholars who have investigated emotional intelligence. These theoreticians introduced various dimensions of emotional intelligence. Bar-On (1997) divided emotional intelligence into five components based on social and intelligent behaviour: (1) intrapersonal component which refers to the individual capability to become aware of his/her own emotions and control them (2) adaptability component which studies flexibility, problem solving ability and objectivism of the individual (3) general mood component which addresses the individual optimism and happiness (4) interpersonal component: it addresses personal ability to adapt with others and his/her social skills (5) stress control components: capability to adapt to pressures and control emotions in a constructive and effective way. Meyer and Salovey (1990) divided emotional intelligence into four factors: (1) emotional perception and expression: recognition and providing verbal and non-verbal information from emotional system, (2) Emotional facilitation of thought (using emotional intelligence): employing emotions as a part of cognitive flow e.g. creativity and problem solving (3) emotional understanding: cognitive processing which includes insights and knowledge obtained about one's own and others' feelings (4) emotional management: managing emotions in oneself and in others.

Totally it should be noted that Goleman (1998) enumerated five elements for emotional intelligence which they also form the framework of present study: (1) self-awareness: whether manager is able to correctly recognize his/her emotions when they are expressed; it includes emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence (2) self-management: whether manager is able to direct his/her emotions towards positive outcomes. It includes self-control, trustworthiness, Conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation (3) self-motivation: whether manager is able to address the deepest and most intimate values and interests of his/her audience in taking effort to achieve his/her own goals; it includes achievement drive, organizational commitment, optimism and initiative (4) social awareness: whether manager is able to accurately recognize others' feelings when meeting them or working with them. It includes understanding others, service-orientation, developing others and improvement, leveraging diversity and political awareness (5) relation management: whether manager is able to direct his/her relationships with others towards a positive outcome in an effective and constructive way; it includes influence, communication, leadership, change catalyst, conflict management, building bonds and collaboration and cooperation.

2.3 Emotional Intelligence and Market Management

Exploiting emotional intelligence in business is a new idea still not completely understood and accepted by many managers and businessmen. Indeed most managers more or less prefer to exploit their brain rather than their heart to conduct their works and fear that showing empathy towards their colleagues and customers prevent them from addressing organizational goals. In various marketing processes, customers are emphasized as organizational partners. Humans have emotions and the more the firms move towards service activities, the more their sensitivity to emotions would be. Individuals who are influential in the market are those who completely know that power of inspiration and feeling is critical beyond all scientific and mathematical rationales. Indeed managers who know scientific structure of the market and inject emotional intelligence into it would create surprising phenomena. Managers and businessmen with high emotional intelligence, i.e. those who appropriately know and direct their feelings, understand others' feelings and take a purposeful approach to it are effective in market management. These people even are happy and satisfied in their personal life and their capability makes them productive people. Indeed organizational management

is based on emotional intelligence. It formulates the overall perspective with respect to it, recognizes organizational mission and then achieves its long- and short-term goals using marketing scientific and theoretical rules and principles. Interest in serving customers, intra-organizational alignment to retain customers and determining organizational mission are not issues, which can be addressed using theoretical discussions but they need a superior intelligence, which includes both interpersonal and intrapersonal ones. Goleman's Emotional Competences is an acquired capability based on emotional intelligence resulting in a brilliant work performance. Emotional intelligence is the potential capability of an individual to learn applied skills based on five factors including self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relation management and emotional competences show the degree to which these potential capabilities have been recognized.

2.4. Promotion

Promotion, indeed, is a link between organization and customer and new marketing implies doing things more than to provide a favorable product and price to target customers. Firms should establish relationships with customers and operate based on a developed plan. When investigating firms systemically, all promotional activities should be considered as secondary systems within the whole market system. This means to coordinate all activities of sales force, advertising programs and other motivating campaigns. From economic theoretical perspectives, the primary objective of promotions is to build shifts in income and demand curves of the corporate products. Essentially promotion consists of a set of informing, encouraging and influencing activities completely intertwined together (Rousta et al., 1989). According to the mentioned theoretical literature, in present research we sought to study the following hypotheses:

Main hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between self-awareness of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between self-management of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between self-motivation of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between social awareness of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between relation management of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

According to the mentioned hypotheses, the conceptual model of the research is shown in figure 1.

