Trait Emotional Intelligence, Personality and the Self-Perceived Performance Ratings of Casino Key Account Representatives

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Abstract

This thesis explores the impact of emotional intelligence on frontline employee service performance in the casino industry. Emotional intelligence is a relatively recent psychological construct that has attracted substantial interest in both the popular literature and within academia. A major appeal of emotional intelligence lies in its possibility of contributing to a portion of the remaining variance in job performance that traditional cognitive intelligence leaves unexplained (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2003). However, the predictive validity of emotional intelligence varies considerably and depends on the context, criterion of interest, and specific theory used (e.g. Emmerling & Goleman, 2003). Furthermore, as agreed by most personality psychologists, a new construct such as emotional intelligence needs to provide incremental validity over well-established constructs to be welcomed into the relevant field (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). With respect to job context and selected criteria, it has been claimed that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in the case of roles which are associated with emotional labour, such as customer service (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005). With regard to theory, various models have been proposed as a means of conceptualising the construct within the relevant literature. These models have been associated with a range of tests which purport to assess emotional intelligence and its predictive validity. In an attempt to emphasize the importance of the role of assessment in operationalising emotional intelligence, Petrides and Furnham (2001) have proposed the theory of trait EI, which is measured using a self-report test. These authors indicated that the theory encompasses behavioural tendencies and self-perceived abilities like a personality trait; therefore, its investigation should be primarily conducted within a personality framework (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides, Furnham & Frederickson, 2004).

From the perspective of predictive validity, this thesis applies the concept of trait EI in the context of the casino high-end market (casino key accounts), and analyses its relationship with the service performance of casino service representatives for the high-end market (casino key account representatives). From the perspective of incremental validity, the thesis incorporates the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality factors as another independent variable to analyse the additional variance in the dependent variable explained by trait EI in predicting the service performance of casino key

account representatives. This study also tests the mediating roles of customer orientation and adaptability in the context of hierarchical relationships of the influence of personality traits (trait EI and FFM) on service performance evaluation, based on the hierarchical model theory proposed by Brown, Mowen, Donavan & Licatal. (2002).

The data used in this thesis were gathered from questionnaires, distributed within a VIP gaming room catering to casino high-end players in one of the world's largest casinos located in Australasia. A sample of 152 usable employee responses was obtained. Multiple regression has been used to test the relevant hypotheses and Baron and Kenny's (1986) method has been used to analyse the mediation.

Through the use of the various statistical analyses, it was found that trait EI was positively related with the service performance of casino key account representatives. It also explained additional variance in the dependent variable – the service performance of casino key account representatives over and above the FFM of personality factors. Partial mediations of customer orientation and adaptability were also found between the basic personality traits and service performance of casino key account representatives. It indicates that indirect effects between the independent and dependent variables are enhanced by the incorporation of the various mediators. The thesis concludes with a discussion of the results, which includes comments on the implications of the findings, an evaluation of the limits of the current investigation, and some thoughts on possible future research.

Declaration

I, Catherine Prentice, declare that the PhD thesis entitled (Trait Emotional Intelligence, Personality and the Self-Perceived Performance Ratings of Casino Key Account Representatives) is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and excusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the reward of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work

Catherine Prentice

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Acknowledgement

The completion of this thesis has been a challenge: being pregnant and having morning sickness through the whole pregnancy, babysitting, and tormented by the abusive and unfaithful husband…. However, it has been made possible only through the support of several people. First and foremost I would like to acknowledge the supervision of Dr Keis Ohtsuka and Professor Brian King. Their advice and guidance has been invaluable and contributed to the accomplishment of the thesis.

A special acknowledgement is extended to my dearest baby, Louis and my parents. My success is entirely dedicated to them. I love him!

Catherine Prentice

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List of Abbreviations

CRP   Casino Rebate Programme

VIP   Very Important Player

EI   Emotional Intelligence

FFM   Five Factor Model

GMA   General Mental Ability

CRM   Customer Relationship Management

LTV   Life Time Value

MSCEIT   Mayer-Salovey-Caruso-Emotional-Intelligence-Test

MEIS   Multifactor-Emotional Intelligence-Scale

ECI   Emotional Competence Inventory

EQ-I   Emotional Quotient Inventory

NEO-PI-R   Neuroticism Extraversion Openness Personality Inventory revised

TABP   Type A Behaviour Pattern

AMA   American Marketing Association

SOCO   Selling Orientation and Customer Orientation

COS   Customer Orientation Scale

ADAPTS   Adaptability Scale

TDA   Trait Descriptive Adjectives

PCA   Principle Component Analysis

SREIT   Self-report Emotional Intelligence Scale

KMO   Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

SPSS   Statistical Package for the Social Science

SAQ   Self-Assessment Questionnaire

SAT   Scholastic Aptitude Test

VIF   Variance Inflation Factor

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Outline of the thesis

Inspired by the researcher's professional experience, this thesis investigates the impact of emotional intelligence on the service performance of casino frontline employees. Employee behaviour and performance during service encounters have been identified as factors in customer retention, an important determinant of company profitability. Specifically, the study focuses on customer contact employees in the casino high-end market. This market is a major source of casino revenues. Because of this, high-end clients are often referred to in the industry as 'casino key accounts', and those employees who service them 'casino key account representatives'.

The study also examines the relevant impact of the Five Factor Model (hereafter, FFM) of personality on the performance ratings of casino key account representatives. The FFM is used for two reasons. First, emotional intelligence is a new psychological construct. It is identified as a personality trait in the current study. For a new construct to be recognised in personality psychology, it needs to explain additional variance in the criterion variables beyond that already accounted for by existing constructs such as personality factors. Second, the various personality measures found in the literature have produced an array of somewhat contradictory research findings. Given the advantages of the FFM of personality over other approaches, as discussed in Chapter three, the study uses this model to investigate the relevant impact of the two personality traits on the performance evaluation.

Since emotional intelligence has been identified as a personality trait, evidence from the literature of the relative weak relationship between basic personality traits and performance outcomes suggests that surface traits should be introduced to predict the dependent variable. Different from basic traits, surface traits are closer to the

performance evaluation and serve as intervening variables; thus, they form a hierarchical relationship with the basic traits. The incorporation of surface traits not only helps to explain the influence of the basic traits on the dependent variable, but also enables the analysis to account for a greater proportion of the variance in the dependent variable. On this basis, customer orientation and adaptability are identified as two surface traits. Their impact, in conjunction with the influence of emotional intelligence and the FFM of personality, on the service performance of casino key account representatives is investigated in this thesis.

These two surface traits were chosen for the following reasons. First, previous studies have demonstrated that customer orientation and adaptability are surface traits. Second, given that frontline employee performance in interactions with customers is associated with customer retention, factors that affect customer retention may have implications for performance evaluation. Customer orientation and adaptability have been identified as two relationship-orientated characteristics in the sales and marketing literature. Empirical studies have also shown their influence on customer retention.

On the basis of the above discussion, the thesis aims to investigate a hierarchical relationship between basic personality traits (emotional intelligence and the FFM of personality), surface traits (customer orientation and adaptability), and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Five research questions are identified in this thesis. To accomplish this aim, the thesis is divided into six chapters.

Chapter one introduces the core research problem as previously outlined. It was raised both by the researcher's professional experience and a solid understanding of the relevant theoretical literature. The first section of the chapter recounts the researcher's personal experience in the casino industry. That story provides the motivation behind

the thesis and, in conjunction with the extant literature, enables a series of specific research questions to be posed. On the basis of the research questions, the theoretical framework of the thesis is presented and the methods of data collection for the hypotheses testing are briefly described. At the end of the chapter, the importance of this study, its major research constructs (emotional intelligence, the FFM of personality, customer orientation, adaptability), as well as the study context (the casino high-end market) are justified. Definitions for the key terms used in the thesis are also provided in this chapter.

Chapter two describes the rationale for choosing the study's focus: casino key account representatives. It is found in relationship marketing theory. The central aim of this marketing paradigm is customer retention and its relationship to company profitability. In the marketing literature, service quality has been regarded as a key influence on customer retention. It has been shown that in most cases service employees determine the level of service quality delivered. As a result, the employee can play a role in customer retention. Drawing on this insight, this chapter reveals the importance of casino frontline employees for the high-end market in terms of casino customer retention and profitability. The definition of 'casino key account representatives' is also given in this chapter.

Chapter three posits the research questions and reviews the relevant literature for each of the key research constructs of this thesis: including *inter alia* emotional intelligence, the FFM of personality, customer orientation, and adaptability. These constructs' roles in the hierarchical model are also presented in the last section. The literature review of emotional intelligence examines the term's historical background, the varying ways it has been conceptualised, and the manners in which it and its predictive validity have

been measured. The historical review illustrates the construct's solid scientific foundations. A detailed discussion of various conceptualisations of emotional intelligence is then presented to demonstrate the construct's basic essence, meaning, and composition (and where debate among researchers continues). The review of emotional intelligence measures that follows has two purposes. First, it shows that this new psychological construct *is* measurable. Second, it introduces the concept of trait EI, a concept which is central to this study. Evidence of the construct's predictive validity further reveals its applicability and helps in the formulation of the hypothesis for Research Question one.

Next, a literature review of the FFM of personality is undertaken. It focuses on the evolution and importance of the model. The traits which each dimension of the personality factors represents are also described. A discussion of the relationship between each of the five personality factors and job performance, particularly for jobs involving interpersonal interactions, provides the basis of the hypothesis relating to Research Question two, which examines the impact of the FFM of personality on the service performance of casino key account representatives. Research Question three, which concerns itself with the incremental validity of emotional intelligence, is derived from the literature on the relationship between trait EI and the FFM of personality.

The chapter's discussion of customer orientation and adaptability centres on understanding these two concepts as relationship selling behaviours or relation-oriented characteristics. In particular, the importance of relationship selling is highlighted. Conceptualising the terms in this way is done in order to provide a firmer theoretical basis for Research Question 4, a question that seeks to uncover the influence of

customer orientation and adaptability on the service performance of casino key account representatives. A hypothesis designed to answer this question is formulated.

Research Question five emerges from a review of the literature on the putative hierarchical relationship between basic personality traits and surface traits. Here, trait EI and the FFM of personality are identified as basic traits, whereas customer orientation and adaptability are regarded as surface traits. Together, basic traits and surface traits form a mediational model in the current study. This research question is answered by proposing several interrelated hypotheses. Each tests the alleged mediation. As these hypotheses entail the establishment of hierarchical relationships between basic personality traits and surface traits, the relevant literature review with regard to these relationships is presented in this section.

Chapter four brings together the findings of the previous chapters. It begins with a summary of the research hypotheses and then discusses research methodology, sampling procedures, instrumentation, and the techniques of data analysis utilised in the thesis. The issue of measurability is also considered. All research variables are measured by self-report scales. Emotional intelligence, personality, customer orientation and adaptability are assessed by valid, well-recognised and existing measures. Performance evaluation is measured on the basis of a scale designed by the sample casino. The reasons for selecting that specific casino as the focus of the research are given. The chapter concludes with a plan of analysis.

Chapter five provides that analysis and the results. It presents preliminary tests for factor-analysing emotional intelligence, customer orientation, adaptability, and service performance scale. Principle Component Analysis is the main factor analysis technique adopted. Emotional intelligence is then factor analysed to four sub-dimensions, and

customer orientation and adaptability to two sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions are then incorporated into a multiple regression equation so that the individual variance of each dimension in the criterion variables can be analysed. As multiple regression is the main statistical technique used in the study, assumptions about the normality of the data are first examined to check whether they are suitable for such analysis. Finally, analyses of the hypothesis testing are detailed and the results presented. In short, the results show that all variables (emotional intelligence, the FFM of personality, customer orientation and adaptability) explain statistically significant variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives; both customer orientation and adaptability partially mediate between the basic personality traits and the performance ratings, and the model with the mediation variables accounts for a greater proportion of variance in the dependent variable than the one without them.

The last chapter provides a discussion on the chief research findings and places them in the context of the broader literature. Implications and the limitations of this study are also considered. The chapter concludes with some thoughts on how this project could be extended.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Overview

This thesis empirically investigates the evidence of a hierarchical relationship between basic personality traits, surface traits, and service performance. Here, basic personality traits include emotional intelligence (referred to as trait EI), and the Five Factor Model of personalty factors. The surface traits include customer orientation and adaptability (relationship-oriented characteristics). The study focuses on casino frontline employee perspectives of the relationship between individual traits and performance evaluation. The scope of the study is the high-end market of the casino industry, which is described in this thesis as the "casino key accounts". The study attempts to investigate the appropriateness of incorporating emotional intelligence in the evaluation of job performance with particular reference to customer services for casino key account representatives.

This chapter starts with a section introducing the researcher's professional background which helps to explain some of the experiences and insights underpinning the analysis. This is followed by sections covering the theoretical background, the research problem, the research questions, the theoretical framework of the study, methodology, and the justification of the research constructs.

1.2 Inspiration for the study

This section provides an explanation of the study by introducing the researcher's professional experience. It begins with an explanation of how the researcher was offered a job as a casino marketing manager, followed by an overview of the

researcher's marketing experiences. The study's rationale and research scope are subsequently discussed.

Casino job offer

In the middle of 2000, the researcher was collecting data at one of the biggest corporations in South-East Asia for her MBA dissertation. The research investigated the impact of emotional intelligence on employee job performance. Emotional intelligence was then a new topic which offered many possibilities for the conduct of basic primary research. The employer operated a casino and hotel business with more than ten thousand employees as part of its scope of activities. Upon completion of the study, the researcher was offered a position as an assistant sales manager within the Department of Tours and Travel in the same company. This role involved dealing with both domestic and international travel agents by selling and promoting non-gambling products.

Four weeks into the three-month training, the researcher introduced nine gamblers to the casino marketing department of the company through a travel agent. At the time she had little knowledge of casino operations, with no knowledge of casino games such as Baccarat, Blackjack, and Roulette. In fact, she had never set foot in a casino apart from collecting research data from casino employees in their offices.

Two months later, Chairman of the casino offered her a new position within the casino marketing department as a casino marketing manager in the Player Development section. After one month of training she was sent to Shanghai, China to attract high rollers. The high rollers were referred to as VIP players and normally

played in the VIP gaming rooms as Casino Rebate Program (CRP) players or Junket Players with a minimum cash check-in set by the casino.

Emotional intelligence and marketing competencies

This was a demanding mission for a fresh graduate with little relevant industry experience, but the researcher proceeded to tackle this new assignment. Since casino gambling is illegal in China except in Macau, traditional marketing promotion was not feasible. In practice, the office had to operate under the cover of tourism. High rollers had to be sought through personal networking, a process of relationship marketing on a person-to-person basis. Within three months, the researcher identified a Junket Operator and sent a group of around 40 players to the casino. Within a year she developed three Junket Operators and nearly 100 CRP players were making regular trips to the casino. These clients had never heard of the word "Junket" or CRP and had no idea what they implied. They were accustomed to playing at casinos in Macau without being treated as VIP players although their average betting met the classification of high rollers. Most of these clients had never even heard of the casino which was being proposed to them.

The casino business was competitive at the time and casino marketers in Shanghai sent from other territories were ubiquitous. All had the same mission – identifying potential players and encouraging the existing clients to travel again. Other casino representatives seemed to have more competitive offerings. The basic tangible offerings from different casinos were homogeneous, such as helicopter or limousine transportation, up-scale food and beverages, and free accommodation in five-star Fengshui-inspired hotel. Casinos in Macau, however, did not even need marketing promotion due to proximity of their casinos to high rollers' residences. Walker Hill in

South Korea and casinos in the Philippines had the advantage of shorter flight times, plus more flexible rebate commissions offered to players. Las Vegas has always been the dream destination for Chinese high rollers. While the casino the researcher was working for had disadvantages such as visa hassles, a longer flight time, a location further from the international airport (about 2 hours drive), and limited in-house entertainment compared to other casinos (for instance, the absence of gentlemen's clubs which are one of the high rollers' favourite non-gambling entertainment activities during their visits). Nevertheless, the researcher's marketing achievements were highly competitive.

It was not the casino's offerings that attracted the Chinese high rollers, but the "care" from casino frontline employees. To these players, good care is considered as good service – forming the comfort zone that appeals to them. The services expected comprised arrangements of visa application assistance, air ticketing, airport reception, transportation, hotel reception, and entertainment before and after casino patronage. Furthermore, the in-house non-gaming entertainment within casino precincts is normally taken care of by casino hosts. In most cases, this was refused and the researchers personal attendance was requested or demanded instead. In addition to these expectations, the casino representatives had to assist with money transfer for the gamblers. By law, every international traveller from the People's Republic of China is only allowed to carry a maximum of USD 2,000 cash through customs while gamblers would in practice often budget more than USD 2 million for their casino visits. They often requested the casino representatives to recommend trustworthy financial institutions and assist them with the process of funds transfer. Other casino representatives in positions such as the researcher provided similar services. However, the differentiating provision from others was emotional care. To be more specific, the

performance of emotional competence accounted for the researcher's marketing effectiveness, drawing upon her previous research on emotional intelligence.

Gamblers are emotional, and these emotions permeate every stage of their journey. Most of the researcher's clients were busy business people. Typically they had made no advance plans to visit a casino. They often decided at the last minute, sometimes shortly before the visa office was due to close, and air tickets were on waiting list or fully booked. They did not normally listen to or accept the conditions, but assumed everything would be ready for them whenever they wanted. When this was not the case, they could be accusing and abusive. It was essential to show understanding and empathy, to calm them down and let them accept the alternatives.

Travelling with these high rollers was a major challenge. They were often unreasonably abusive if the plane was delayed; if there was long queue at immigration after disembarkation; if they were accidentally assigned a limousine without the number 8 on the number plate (the number designated for luck), or a driver with a pointy face (a characteristic believed to bring them back luck). However, it was not within the power of the researcher to make the plane take off on time; tell immigration officers to offer them privileges; or even order another limousine with a round-face driver before their patience runs out. Instead, the researcher managed to mitigate their emotions and convince them to calmly accept the unexpected, which the researcher now realises have a lot to do with emotional intelligence.

Upon their arrival at the casino hotel reception, the researcher's job of escorting these players to the destination was technically complete. From this point casino hosts were required to look after them. However, they often expressed discomfort with the prospect of encountering new faces and demanded the researcher's presence during

their playing time. This was not appreciated by the researcher's superiors and was considered as a violation of company rules. This led to emotional confrontation, indicative of a discrepancy between clients' and employer' expectations.

The most challenging part of the job as a gambler-contact employee was to regulate players' winning or losing-related emotions. Those could be the source of conflict, anger, never-return intentions, and spreading negative word-of-mouth. For example, some winning gamblers would demand entertainment such as a "gentleman's club" or prostitutes. These are commonly available in places like Macau and Las Vegas, but not available in the casino the researcher was working for. Under such circumstances, these players could be harsh and critical towards casino hosts. This response was often exacerbated when these gamblers had recently experienced a big loss. At such times they could be wildly emotional and abusive. Some complained that the croupier had a killing face, or a pretty female casino host had approached them to bring bad luck. They might also demand something that the casino could not, or was unable to deliver. Then the casino host or shift manager dealing with them might be severely accused or abused, even if they had done nothing wrong. However, the hosts still had to behave in a friendly manner and present a smiling face towards the abusive customers and try their best to serve them. In other words, they were performing emotional labour. The researcher was often called to deal with clients' expectations or emotional outbursts.

When these players completed their first trip to the casino, irrespective of their gambling results, they often expressed the wish to visit again and became loyal clients. The researcher was informed that the decision by these gamblers to visit a casino was not based on the casino location, gaming or non-gaming related facilities,

or a big win on the previous trip, but on the casino representative they had dealt with. In this case, the researcher, as one of the casino marketing representatives who has the foremost interactions with the clients, was often the reason that these gamblers frequently patronising the casino, despite setbacks encountered during previous trips. The researcher was informed that most clients, after they heard the researcher was leaving stopped visiting the casino. Some of them even got in touch and flew all the way from China to visit the researcher and become high rollers at Australia's Crown casino in Melbourne, Star City in Sydney and Burswood in Perth – all organised by the researcher.

The research inspiration

The significance of the researcher's work experience has the following implications. First, although casino services include both tangible elements such as limousine services and free accommodation, and the intangible elements of the services performed by casino frontline employees, it is the intangible component that appears to most attract gambler patronage. Second, the service encounters between casino frontline employees and clients are characterised by emotional events, so the emotional performance of the employee is critical in shaping gambler perceptions of casino service quality. In other words, employees' emotional abilities affect their performance over the encounters that lead to customer service quality judgements. Finally, this suggests that the employees are a key factor in gambler retention. In summary, the researchers experience indicates that the casino frontline employee is an important determinant of high roller retention. Specifically, it is the employee emotional competence that affects service performance, which in turn influences customer retention.

As indicated in the marketing literature, customer retention leads to company profitability; therefore factors that affect customer retention have implications for firm profitability. On the basis of the above, emotional intelligence is identified as a prime factor in gambler retention through its effect on employee service performance. Therefore, from the casino's profitability point of view, it may be worth exploring the role of emotional intelligence in the service performance of casino frontline employees. The current study sheds light in this regard by incorporating emotional intelligence into the casino high roller context to analyse its relationship with employee performance evaluation. Establishing this link may have significant implications for improving employee job performance and increasing casino revenue.