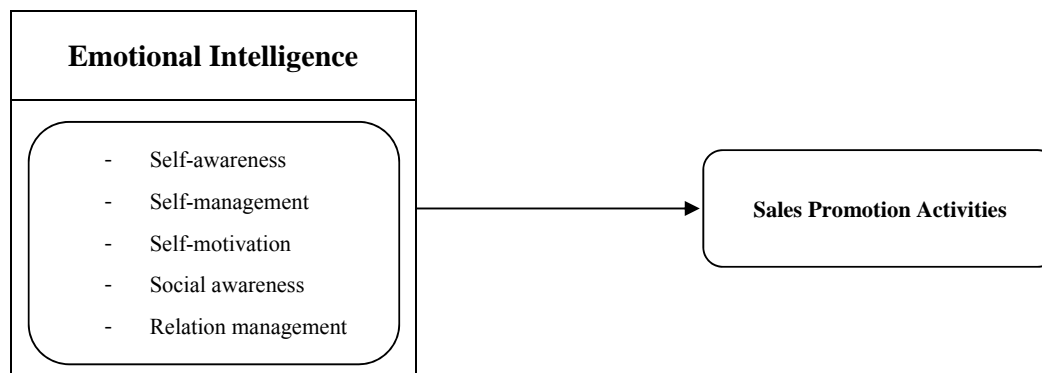


Fig.1. Research conceptual model

3. Research Methodology

In present research, among four major methods for data collection (questionnaire, interview, observation and library study) two ones were used to collect the required data. It is clearly shown that in every research work the researcher should study the relevant documents and in other word she/she should conduct a library study on the research subject so that an appropriate framework can be found for the study and it is ensured that all variables relating to research question are identified in some way. Besides, questionnaires including a set of purposeful questions also were used to collect data as a common instrument for this purpose. Questionnaires typically evaluate viewpoints and opinions of respondents based on different scales. In present research, emotional intelligence inventory with 32 items was used which was based on theoretical bases of Goleman (1998) competence model and measured five components of emotional intelligence i.e. self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relation management. Sales promotion questionnaire included nine items developed based on research literature and experts' opinions and a 5-point Likert scale was used to receive responses of statistical population about research variables. Finally reliability of the questionnaires was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha calculated via SPSS software. To this end a pilot study was conducted and 35 copies of both questionnaires were distributed to sales managers as a pre-test. Then Cronbach's alpha was calculated based on the collected data and SPSS. Results showed appropriate Cronbach's Alpha of 0.92 and 0.89 respectively for emotional intelligence inventory and sales promotion questionnaire.

Statistical population of the research consisted of 532 managers operating for firms belonging to food industry located in West Azarbaijan province of Iran. Since it is believed that by knowing the size of statistical population (N) the sample size can be determined based on Krejcie and Morgan's table provided in 1970, in present research the sample size was determined to be 534 with respect to the size of statistical population (534 managers). But with respect to the fact that probably a number of questionnaires would not be returned or would not be completed in the correct way, thus the number of distributed questionnaires was 250 among them 225 copies were usable for data analysis purpose. A simple random sampling procedure was applied to statistical population i.e. managers working for firms belonging to food industry located in West Azarbaijan province of Iran. To describe data, statistical statistics were used and inferential statistics were used to analyse data and test of research hypotheses. Finally to conduct more accurate and objective analyses and show if there is a statistical significant relationship between two variables, correlation coefficient was used. Based on normality or non-normality of data, Pearson's and Spearman's tests were respectively used to identify degree and type of the relationships between variables. Data normality can be examined based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and in present study this test was conducted both for individual variables and total variables. This test was conducted at 95% confidence interval and significance level (α) of 0.01 as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Results of the normality test related to research variables