Inspired by the researcher's professional experience, the thesis addresses a number of research questions concerning emotional intelligence. These questions, derived from the relevant theoretical background, are identified in the following section.

1.2 Theoretical background and research problem

The era of "build it and they will come" in the casino industry has now passed due to increasing competition. Traditional marketing of casinos by simply mimicking competitors or following some marketing managers' experience without taking into account customer needs and market trends has been replaced by a more structured and systematic approach (Klebanow, 2002a). This new approach involves a series of marketing strategies emphasising customer needs and wants, with the intention of satisfying them and making them return. In other words, casino marketing has evolved into a new paradigm – relationship marketing, in which customer loyalty or customer retention becomes the focus of marketing strategy (Baird, 2002; Johnson, 2002). This marketing approach is particularly preferred for the casino high-end

market (Kale, 2005). This market includes domestic and international high-end gamblers or high rollers. A small number of these gamblers often contribute major revenues to casinos (Kale, 2003; 2005; Lucas, Kilby & Santos, 2002), and are referred to as casino key accounts.

Customer retention leads to company profitability. According to Reichheld (1996), a 5 percent increase in customer retention can lead to a 25 to 85 percent increase in a firm's general revenue. The rate of increase depends on the industry. Basing their study on the number of gamblers who lose in table games each year, Watson and Kale (2003) determined that gambler retention positively impacts on casino profitability. The increase rates vary within different customer segments. The authors particularly indicate that the retention of casino key accounts offers an important contribution to casino revenues.

Service quality has been evidenced as a key antecedent of customer retention in the services marketing literature (e.g., Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1996). In the casino industry, it is also regarded as an important factor in casino customer satisfaction and retention (Johnson, 2002), and in seeking a competitive advantage (e.g., Baird, 2002). Researchers such as Farrell, Souchon and Durden (2001) have asserted that service quality is primarily formed by frontline employees' service behaviour during service encounters. Typically these encounters involve personal interactions between the employee and the customer (Bitner, 1990; Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). On the other hand, frontline employee service encounter behaviour is concerned with the employee's performance evaluation, particularly in relation to service (Singh, 2000). An employee's service performance is affected by his or her behaviour when interacting with customers. Service quality assessments are related to

employee service performances. From this perspective, employee service performance has implications for customer retention and company profitability.

Research about the management of frontline employees in the services and marketing literature has mostly focused on the consequences of employee service behaviour, including customer perceptions of service quality (e.g., Farrell, Souchon, & Durden, 2001), customer satisfaction (e.g., Winsted, 2000), and customer retention (e.g., Brown & Chin, 2004). Relatively few studies have examined the factors predicting the service performance of frontline employees. Previous research has focused on examining role theory and burnout (e.g., Singh & Goolsby, 1994), which has a direct effect on employee job satisfaction and service performance (e.g., Bettencourt & Brown, 1997). According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), burnout is a psychological condition or syndrome characterised by three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, reduced personal accomplishment, and depersonalisation. Among the three dimensions, emotional exhaustion often occurs in the case of frontline employees involved in interpersonal interactions. It reflects sensory exhaustion due to excessive emotional demands (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Frontline employees are particularly susceptible to burnout because they are placed in a boundary spanning position dealing with customers' demands that cannot always be met by the management (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). In addition, as Hartline and Ferrell (1993) have pointed out, these employees are underpaid, under-trained, overworked and highly stressed. Burnout often leads to low job satisfaction and employee turnover (e.g., Jayaratne & Chess, 1984). However, the job satisfaction of customer-contact employees positively impacts on their service performance, which affects customer perceptions of service quality and in turn leads to customer

satisfaction and retention. This relationship link has been empirically tested and supported by Brown and Chin (2004). Furthermore, employee turnover increases the costs of both staff recruitment and training.

From the perspectives of company profitability and organizational effectiveness, factors influencing the emotional exhaustion of frontline employees, (a dimension of burnout), may have implications for their service performance. Conceptualised as emotional management skills, emotional intelligence may impact on the employees' performance. From the customer's perspective, Hartel, Barker and Barker (1999) have proposed that a frontline employee's emotional intelligence could affect the process of customer emotional formation and evaluation, which in turn leads to their behavioural intentions. According to Mano and Oliver (1993), service encounters are characterised as emotional variables containing emotional events. The emotions associated with service encounter events influence customer attitudes and behaviours (Hartel et al., 1999). Nevertheless, the employee's emotional intelligence, involving recognising and managing emotions of others, may help to regulate the formation of customer emotions, which in turn affect their judgement and behavioural intentions (Hartel et al., 1999). Customer reactions reflect how well the employees perform in the context of service encounters. From this perspective, the evaluation of employee performance may be affected by the level of his or her emotional intelligence.

Where it involves recognising and managing one's own emotions, emotional intelligence may be able to affect frontline employees' service performance. This is connected with the idea of emotional labour. Abraham (1998) defined emotional labour as managing emotions so that they are consistent with organizational or occupational display rules. The job of frontline employees is characterised as highly

demanding in terms of emotional labour. Emotional labour has its salient benefits for both the organization and for individuals (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). However, recent research in this area has been mainly concerned with the detrimental effects of emotional labour, such as high stress, burnout and lower job satisfaction (e.g., Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Grandey, 2002; Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Displays of emotion may be inconsistent with how the emotional labourer really feels. This can lead to emotional dissonance, with further detrimental consequences. Nevertheless, researchers (e.g., Daus, 2002) have found that emotional intelligence can moderate or ameliorate the negative consequences of emotional labour. It may be anticipated that the exercise of emotional intelligence may help to improve the job performance of frontline employees.

Based on the above discussion, the current study investigates the relationship between emotional intelligence and the service performance of casino frontline employees, specifically those service employees who interact directly with casino key accounts. Hereafter, they are referred to as "casino key account representatives". Emotional intelligence has been selected as the dominant independent variable in the current study on the basis of the researcher's professional experience and the research gap which has been previously identified. It is anticipated that any relationships which are identified will have significant implications for facilitating personnel selection and improvement, as well as increasing casino profitability. As previously discussed, employees' service performance can be regarded as an important indicator of customer perceptions of service quality, and these in turn have been evidenced as vital antecedents of customer retention and company profitability. Emotional intelligence may be a predicting factor in service performance.

The above discussion has identified the research problem and demonstrated a possible link between the primary research constructs. It also highlighted the potential significance of the study. On the basis of the identified research problem, research questions are addressed in the following section.

1.4 Research questions and conceptual framework

Emotional intelligence has been widely discussed within both business circles and academia, since the publication of Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence* in 1995. Popularisation of the term derives from the claim that it taps into the remaining variance in job performance that traditional forms of measuring intelligence leave unexplained (e.g., Goleman, 1998; Van Rooy & Visvervaran, 2004). Given that emotional intelligence has been identified as a potential factor in the service performance of casino key account representatives, the influence of emotional intelligence on the criterion variable, however, has been complex for the following reasons.

First, the predictive capacity of emotional intelligence appears to vary considerably depending on the context, criterion of interest, and specific theory used (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003; Van Rooy & Visvervaran, 2004). A number of researchers have viewed emotional intelligence as a valid predictor of performance in jobs which demand a high level of emotional intelligence (e.g., Cage, Daus & Saul, 2004; Daus, Rubin, Smith & Cage, 2004; Van Rooy & Visvervaran, 2004). These jobs, such as that of the customer service representative, typically demand a high level emotional labour (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005).

Although it is founded on Thorndike's (1920) social intelligence theory, emotional intelligence is widely regarded as a new psychological construct (e.g., Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1990). For a new construct to be welcomed into the psychology field, it must explain additional variance over the well-established constructs (e.g., Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Zeidner, Mathews & Roberts, 2004). The incremental validity of emotional intelligence, however, is complicated by the variety of theoretical models. These result in differing methods for measuring the construct. According to Petrides and Furnham (2000a, 2000b, 2001), emotional intelligence measured through performance-based tests is operationalised as a cognitive ability, classified as ability EI. In contrast, the measurement of emotional intelligence through self-report questionnaires leads to the construct operationalised as a personality trait, classified as trait EI. One might expect ability EI to demonstrate incremental validity over traditional intelligence, for example, General Mental Ability (GMA), while trait EI should explain additional variance in performance over personality measures (Petrides & Furnham, 2001).

Researchers have long studied personality traits as predictors of human behaviour and performance (e.g., Spivey, Munson & Locander, 1979). However, only a very small portion of variance in performance can be explained by the basic personality traits (e.g., Hurley, 1998). This weak link between personality traits and performance prompted the introduction of the concept surface trait. According to Brown, Moven, Donavan and Licata (2002), basic personalty traits may be too far from focal behaviours to be effective predictors of performance; while surface traits mediate between basic traits and performance, and enhance the prediction of performance evaluation. Brown et al. (2002) proposed a hierarchical model of customer orientation as a surface trait, and empirically tested the relationship between basic personality

trait, surface traits, and service performance. Their results showed that the incorporation of a surface trait as the mediator enhanced the performance evaluation.

Casino key service representatives are the frontline service employees for casino key accounts, and trait EI is classified as a personality trait. On this basis, the current study uses the concept of trait EI in pursuit of the following objectives:

1. To investigate the relationship between trait EI as a personality trait and the service performance of casino key account representatives;

2. To examine the incremental validity of trait EI over personality factors by using the sample of casino key account representatives; and

3. To identify the surface traits for the current study and investigate the indirect relationship between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

It is worth noting that the current study will use the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality factors in analysing the incremental validity of trait EI. Proposed by Costa and McCrae (1985), the FFM of personality is one of the most prominent personality models. It measures five higher-order, orthogonal dimensions of personality: Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience and Neuroticism.

Over several decades, personality characteristics have been shown to predict job performance. However, the wide variety of personality measures that have been utilised have confused the research findings. Salgado's (2003) meta-analysis compared the criterion validity of different personality measures, and suggested the use of FFM for future personality research and practitioner personnel selection

decisions. In addition, the FFM of personality has been recognised as necessary and sufficient as a description of the structure of personality internationally, as it emerges across languages and different theoretical perspectives, as well as in rating sources (Mount, Barrick & Stewart, 1998). This study extends its application by analysing the relationship with the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Another aim of this study is to incorporate two very popular selling constructs – customer orientation and adaptability. They are two of the most commonly recognised relationship-oriented characteristics in the analysis of key account representative performance (see Keilor, Parker & Pettijohn, 1999; 2000). The incorporation of these two relationship-oriented behaviours as a factor of performance in the current study should help to substantiate Kale's (2005) claim that the appropriate marketing approach for casino key accounts is relationship marketing. This is based on Wortuba's (1996) proposal that when a firm pursues a relationship marketing strategy, its salespeople should adopt relationship selling behaviours. The link has been empirically tested and positive results were obtained for some relationship selling behaviours (Georges, Guenzi, & Pardo, 2004). Relationship-selling behaviours in the relevant literature have also been referred to as relationship-oriented characteristics (e.g., Keilor, Parker, & Pettijohn, 1999; 2000).

In the case of casinos, there is no particular physical product to be sold. However, casinos do offer a special product, namely gaming-related entertainment experiences consisting of services delivered by casino frontline employees (Macomber, 1999). These employees are service salespeople including the casino key account representatives. The latter are the sales force providing casino high-end market or key

accounts with appropriate services intending to satisfy customers and make them return (Kale, 2005).

Since these representatives are accountable for building relationships with casino clients and retaining them, their behaviours during the interactions with the clients should be regarded as relationship-oriented characteristics. Guenzi, Pardo and Georges (2004) found that key account representatives' relationship selling behaviours impact upon customer trust, which in turn affects the salesperson's performance (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990). Keilor, Parker and Pettijohn (2000) proposed direct association between relationship-oriented characteristics and salesperson performance, showing that one of them had a significant relationship with performance. A similar study was conducted by Boles, Brashear, Bellenger and Barksdale (2000), but these authors incorporated personal factors as antecedents of relationship selling behaviours. Based on these studies, customer orientation and adaptability as relationship-oriented characteristics may affect the service performance evaluation of casino key account representatives. In addition, this thesis aims to identify the relevant impact of customer orientation and adaptability on performance ratings due to features special to the casino key account market. This finding would help casinos in selecting appropriate marketing strategies as well as facilitating the selection of appropriate training programs for casino frontline employees, particularly those having direct contact with casino key accounts.

In addition, customer orientation and adaptability are identified as the surface traits in the current study used to investigate their mediating effects between basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality) and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Both customer orientation and adaptability have also been

identified as service encounter behaviours (e.g., Farrell, Souchon & Durden, 2001), which, according to Brown et al.'s definition (2002), can be characterised as surface traits. This link is elaborated in Chapter three.

Based on the above discussion, the following research questions are proposed:

1. Is trait EI related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

2. Is the FFM of personality related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

3. Does trait emotional intelligence explain additional variance of the service performance of casino key account representatives over the effects of the FFM of personality?

4. Is customer orientation and adaptability related to the service performance of casino key account representatives? Which is the better predictor of the service performance of casino key account representatives?

5. Do customer orientation and adaptability respectively mediate the relationships between basic personality traits composed of trait EI and the FFM, and the service performance of casino key account representatives? Does the model with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables account for a great proportion of variance in performance rating than a direct model without mediation?

Based on the above research questions, the proposed relationships between them are shown in Figure 1 below. This schematic diagram presents the theoretical framework for the thesis. The hierarchical relationship of surface traits mediating between basic personality traits and the service performance evaluation is shown.

```
┌──────────────────────┐
│                      │──────────────────────────────────┐
│      Trait EI        │                                  │
│                      │       ┌──────────────────────┐   │
└──────────────────────┘       │  Relationship-oriented│   │
                               │    characteristics   │   ▼
                               │                      │  ┌──────────────┐
                               │ Customer orientation │─▶│ Performance  │
┌──────────────────────┐       │ Adaptability         │  │   ratings    │
│      FFM             │       └──────────────────────┘  └──────────────┘
│                      │                ▲                       ▲
│  Conscientiousness   │                │                       │
│  Extraversion        │────────────────┘                       │
│  Agreeableness       │────────────────────────────────────────┘
│  Openness            │
│  Neuroticism         │
└──────────────────────┘
```
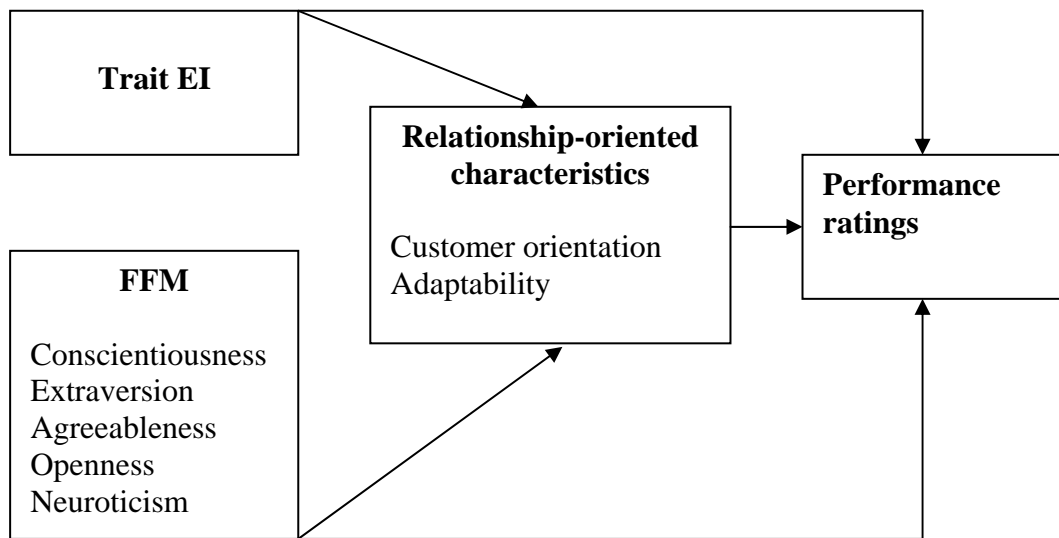
Figure 1. Model of relationship-oriented characteristics mediating between basic personality traits and performance evaluation.

For the purposes of this study, customer orientation and adaptability are referred to as surface traits in this thesis. As indicated in the previous discussion, they are also characterised as relationship-oriented characteristics. The basic personality traits include trait emotional intelligence (trait EI) and the FFM of personality. The study proceeds by analysing the relationships between basic personality traits, surface traits, and service performance evaluation, using a sample of casino frontline employees in the high-end market. The scope of the study is on the casino high-roller context, referred to as casino key accounts. The study addresses the appropriateness of incorporating trait EI, the FFM of personality, customer orientation and adaptability – the two relationship-oriented service behaviours - into the analysis of the customer service performance of casino key account representatives.

The proposed conceptual framework is based on Brown et al.'s (2002) hierarchical model in which customer orientation serves as a surface trait mediating between personality factors as the basic personality trait, and the performance evaluation of service representatives. Brown et al. distinguished basic traits from surface traits, and stated that basic traits differ from surface traits, with the former characterised as enduring dispositions to behave in a natural way across diverse situations and the latter as enduring dispositions to behave within specific situations. Basic personality traits impact on performance evaluation through their effect on surface traits. This link was empirically tested and confirmed by Brown et al.

The current study expands on Brown et al's model which is presented in Figure 2. It analyses the hierarchical relationships by incorporating trait EI as an additional basic trait along with personality factors, and incorporating adaptability as an additional surface trait to customer orientation. In the current study, personality factors are limited to the use of FFM. In the case of this study, the proposed model has been developed with a different population in mind - namely, casino key account representatives. Based on the above discussion, the variables investigated in this study are:

Independent variables: emotional intelligence, the FFM of personality

Mediating variables: customer orientation, adaptability, and

Dependent variable: the service performance of casino key account representatives
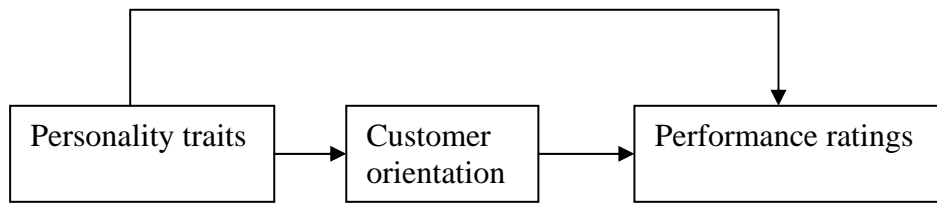
Figure 2. Theoretical framework – Brown et al's (2002) hierarchical model – customer orientation as the mediator between basic personality traits and performance evaluation

1.5 Methodology

This study has used a self-report questionnaire administered personally by the researcher and the data were collected at the VIP gaming area in one of the world's biggest casinos (hereafter referred to as the Casino) located in Australasia. The VIP gaming room only caters for premium players, including individual high-end rollers and Junket players with a set minimum monetary check-in. These customers are referred to as VIP guests or high rollers by the Casino. The constructs identified in the research question were measured using well-recognized instruments in the relevant areas, except in the case of the dependent variable – the service performance evaluation – which was measured by adopting the items used by the surveyed casino to measure the service-related job performance of casino frontline employees working in the VIP gaming area.

The research questions are answered using hypothesis testing. Hypotheses are formed in Chapter three on the basis of relevant literature review relating to the research questions. The data are analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

(SPSS). Multiple Regression is used as the primary data-analysis technique to analyse the hypothesised relationships derived from the research questions. The mediation relationship is investigated by using the four-step criteria for mediation testing proposed Baron and Kenny's (1986). These methodological issues are further elaborated in Chapter 4.

1.6 Justification of the research

The following section addresses the importance of investigating the relationships among the constructs identified in the research questions, namely, emotional intelligence, the FFM of personality factor, customer orientation, and adaptability. Since this study focuses on a very particular industry, the reason for choosing that study context, the high-end market of the casino industry, is also revealed.

1.6.1 Emotional intelligence

Although emotional intelligence has been extensively discussed in the relevant literature since its inception in the early 1990s, its empirical application in an organizational context has been scarce. The investigation of emotional intelligence as a factor in service performance of frontline employees is still at the exploratory stage. However, emotional intelligence has appeared in personnel selections and training programs at some casinos, notably, Harrah's, one of the world's biggest casinos. Casino managers have realized the importance of emotional skills in dealing with casino players. A few anecdotes and episodic advices that have implications for emotional competencies used in dealing with casino clients appear on the website of Bright Ideas of Urbino (e.g., Kale, 2001; 2005, Karoul, 2006). Based on this fact, an empirical study specifying the relationship between emotional intelligence and the

service performance evaluation of casino frontline employees has the following benefits: it would broaden the application of emotional intelligence; reinforce the importance of the concept in its existing practice in the casino industry facilitating personnel selection and training programs; and provide potential for expanding its applications in casinos and associated industries.

1.6.2 The FFM of personality

Given that personality measures have been evidenced in numerous studies as a factor in job performance, the application of the FFM of personality in the service performance evaluation of frontline employees has been surprisingly limited. Even in Brown et al.'s (2002) study mentioned previously a non-FFM model was used. This study extends the use of FFM to the casino context. The use of FFM in this study adds to its credibility by broadening its application to the casino key account context through the analysis of the relevant relationships identified in the research questions.