		Emotional intelligence	Sales promotion	Self-awareness	Self-management	Self-motivation	Social motivation	Relation management
N		225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	3.22	3.06	2.90	2.84	3.22	2.77	2.77
	Std. Deviation	.698	.802	.794	.728	.623	.721	.720
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.229	.165	.193	.110	.229	.114	.146
	Positive	.133	.120	.193	.073	.218	.063	.123
	Negative	-.229	-.165	-.184	-.110	-.229	-.114	-.146
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		3.796	2.743	3.200	1.822	3.797	1.886	2.425
	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.630	.197	.147	.071	.259	.483	.049

According to the obtained results shown in table 1, significance level for all research variables is higher than the assumed significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$). Therefore data normality is confirmed and

parametric methods and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to test hypotheses and the resulted Pearson's correlation coefficients are seen in Table 2.

Table 2
Pearson's correlation coefficients for study variables

		Emotional intelligence	Sales promotion	Self-awareness	Self-management	Self-motivation	Social awareness	Relation management
Emotional intelligence	Pearson Correlation	1	.960**	.952**	.982**	.959**	.958**	.975**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0	0	0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Sales promotion	Pearson Correlation	.960**	1	.973**	.961**	.981**	.994**	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0	0	0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Self-awareness	Pearson Correlation	.952**	.973**	1	.958**	.990**	.982**	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0	0	0	0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Self-management	Pearson Correlation	.982**	.961**	.958**	1	.960**	.967**	.983**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		0	0	0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Self-motivation	Pearson Correlation	.959**	.981**	.990**	.960**	1	.989**	.990**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0		0	0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Social awareness	Pearson Correlation	.958**	.994**	.982**	.967**	.989**	1	.993**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0		0
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225
Relation management	Pearson Correlation	.975**	.990**	.990**	.983**	.990**	.993**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	N	225	225	225	225	225	225	225

3.2. Hypothesis Testing and Results

Main hypothesis: with respect to SPSS output shown in Table 2, the correlation between the two variables emotional intelligence of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.960 suggesting an strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the main hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' emotional intelligence and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 1: With respect to SPSS output shown in Table2, the correlation between the two variables self-awareness of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.973 suggesting an strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the first sub-hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' self-awareness and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 2: With respect to SPSS output shown in Table 2, the correlation between the two variables self-management of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.961 suggesting an strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the second sub-hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' self-management and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 3: with respect to SPSS output shown in Table 2, the correlation between the two variables self-motivation of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.981 suggesting an strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the third sub-hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' self-motivation and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 4: with respect to SPSS output shown in Table2, the correlation between the two variables social awareness of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.994 suggesting a strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the fourth sub-hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' social awareness and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

Sub-hypothesis 5: with respect to SPSS output shown in Table 2, the correlation between the two variables relation management of sales managers and sales promotion activities is 0.990 suggesting a strong correlation and with respect to the fact that significance level associated with the mentioned correlation test (0.000) is lower than the research error coefficient (0.01), thus H_0 (assumption of no relationship) is rejected and the fifth sub-hypothesis is supported at confidence interval 99% and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between sales manager' relation management and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The main hypothesis of present research was presence of a significant relationship between emotional intelligence of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises and the obtained results (Table 2) showed a significant positive relationship between these two variables. This result is consistent with that of Ola (2009) conducted in Iranian context which concluded that there was a positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence and organizational excellence. According to the results of study on sample firms, an individual has more emotional intelligence when he/she is more aware of his/her feelings, has more control on his/her internal thoughts and external behaviours, more motivates himself/herself to achieve the goals and finally he/she is more skilful in managing his/her relationships with customers. Thus emotional intelligence of sales managers should be more emphasized as a factor related to sales promotion.