1.6.3 Customer orientation and adaptability

The use of customer orientation and adaptability as two approaches to selling has been widely discussed in the marketing literature. They appear regularly in the service context as service implementation behaviours. However, little research-based evidence has been provided for their relationship with service performance. In addition, studying adaptability as a surface trait has not been done in previous research. Therefore, this study adds credibility to the view that the two constructs may be valid predictors of service performance as two relationship-oriented characteristics, and be mediators as surface traits mediating between the basic personality traits and performance evaluation.

1.6.4 The casino industry

Gambling has an ancient and almost universal history. According to Schwartz (2006), dice was recovered from Egyptian tombs; the Chinese, Greeks and Romans were known to play games of skill and chance for amusement back in 2300 B.C.; British colonization of America in the early 17th century was partly financed through lottery proceeds; Harvard and Yale ran lotteries to construct some of the buildings. Gambling can be regarded as a subset of all voluntary human risk taking activities, such as buying shares, purchasing a house or investing funds in any scheme with a degree of risk. Gambling operations are ubiquitous: from charity and church fund-raising activities through to professional horse racing punters, "high roller" casino players and internet gaming (Productivity Commission submission, 2004). Casinos are regarded as a major part of the gambling operations to attract consumers' discretionary, disposable income (Macomber 1999)

Increasing gaming revenue has encouraged keen interest in casino industry. Gambling, once thought to be a shady and corrupt business, according to Awe, Keating and Schwartz (2002, p169), has become more widely accepted as a legitimate industry, and is now often called "gaming". Casinos as an industry, apart from gaming entertainment, do contribute to society. Taking the USA as a sample, according to the gaming market research handbook 2003 (Walker, 2003), the data shows that more than $3 billion in 1999 in gaming tax revenues paid by the industry to the states and communities where casinos operated provided funding for needed services and programs. Taxes paid by commercial casinos increased to $3.6 billion in 2001, (an increase of $ 147 million since 2000 on casino gaming) have made more dollars available for important public purposes, such as education programs, health care

services, public transportation and safety efforts and programs for the elderly and disabled (Walker, 2003). The presence of casinos has also contributed to the economic revitalization of riverfronts and downtown areas (Briggs, 2001). Among all gaming activities, casinos create jobs and often spur hotel construction and retail development, for example, approximately 365,000 people were directly and indirectly employed by commercial casinos in 2001. The American Gaming Association estimates that every $1 million in casino revenue creates 13 jobs at an average wage of $ 26,000 (Walker, 2003). It also has an impact on tourism revenue and other economic activity (Walker & Jackson, 2007).

In addition, the current study has specific implications for casinos in Australasia with the rapid erection of new casinos in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly in Macau and the Philippines. Researchers such as Kale (2007) and Lam (2007) have noted that Macau has become the largest gaming destination in the world, known as Asia's Las Vegas since early this century. The ubiquity of casinos in this region is reinforced with the two licences awarded to Las Vegas Sands and Genting Malaysia in Singapore. The blossoming of this industry implies the need for relevant academic research to accommodate a better understanding of casino expansion. The scarcity of empirical studies of the casino industry has stimulated the current study.

1.6.5 The context of casino key accounts

The current study focuses on the casino high-end market and high roller settings. Due to the significance of this market for casino profitability, applying the aforementioned constructs may have implications for both casino operators and practitioners.

Casino operators often establish separate gaming areas to cater for gamblers in different segments, such as a general gaming floor for casual players, and VIP rooms for domestic and international high rollers. Though small in number, according to Kale (2005), the latter group makes up the major revenues and profits for the casino property. This segment has received increasing attention from casinos. For example, in the article 'High Rollers Fly High', it is stated "the Mirage will fly in a whale on a chartered jet… Each hotel has deluxe suites reserved for high rollers" (In Style, Oct 1, 1998, p 174); while in 'Catering to the Wealthy', Ulfelder (2003) noted that "when a high roller steps into a Harrah's casino, the host – whose job is specifically to look after such top players – is likely to ask about his wife by name, tell him his suite has been stocked with his favourite brand of cigars and slip him tickets to that week's PGA gold tournament" (published on 13th November, 2003). Similarly, Kale (2005) has observed that "casinos have always bent over backwards in trying to accommodate the needs, preferences, whims, and idiosyncrasies of their high rollers. From lavish gifts to the redesigning of hotel rooms and suites, casinos will do almost anything to cater to the fancies and superstitions of their high-end customers" (24th February, 2005).

High rollers account for a disproportionately large share of the revenues and profits of casinos. According to Lucas, Kilby and Santos (2002), 5 per cent of high rollers, can produce 40 percent of the gross gaming win. Kale (2003) reported that 90 per cent of the table games revenues could be generated from a mere 3 per cent of premium players. In fact, Bill Eadington, a respected gaming scholar, claimed that just ten high rollers may account for as much as one-third of Baccarat revenues for Las Vegas's major casinos (cited by Hannum & Kale, 2004).

A 2001 article in the *Wall Street Journal* reported that high rollers are essential if a casino is to generate sufficient cash flows to provide a return on the large capital outlays used to build a mega-resort (Binkley, 2001; cited by Hannum & Kale, 2004). Hannum and Kale (2004) have also referred to the views of several researchers and authors (e.g., MacDonald, 2001a; Lucas, Kilby & Santos, 2002; Watson & Kale, 2003) who perceive high rollers as the saviours of casino establishments. Based on the definition of key accounts within the marketing literature, this group of players will be classified as casino key accounts. They are sometimes described as premium players (Hannum & Kale, 2004), high-end clients (Kale, 2005), and Whales (Ulfelder, 2003). The most popular names for these players within the industry are VIP players or high rollers. For the purpose of the current study, the name of casino key accounts will be used.

Although the study of problem gambling has been dominant in gaming-related research, statistics have shown that only two percent approximately of gamblers are at risk of developing gambling problems (Productivity Commission Submission, 1999). For many people, gambling is an occasional activity and a form of recreation or entertainment. When they have finished gambling, they promptly move to other non-gambling activities (Zies, 2001). As a large body of research has been undertaken on problem gambling, the present research will be an important addition to the neglected area of casino employees.

1.7 Definitions

Due to various definitions of the terms listed below in the existing literature, the following section provides the definitions that are applied throughout this thesis.

Emotional intelligence - As it is used in the current study, emotional intelligence is based on Salovey and Mayer's (1990) ability model, and defined as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p.187). However, a self-report emotional intelligence test has been employed in this study, so it is operationalised as a personality trait, referred as trait EI and conceputalised by Petrides and Furnham (2000). So, for the purposes of the present study, emotional intelligence refers to trait EI, and the two terms will be used interchangeably.

Adaptability – Adaptability is based on Hartline and Ferrell's definition (1996). Adaptability in this study refers to the ability of casino key account representatives to adjust their behaviour to the interpersonal demands of service encounters.

Casino key account – Casino key account refers to casino premium players or high rollers, including domestic and international high-end gamblers. No official definition of a high roller has been found in relevant literature. Wikipedia defines a high roller in the casino industry as "a gambler who wagers large amounts of money. These players often have tables with very high table limits that can shut out almost all other players, allowing the whale exclusive use of a table." (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki). There are other names used to refer to high rollers, including high-end client, VIP player and whales. High roller is the most popular name for casino players in this market segmentation. However, as key account is a more official term for this marketing segment within the sales and marketing literature, the current study adopts this term for the high roller market. The service employees for casino key accounts are referred to as casino key account representatives.

In assessing the validity of the present research, the following two assumptions are made:

1. That participants responded truthfully when answering questions about the examined variables, and that
2. Participants understood questions and concepts about the examined variables.

1.8 Summary

This chapter explores the foundations of this research project. It has introduced the research problem and questions. The model underpinning the thesis has been outlined and a brief description of the methodology employed provided. Finally, the relevance of the research has been discussed and formal definitions of the key terms given. From these foundations, a more detailed exposition of the research project can now be developed in the following chapters. This process begins in Chapter 2 where the rationale for choosing casino key account representatives as the thesis' focus is provided.

Chapter 2: Casino key account representatives

2.1 Overview

The current study aims to investigate emotional intelligence as a key determinant of the service performance of casino frontline employees, specifically, the service representatives in the casino high roller market, referred to as casino key account representatives in this study. This chapter provides the rationale and importance of studying key account representatives in a casino setting based on the theory of relationship marketing. According to the theory, customer retention is the central aim of this marketing paradigm, and has been evidenced to lead to company profitability. Hence, factors leading to customer retention play an important role in a firm's profitability. The relevant marketing literature indicates that frontline service employees play a key role in customer retention. On this basis, this chapter reveals the role of casino key account representatives in casino customer retention based on the relevant marketing theory. Casino customers refer specifically to the high roller market. This chapter begins by introducing the significance of a relationship marketing approach in the casino industry based on the connection between customer retention and company profitability. The following sections reveal factors leading to casino customer retention on the basis of the service marketing literature, where a definition is provided of the role of casino key account representatives in the casino industry from the perspective of profitability. It is worth noting that literature concerning casinos has been mainly drawn from popular press due to the scarcity of academic work in this area. This chapter is organised in the following way:

1. Relationship marketing in the casino industry

   - Definition and significance

   - Customer relationship management in the casino industry

2. Factors leading to customer retention

   - Antecedents of customer retention

   - Service encounters

   - Frontline employees

   - Key account representatives

3. Factors leading to casino customer retention

   - Antecedents of customer retention in casino industry

   - Casino frontline employees

   - Casino key account representatives

2.2 Relationship marketing in the casino industry

2.2.1 Definition and significance

Relationship marketing is defined as a process of identifying and establishing, maintaining and enhancing and, when necessary, terminating relationships with customers and other stakeholders, at a profit (Gronroos, 1994). Depending on the context, relationship marketing also bears a few other names, for example, one-to-one marketing, continuity marketing or customer relationship management (CRM), as indicated by Peppers and Rogers (2002). Despite the different names that are used, Kale (2003) indicated that the central idea of this concept is to retain customers by establishing individual relationships with clients and treating each customer

differently based on the information collected about them. In other words, customer retention is the focal point of relationship marketing. It is worth noting that, relationship marketing and CRM are used interchangeably in this study.

Considered as a paradigm shift, CRM has been dominant in marketing literature for more than a decade since early 1990s, especially with the rapid rise of the service industries. The underlying assumption is that customer retention leads to company profitability. According to Reichheld (1996), a 5 percent increase in customer retention can lead to a 25 to 85 percent increase in profitability. This can be construed by customer lifetime value (LTV). LTV is the revenue that one customer can spend with the company directly or indirectly through referral and recommendation over a nominal period of time (Roberts, 2001). Directly, the more frequently a customer comes back to the business, the more his or her loyalty builds. A loyal customer tends to buy additional services and is less sensitive to tactical discounting. Furthermore, the initial costs of attracting and establishing relationships with these customers have already been absorbed due to experience-curve effects; on the other hand, as customers get to know the supplier through repeated purchases, they become less dependent on the employees for information and advice, and the effects of such learning are likely to translate into lower costs (Reichheld, 1996). Indirectly, according to Roberts (2001), loyal customers tend to be self-perpetuating advocates and spread favourable word-of-mouth communication, which in turn enhances company profitability.

2.2.2 Customer Relationship Management in the Casino Industry

Casino marketing has also entered a new paradigm. The logic of customer retention leading to company profitability applies to the casino industry. In the early 1990s casinos operated in monopolistic or oligopolistic environments. The sector was characterised by a philosophy of "build it and they will come". Casino marketing was simply to mimic competitors or was based on some experienced marketing managers' views (Klebanlow, 2002a). Marketing promotion, such as special events, tournaments, coupon books, bus or air programs, direct mail effort and advertising campaigns, were primarily designed to acquire new customers.

However, this marketing approach has become less effective as competition in the casino industry has grown. Increasing gaming revenue has encouraged a keen interest, and ever more new operators have sprung up. Market protection, such as the Sociedade de Turismo Diversoes de Macau (STDM) and Genting, Malaysia in Asia, has disappeared with the regulatory changes that allow the arrival of international competitors into Macau and the issuance of two casino licences in Singapore. Traditionally, the marketing promotions of casinos, irrespective of location, have been fairly homogeneous, strongly focusing on attracting new customers. With this approach, competitors simply tried to match each other or exceed other casinos with even more aggressive promotions (Klebanow, 2002). Yet, with increased entry into the industry this marketing strategy proved less and less successful. The force of competition thus eventually encouraged casino marketers to adopt a new marketing approach that focused on meeting existing customers' needs and wants in order to ensure their return. In other words, customer retention had become a central aim of

the new marketing paradigm in the casino industry (Johnson, 2002; Kale, 2003), as retaining existing customers has been proved to be more profitable than attracting new customers (Watson & Kale, 2003).

Using casinos in Australia as an example, Watson and Kale (2003) identified four reasons why the casino industry should adopt a CRM strategy: first, the industry has high retention rates; second, it is more expensive to attract new customers than retain existing ones; third, the business has the ability to calculate profit at a customer level; and finally, the industry is able to segment markets.

Applying the concepts of CRM and LTV to casino table gaming, Watson and Kale demonstrated the relationship between retaining existing casino players and casino profitability. First, the authors employed a two-by-two taxonomy to divide casino customers into four segments based on customer profitability and their relationship with the casino. The first segment is named Prime Customers (PC) who are the casino's most desirable target customers. This segment includes high-volume casino players usually comprised of brand-loyal individuals with a high net worth. The second is known as Mobile Customers (MC). Although MCs have less than 1% of a casino's customer base, this segment comprises the highest volume customers (Productivity Commission, 2000). The third is known as Valued Customers of Tomorrow (VCT), who normally gamble more than once a month, and reside locally. The last grouping consists of Incidental Customers who are usually the curious and casual players and not really interested in gaming. According to Watson and Kale (2003), this segmentation is based on casino contexts in Australia, but the authors indicated that it is applicable to casinos at different locations.

Based on this segmentation, Watson and Kale have calculated the increased rate of a casino's gross profits based on the retention rate of each of the segments. Customer retention rates were calculated based on the number of customers lost from a given segment each year. The results in the Table 1 below show that a 2 percent increase in Prime Customer's retention rate will yield an average increase of 10 percent in table revenues. Furthermore, the authors indicated that the relationship between an increased retention rate and increased revenue was not linear. For instance, an average 5 percent in Prime Customer's retention leads to a 35 percent increase in overall table games' revenues. As for Mobile Customers, a 2 percent increase in retention increased the table revenue by 5 percent. Although retaining Valued Customers of Tomorrow was identified to show a very minor increase in revenue, according to the authors, it is promising to upgrade this segment as they have the potential to be promoted to Prime Customers in the future. There was no indication of this relationship for Incidental Customers, as these customers are casual gamblers, without a keen interest in gaming.

Table 1

The Impact of Increased Retention Rates across Segments on Casino Profitability

Games played	6-deck Blackjack				Baccarat			
Casino player segments and effects of increase in retention	PC	MC	VCT	IC	PC	MC	VCT	IC
1% - increased revenue per customer	$9,376.28	$24.817.02	$167.51	$0.48	$43,408.70	$114,893.62	$775.53	$2.20
2% - increased revenue per customer	$20,538.51	$53,018.18	$357.87	$0.98	$95,085.71	$245,454.55	$1,656.82	$4.55
5% - increased revenue per customer	$71,884.80	$166,628.57	$1,124.74	$2.72	$332,800.00	$771,428.57	$5,207.14	$12.57
1% - increase in total game revenue	4.60%	2.50%	0.50%	0.00%	4.60%	2.50%	0.50%	0.00%
2% - increase in total game revenue	10.20%	5.30%	1.10%	0.00%	10.20%	5.30%	1.10%	0.00%
5% - increase in total game revenue	35.60%	16.50%	3.30%	0.00%	35.60%	16.50%	3.30%	0.00%

[Source - LTV calculation and impact of increased retention rates across segments by Watson and Kale (2003)]

2.3 Factors leading to customer retention

2.3.1 Antecedents of customer retention

Since customer retention is directly related to a firm's profitability, the question arises about what factors lead to customer retention. Marketing researchers, for example Rust and Zahorik (1993), have addressed a chain of service quality impacting on customer satisfaction, and customer satisfaction affecting customer retention.

Storbacka, Strandvik and Gronroos (1994) provided a more comprehensive framework linking service quality, customer satisfaction, customer retention, and company profitability. This chain of relationship is based on the assumption that customer satisfaction is improved by enhancing service quality. A satisfied customer tends to have a strong and long relationship with the service provider, and long-term relationships generate stable revenues that improve customer relationship profitability.

These relationships have been empirically tested in the relevant literature. Woodside, Frey and Daly (1989) proposed a relationship linking service quality, customer satisfaction and customer behavioural retention. Employing patients from two hospitals, the authors found that customer perceptions of service quality affect his or her overall satisfaction with the services, and customer satisfaction impacts on behavioural intention. Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) examined the relationship between service quality and customer behaviour intentions. The results from a multicompany empirical study showed that improving service quality increased favourable behavioural intentions and decreased unfavourable intentions. A similar finding was reported by Rust, Zahorik, and Keiningham (1995).

Rust and Zahorik (1993) provided a mathematical framework for assessing the value of customer satisfaction, and indicated that customer satisfaction is linked sequentially to individual loyalty, aggregate retention rate, market share and profits. Employing a sample from a retail bank, Hallowell (1996) examined the link between customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and profitability. The results show that customer satisfaction is responsible for as much as 37 percent of the difference in

customer loyalty levels. Based on these studies, service quality and customer satisfaction have been evidenced as antecedents leading to customer retention and company profitability. In the relevant marketing literature, there has been some confusion and debate about the differences between the two constructs. Nevertheless most marketing researchers (e.g., Liljander & Strandvik, 1995; Oliver, 1993; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1994) agree that service quality precedes customer satisfaction. This study views service quality as being the antecedent of customer satisfaction.

Service quality is defined as a consumer's judgement or perception of an entity's overall excellence or superiority, often as a result of comparing expectations with perceived performance (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). It is also regarded as a form of attitude, a global attitude of a firm, related but not equivalent to satisfaction. It contains five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). As an antecedent of customer satisfaction, service quality can be measured at the encounter level to predict encounter satisfaction, or measured as a function of multiple experiences to predict overall service satisfaction. Furthermore, the evaluation of the one encounter may be correlated with the measures of overall satisfaction, which is then correlated with overall perceptions of service quality (Bitner & Hubbert, 1994). Although the overall service quality predicts customer satisfaction, and customer retention, which ultimately leads to a firm's profitability, it is every service encounter that adds up to the cumulative perception and judgement.

2.3.2 Service encounter

A service encounter is defined as having limited or narrow relational contact and communication, and is regarded as a one-off or independent purchase (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Grönroos 1994). Service encounters are dyadic with a beginning and end point (Berry, 1983; McColl-Kennedy, 1998; Solomon, Surprenant, Czepiel, & Gutman, 1985), and some form of exchange takes place (Dwyer et al., 1987). In most cases, a service encounter is a process that relies on the interaction between the service provider and the customer, and the service encounter is considered interpersonally relational in nature (e.g., Crosby, Evans & Cowles 1990; Crosby & Stephens 1987; Lacobucci & Ostrom, 1996; Ostrom & Lacobucci, 1995), especially in services characterized by a high degree of person-to-person interaction and by the absence of an exchange of tangible goods (Chandon, Leo, & Philippe, 1997). The idea originated from people-based "pure" services and focused primarily on the dyadic encounter between customer and frontline employees in the service sector. It can also be generalized to any marketing situation in which personal interaction is an important element of the total offering (Solomon et al., 1985).

Gronroos (1995) indicated that a successful company usually dominates the quality dimension by not only supplying a quality product, but also by fostering good interactions between customers and employees. The importance of dyadic encounters between buyer and seller – client and service provider in service marketing lies in the interpersonal contact during service encounter being a factor in customers' perception of service quality and determining ultimate satisfaction (Bitner, Booms, & Mohr,

1990; 1994; Kelly, Hoffman, & Davis, 1993). Other researchers, such as Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) also point out that interpersonal contact between frontline employees and customers is vital to customers' perception of a company's service quality, because personal interactions involve dynamic bargaining and communication processes that can dramatically change the attitudes, intentions, and behaviours of the parties involved. A close examination of the scale items for each dimension of service quality identified by Parasuraman et al. (1988) reveals that a majority of all the items relate directly to the human interaction element of service delivery.

2.3.3 Frontline employees

Customer service representatives or frontline employees, normally in the marketing-oriented boundary spanning positions, are the first and primary contact point for the customer before, during and after the service process. They play an important role in affecting customers' perceptions of any service encounter (Bitner et al., 1990). Customers often base their impression of the firm largely on the service received from customer contact employees (Singh & Goolsby, 1994). In an exploratory study, Parasuraman et al. (1985) claimed that frontline service employees are pivotal in forming a customer's level of perceived service quality. These employees' behaviours and performance over the service encounter form customers' perceptions of service quality, which further leads to customer satisfaction (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988).

Other researchers (e.g., Bitner, 1990; Surprenant & Solomon, 1987) empirically uncovered the importance of customer contact employee's behaviour in affecting

customer satisfaction. A few survey-based studies, from customer satisfaction point of view, also indicated the significant role of the frontline employees during the service delivery process, and the association of their service performance and customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For example, Crosby and Stephen (1987) found the service performance of the customer contact person is the significant predictor of overall satisfaction of the service. In another study, Crosby et al. (1990) revealed that the employees' relationship selling behaviours are the major determinants of relationship quality composed of two dimensions: trust and customer satisfaction. A similar finding was also reported by Boles, Barksdale and Johnson (1996). As indicated in previous context, customer satisfaction, preceded by service quality, is an important antecedent of customer retention; hence, frontline employees in people-based service contexts become a key factor in customer retention.