Sub-hypothesis 1 of present study was associated with the significant relationship between self-awareness of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises and the results (Table2) shows a significant positive relationship between these two variables. This result is consistent with that of Ola (2009) in Iran. He concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between sales manager self-awareness and organizational excellence. According to research findings with respect to sub-hypothesis 1 it is suggested that sales managers should accurately recognize their weaknesses and strengths and identify their emotions. Because managers who have a high level of self-awareness are able to evaluate their capabilities in a more objective way and they are able to recognize their feelings in every specific moment. In addition self-awareness is one of the main factors contributing to self-confidence. It means that self-awareness leads managers to recognize their emotions, exploit them in their decision makings and develop self-confidence through objective evaluation of their capabilities.

Sub-hypothesis 2 was about the relationship between self-management of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian Business enterprises and the results (Table 2) showed that there was a positive significant relationship between these two variables. This result is consistent with that of Ola (2009) in Iran which concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between self-management and organizational excellence. According to the results of present research there was a relationship between sales promotion activities and ability of sales managers to avoid emotional disorders, be accountable with respect to their performance, be honest and develop internal trust building, be aware of the changes in their environment, be flexible and resistant to changes and finally be innovative i.e. be adaptable to new ideas, strategies and conditions.

Sub-hypothesis 3 addressed the relationship between self-motivation of sales managers and sales promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises and the results (Table 2) showed a significant

positive relationship between these two variables. This result is consistent with that of Ola (2009) which concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between self-motivation and organizational excellence. According to the results, such capabilities as efforts towards meeting high level criteria, alignment with goals of the group or business enterprise, readiness to exploit opportunities and focusing on achieving goals instead of paying attention to barriers contribute to promotion activities of sales managers. In the studied firms, self-motivation has the highest correlation with promotion activities and this suggests that the studied firms have been able to prepare an appropriate ground for creation of a motivating environment for sales managers and this has led to increased commitment of sales managers to managing promotion activities.

Sub-hypothesis 4 addressed the relationship between social awareness of sales managers and promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises and the results (Table 2) showed that there was a significant positive relationship between two variables. This result was consistent with that of Ola (2009) in Iran and concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between social awareness and organizational excellence. With respect to social awareness component, sales managers should try to recognize customers' emotions and be curious about it. Also they should take those emotions in to account in their decision making processes, being a good listener and focus on customers' feelings. This implies further intimacy between sales managers and customers.

Sub-hypothesis 5 addressed the relationship between relation management of sales managers and promotion activities in Iranian business enterprises and the results (Table 2) showed a significant positive relationship between these two variables. This result is consistent with that of Ola (2009) in Iran which concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between relation management of sales managers and organizational excellence. With respect to relation management it should be noted that sales managers not only should establish friendly relations with their customers but also these relations should be completely purposeful. To this end, managers should develop extensive relationships with customers in business enterprises, pay attention to priorities and needs of customers and share customer values.

References

- Bar-On, R. (1997). *The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i): Technical manual*. Toronto, Canada: Multi-Health Systems, Inc.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Multiple intelligence: the theory in practice*. New York: basic books.
- Ghalandari, K., S. Mortazavi, Sh. Abbasi & Ghorbani Ghale Jogh, M. (2012a). The effect of emotional labor on emotional exhaustion in banking services: The role of Iranian emotional intelligence. *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology*, 4(12), 1794-1800.
- Ghalandari, K., M. Ghorbani Ghale Jogh, M. Imani & Babaeinia, L. (2012b). The Effect of emotional labor strategies on employees job performance and organizational commitment in hospital sector: Moderating role of emotional intelligence in Iran. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 17 (3), 319-326.
- Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Krejcie R.V., & Morgan, D.W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 30, 607-10.
- Mayer, J., & Salovey, P. (1997). *What is emotional intelligence? In P. Salovey & D. Sluyter (Eds.), Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Implications for Educators*. (pp.3-31). New York: Basic Books.
- Ola, R. (2009). Study of the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational excellence of Teacher Education Organization, (case study of Teacher Education University), MA *Thesis in Public Administration, Teacher Education University*.
- Rousta A., D. Venous, & Ebrahimi, A. (1989). *Marketing Management*. 4th ed., Samt Publishing.