2.3.4 Key account representatives

Although frontline employees play an important role in building relationships with customers and attempting to retain them, attention is increasingly paid to those key account representatives. Key accounts are referred to a firm's largest and/or most important customers (Weilbaker & Weeks, 1997). These accounts are also known as major accounts (Colletti & Tubridy, 1987), or large accounts (Miller & Heiman, 1991). Key account representatives hence are those frontline employees specially focusing on building and maintaining relationships with these key accounts. Researchers (e.g., Zeithaml, Rust & Lemon, 2001) indicate that not all customers are profitable and worth retaining, and most companies have only a few customers that account for a major part of their total sales (Hakansson & Snehota, 1995). A customer tier system is thus suggested for selling firms in an attempt to provide better and more

reliable products or services to the higher tier segment (Zeithaml et al., 2001). The firms often dedicate the most important resources and special treatment to the core portfolio. This strategy mainly relies on key account representatives, according to Barrett (1986). The representatives can facilitate the quality of relationships with the key accounts, improve communication and help increase both the quality service and the coordination between the firm and the key account (Barrett, 1986).

2.4 Factors leading to casino customer retention

2.4.1 Antecedents of casino customer retention

The relationship between service quality and customer retention is also manifest in the casino industry. Increased revenue in gaming business implies casinos are thriving but also means increased competition for the gaming customer. Casinos have been adding more amenities to attract visitors, for example, recreational vehicles (RV) parks, golf courses, fine-dining restaurants, resorts and more. However, casinos cannot keep adding new facilities, because they are homogeneous. Baird (2002) indicates the way for casinos to differentiate from competitors and gain competitive advantage has come down to customer services, particularly those performed by customer-contact employees. In reviewing the increased competition in Macau, Kale (2006) clearly indicates customer service is one of the key factors leading to customer loyalty and sustainable competitive advantage.

Holding a similar view, Kale (2002) divided casino offerings into two classifications: core products and supplementary service offerings. According to Kale, the core service element of a casino is to offer gambling entertainment via machines, table games, sports betting, and keno. The supplementary services normally offered include

hospitality, payment, billing, consultation, order taking, safekeeping, security, transportation, exceptions, and order getting. Kale indicated that casinos offer the core with little variation in quality across competitors. It is the supplementary service elements that one would expect to find considerable differences across different casinos, as these services involve an element of people. He further alleges that casinos urgently need to emphasize performance on supplementary aspects of the service offering, in order to gain and preserve a competitive advantage.

Johnson (2002) also indicated that casinos at different locations offer similar gaming products, for example, various slot machines, table games, sleeping accommodations, and some new casinos may incorporate some innovative themes, decors, wild animal shows etc. However, it is not enough to have the newest games, because customers' sense of spontaneity for the novelty is soon to be lost (Klein, 2000). Johnson indicated it is the whole entertainment experience during every service interaction in the casino property, especially the encounter between casino players and customer-contact employees that form customer satisfaction and thus company retention.

2.4.2 Casino frontline employees

Given the importance of customer-contact employees identified in service marketing literature, due to its role in customer service quality perception and customer retention, the recognition of casino services in gaining a competitive advantage for casinos implies the role of casino frontline employees is vital in customer satisfaction and retention. Employing a sample of both customers and employees from the slot machine section, Johnson (2002) used the critical incident technique (CIT) to identify very satisfactory and very dissatisfactory service encounters from the customer's point of view. The results suggested that customer satisfaction is directly or indirectly

related to casino service employees, for example, how employees respond to service delivery systems failure, how employees respond to customer needs and requests, and how much attention employees pay to regular visitors.

Galletti (2002) also indicated that it is casino employees who establish relationships with casino customers by interacting, influencing and servicing the target, and a repeated visit to a casino is a function of the attributes of the casino staff. From a customer's point of view, "they don't love casinos; they love people. Can you imagine customers forming a relationship with Kleenex, Crest or Campbell's Soup? They may have a good opinion of casino business but that's not the same as loyalty. Only people create loyalty" (quoted from Raphel, 1997).

Identifying customer service as an important factor in the survival and prosperity of casinos in Macau for the long term, Kale (2006) proposed Top-ten lists as content for customer training agenda: 1) How to greet customers 2) How to diagnose customer problems; 3) How to demonstrate customer empathy; 4) How to establish procedures for handling various kinds of customer complaints; 5) How to set priorities in serving customers based on the relative value of the customer; 6) How to communicate the philosophy and overall image of your organization during interactions with consistency; 7) How to learn and use specific response patterns that evoke a positive reaction from customers across a wide range of situations; 8) How to answer customer questions with regard to your property; 9) How do you ensure a seamless customer experience across touch points; 10) How to establish rapport with customers regardless of their nationality, demographics, or personality. A close examination of each item reveals a human element, specifically the casino frontline employee. It is these employees who greet customers, diagnose customer problems, show empathy,

handle customer complaints, serve customers, communicate with customers, respond to customers properly, answer customer questions properly, ensure a good customer experience and establish rapport. The author indicated this training agenda was consistent with the need for casinos in the midst of increased competition to gain customer loyalty and a competitive advantage.

Steven Karoul, a leading casino marketing commentator, in promoting computerized customer contact programs emphasised the importance of staying in touch with players (www.urbino.net, published 04 January, 1999). This implies that it is people – casino marketing executives who are the contact points for casino customers. He indicates the importance of keeping in personal contact with players and has further claimed that the longer a marketing executive remains in the industry, the larger his or her customer based of players becomes.

2.4.3 Casino key account representatives

A customer tier system is applied to casinos, as evidenced by "the existence of high-roller clubs and VIP rooms in casinos" (Watson & Kale, 2003, p, 93). The segmentation of casino players is generally based on betting volumes and visit frequency. The high roller segment, as indicated in the previous chapter, even just a small number of them often contributes to the major revenues and profits for casinos. Therefore, this group of players can be referred to as "casino key accounts" based on the conceptualisation by Weilbaker and Weeks (1997). The service employees for this segment are thus named as casino key account representatives in this study.

Casino key account representatives are primarily composed of two groups of employees having most direct contact with casino key accounts, namely, off-site player development executives (PDE) and on-site casino hosts (Macomber, 2000). Both PDE and casino hosts are service providers who have directly contact with casino players, situated in the frontline, or boundary spanning positions. These frontline employees report directly to the marketing department. They both provide services for casino key accounts, with PDE aiming to bring the potential high rollers to the casino, and casino hosts to cultivate relationships with in-house players by being the most visible and accessible casino employees apart from croupiers.

The preferred marketing approach for casino key accounts is primarily relationship marketing or one-to-one marketing with the intention of retaining high rollers (Kale, 2005). The job of service representatives for casino key accounts is to provide assurance that these customers' needs and wants are met, so they can keep returning. Given the recognition of frontline employees in customers' perceived service quality and customer retention as indicated in service and marketing literature, the importance of casino key account representatives is self-evidenced due to the role of casino key accounts in casinos revealed in Chapter one.

Although casino management and experts acknowledge the important role of frontline employee in shaping customer perception of the casino and casino profitability, no empirical research has been undertaken relating to these service employees. There are some episodic opinions or anecdotes regarding casino employees from casino experts or consultants published in some popular press or websites, such as www.urbino.net. For example, in "Optimally Manage High-end Market", Kale (2005) stated that, "The

preferred mode of marketing to high rollers is one-on-one marketing. It is largely up to the casino host to schmooze with the high rollers so that they keep coming to the casino. The onus of retaining a high roller thus squarely falls on the host. Human relationship skills of a host and chemistry between a host and the client largely determine the length of the high-end client's relationship with a casino" (accessed on 24th February, 2005). In discussing the job of a casino host, Brokopp (1999) has stated that "Outside of the dealers, casino hosts are perhaps the most visible and accessible of all casino employees. Casino hosts cultivate relationships with every level of player, from a first-time visitor playing quarter slots on up to the high roller who attends frequently and makes buy-ins in the thousands of dollars" (accessed on 30th June, 1999, http.casinocitytimes.com). Given the importance of casino frontline employees in player retention and casino profitability identified above, the thesis provides an empirical study shedding lights on revealing antecedents of casino key account retention from the perspective of casino frontline employee service performance, specifically, the service performance of casino key account representatives, which, discussed before, has implications for casino profitability.

2.5 Summary

This chapter provided the rationale for studying casino key account representatives, by discussing their role in casino customer relationship management for casino key accounts through the relationship chain of service quality, customer satisfaction, customer retention and company profitability. It began by demonstrating the link between casino customer retention and casino profitability, followed by a discussion of the relationship between service quality and customer retention. The role of casino

frontline employees was identified, from which the importance of casino key account representatives was revealed. The following chapter continues the analysis in two ways: first, it reviews the relevant literature for each of the variables investigated in this thesis and then it proposes a series of hypotheses that arise from the research questions.

Chapter three: Literature review

3.1 Overview

Having discussed the importance of studying casino key account representatives in Chapter 2, this chapter reviews the relevant literature to identify research issues that have been briefly discussed in Chapter 1. It aims to build the theoretical foundation upon which the research is based by reviewing the relevant literature concerning each of the research questions. Specifically the chapter provides overviews of our knowledge relating to the hierarchical relationship between the basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality), surface traits (customer orientation and adaptability) and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

The literature review is organised into five sections, each of which is related to a specific research question. In addition, the hypotheses established by the theoretical model (Figure 1) in relation to the research questions are presented at the end of each section. The first section presents the relevant literature to emotional intelligence concerning research question 1. From the extant literature, this section aims to identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and customer service representative performance, and the relationship scope is then narrowed to the effect of emotional intelligence on casino key account representatives by discussing the impact of emotional intelligence on service encounters and the role of emotions in the study context. As emotional intelligence is a relatively new psychological construct, the literature review of emotional intelligence in this section also extends to aspects of its historical background, conceptualisations and predictive validity. Reviewing these

aspects will help to understand where emotional intelligence is from, what it is about, and why it is important. This section also serves as the foundation for the second and third sections by introducing the concept of trait EI, a form of EI which is related to personality but provides additional variance in criteria of interest. Section 2 focuses on the literature review of personality, particularly the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality. This relates to research question 2. Section 3 further reviews the important relationship between trait EI and the FFM of personality, from which the incremental validity of trait EI is identified. This section aims to address research question 3. The literature reviewed in the fourth section identifies customer orientation and adaptability as relationship-oriented characteristics based on the relevant literature on relationship selling theory. This section is presented to address research question 4. The last section reveals a hierarchical relationship theory about basic personality traits, surface traits, and the performance evaluation in order to identify research question 5. Based on this theory, the relationships of the research variables of this study – trait EI and the FFM of personality, customer orientation and adaptability, and the service performance of casino key account representatives – are proposed. The section titles of this chapter are summarized below:

- Emotional intelligence

- The FFM of personality

- Trait EI and the FFM of personality

- Customer orientation and adaptability

- A hierarchical relationship of basic personality traits, surface traits, and performance evaluation

3.2 Emotional intelligence

3.2.1 Overview

Interest in the topic of emotional intelligence (EI) has been widely disseminated in popular media, the commercial world and the scientific community since Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence* was published in 1995. One of the major reasons for the popularity lies in the fact that emotional intelligence may tap into a greater portion of unexplained variance in job performance left by traditional intelligence (Goldstein, Zedeck, & Goldstein, 2002). Furthermore, according to Zee and Wabeke (2004), traditional intelligence may be able to provide one accurate answer to a well-defined problem in the academic world, but it fails to do so in the daily life of organisations where emotions are prevalent. Emotions have been recognized as a fundamental and integral part of work life, for both employees and customers. Emotional dissonance, burnout, role theory such as role conflict, role ambiguity, role overload to psychological stress etc. have been popular topics in boundary spanning research on employees. Customer satisfaction, loyalty, commitment and retention etc. are emotionally loaded terms describing customer emotional attachment to a firm that brings that firm potential profitability. Emotional intelligence emerged as a concept referring to intelligent behaviours in dealing with emotional related issues. Employees use these behaviours not only to manage their own performances but also to regulate customers' mood in order to influence customer perception of the firm's quality.

Despite the popularity of this topic, there has been substantial controversy and debate around this construct among emotional intelligence researchers and practitioners, mainly in the areas of conceptualisation and assessments, which further led to arguments on its applicability and predictability. However, the results of Rooy and Viswesvaran's (2004) meta-analysis demonstrate that emotional intelligence is a valuable predictor of performance and is a construct worthy of future research, regardless of the various opinions on issues around this topic. Furthermore, emotional intelligence has been evidenced as a positive predictor for jobs logically requiring a high level of emotional intelligence, and such jobs normally contain high emotional labour demands, for instance, the job of customer service representatives (Dau, Rubin, & Cage, 2004; Glomb, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Rotundo, 2004).

On the basis of these findings, this section aims to hypothesize a relationship between emotional intelligence and the service performance of casino key account representatives, being the service providers to the casino key accounts' market, in order to answer research question 1. Prior to forming the hypothesis, the relevant literature about emotional intelligence is revealed from the perspectives of its historical background and conceptualisations, which help explain the solid scientific background of this construct, as well as its measurability and predictive validity, paving the foundation for the hypothesis formation. Specifically, the following section presents three issues of emotional intelligence: 1) Origins of emotional intelligence; 2) Definition of emotional intelligence; and 3) Importance of emotional intelligence.

The first section reveals the historical background of emotional intelligence. The second section reveals the conceptualisations of emotional intelligence. The

conceptualisations proposed by three protagonists in this area are discussed, namely, the models of Mayer-Salovey-Caruso, Goleman and Baron-On, because the three models have generated the most interest in research and they tend to complement each other in explaining the concept of emotional intelligence. Finally, the importance of emotional intelligence will be reviewed from the aspects of measurement and predictive validity. Given the popularity of emotional intelligence as a new psychological construct, its potential of predicting performance may be limited if the construct cannot be measured, whereby the literature involving emotional intelligence measures is discussed preceding the review of the relevant literature on predictive validity. The measurement issue is revealed from the method of assessing emotional intelligence, on which the concepts of trait EI and ability EI are presented. The distinction between trait EI and ability EI is based on how emotional intelligence is operationalised. The classification helps understand the use of trait EI in the current study.

3.2.2 Origins of emotional intelligence

Thorndike and Gardener paved the way for the current interest in emotional intelligence. Over eight decades ago, Thorndike (1920) suggested that intelligence could be organised under three broad dimensions: mechanical, abstract, and social. Mechanical intelligence reflects a person's ability to manage things and mechanisms; abstract intelligence is an ability to manage and understand ideas and symbols; and social intelligence refers to "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations" (p.228) (cf. Newsome, Day, &

Catano, 2000). The last categorisation proposed by Thorndike is very similar to the concept of emotional intelligence.

Following Thorndike's ideas, Gardner (1993) included interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences in his theory of multiple intelligences. According to Gardner, social intelligence, which is one among seven intelligence domains, comprises an individual's interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence relates to one's ability to deal with oneself and to "symbolize complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings" (p, 239) within the self. Interpersonal intelligence relates to one's ability to deal with others and to "notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations and intentions" (p.239). Emotional intelligence can be viewed as a combination of the intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence of an individual.

The first use of the term emotional intelligence appeared in a German publication in 1966. The author named Leuner (1966) discusses women who reject their social roles due to them being separated at an early age from their mothers. He suggested that they had a low "Emotional Intelligence" and prescribed Lysergic Acid Diethylamide (LSD) for their treatment. EI first appeared in English in a doctoral dissertation by Payne (1983, 1986) in the advocated fostering EI in schools by liberating emotional experience through therapy.

The term emotional intelligence was brought into mainstream psychology in the early 1990s (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Mayer and Salovey (1997) presented a conceptual framework of emotional abilities that they believed constituted emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman, a psychologist and

science writer who has previously written on brain and behavioural research for the *New York Times*, popularised the term in the middle 1990s and conceptualised emotional intelligence as a general quality possessed by every normal person, a quantitative spectrum of individual differences in which people can be ranked on a type of emotional scale. Thus, so far, emotional intelligence has come to mean a measurement of emotions.

3.2.3 Emotional intelligence definitions

In reviewing the literature related to emotional intelligence, the definitions and conceptualisations are broadly varied, and each of them bears little resemblance on their own. Among all the theories about emotional intelligence, those proposed by Mayer and Salovey, Bar-on and Goleman have generated the most interest in terms of research and application. Each of their theoretical paradigms conceptualise emotional intelligence from one of two perspectives: as a form of pure intelligence consisting of cognitive ability only (Mayer & Salovey, 1990), or as a mixed intelligence consisting of both cognitive ability and personality aspects, the differences in which are attributed to the different beliefs of what constitutes emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1998). The two perspectives revealed in depth below, although different, are, according to Ciarrochi, Chan and Caputi (2000), more complementary than contradictory.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso ability model

Relating emotional intelligence to Thorndike's social intelligence dimension, Mayer and Salovey (1990) perceive emotional intelligence as a form of pure intelligence,

representing our potential for achieving mastery of specific abilities in this domain. The authors presented a conceptual framework of emotional abilities that they believed constituted emotional intelligence. To the authors, emotional intelligence should integrate the domains of intelligence and emotion. It involves capacity to carry out abstract reasoning about emotional signals that convey regular and discernable meanings about relationships and a number of universal basic emotions (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002). This idea can be thought of as one member of an emerging group of potential hot intelligences that include social intelligence (Sternberg & Smith, 1985, Thorndike 1920), practical intelligence (Sternberg & Caruso, 1985; Wagner & Sternberg, 1985), personal intelligence (Gardner 1993), non-verbal perception skills (Buck, 1984; Rosenthal, Hall, DiMatteo, Rogers, & Archer 1979), and emotional creativity (Averill & Nunley, 1992). Each of these forgoing concepts forms coherent domains that partly overlap with emotional intelligence, but divide human intelligence in distinctive ways.

To establish emotional intelligence as a pure intelligence, Mayer, Caruso, Salovey (1999) used three criteria: conceptual, correlational and developmental. Conceptually, any intelligence must reflect actual mental performance rather than preferred behaviour patterns, self-esteem, or non-intellectual attainments (Carroll, 1993; Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Scarr, 1989). To Mayer et al., emotional intelligence does describe actual abilities. Secondly, from a correlation perspective, a new "intelligence" should describe a set of closely related abilities that are similar to, but distinct from, mental abilities described by existing intelligences (Carroll, 1993). Mayer et al. regard emotional intelligence as a type of social intelligence but in a broader scope, because it does not only include reasoning about the emotions in social relationships, but also

reasoning about internal emotions that are important for personal growth. Finally, from a development point of view, intelligence should develop with age and experience. The results gained by Mayer et al. showed that adults did perform at higher ability levels than do adolescents.

Subsuming emotional intelligence under the domain of intelligence, Salovey and Mayer (1990, 1997) define emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, respond and manipulate emotional information without necessarily understanding it and the ability to understand and manage emotions without necessarily perceiving feelings well or fully experiencing them. It is divided into four branches. The first branch is emotional perception, which includes the ability to identify emotion in one's physical states, feelings and thoughts; the ability to identify emotions in other people, designs, artwork, *et cetera* through language, sound, appearance, and behaviour; the ability to express emotions accurately, and to express the needs related to those feelings; the ability to discriminate between accurate and inaccurate, or honest versus dishonest expressions of feelings.

The second branch is emotional assimilation, which includes emotion-prioritised thinking by directing attention to important information. Emotions are so sufficiently vivid and available that they can be generated as aids to judgement and memory concerning feelings. Emotional mood swings change the individual's perspective from optimistic to pessimistic, encouraging consideration of multiple points of view. Emotional states differentially encourage specific problem-solving approaches such as when happiness facilitates inductive reasoning and creativity.

The third branch is emotional understanding, which includes the ability to label emotions and recognize relations among the words and the emotions themselves, such as the relation between liking and loving; the ability to interpret the meanings that emotions convey regarding relationships, such as that sadness often accompanies a loss; the ability to understand complex feelings, simultaneous feelings of love and hate or blends such as awe as a combination of fear and surprise; the ability to recognize likely transitions among emotions, such as the transition from anger to satisfaction or from anger to shame.

The fourth branch is emotion management, which includes the ability to stay open to feelings, both those that are pleasant and those that are unpleasant; the ability to reflectively engage or detach from an emotion depending upon it being judged to be informative or utility; the ability to reflectively monitor emotions in relation to oneself and others, such as recognizing how clear, typical, influential or reasonable they are; the ability to manage emotion in oneself and others by moderating negative emotions and enhancing pleasant ones, without repressing or exaggerating information they may convey.

Mayer, Salovey, Caruso and Sitarenios (2001) further explain that the four branches function hierarchically with the perception of emotions acting as the most basic or bottom branch, and emotional management as the most complex or top branch. Specifically, perception of emotions is a precursor to the next three branches. If an individual lacks the ability to process the lowest level of emotional input, he or she would also lack the ability to manage emotions at a higher level described in this model. Once perception has gained, emotions can be utilized to facilitate thought

consciously or unconsciously. This is supported by Levine's (1997) (cited by Webb 2004) study which shows that different emotions are related to different problem solving strategies. For example, sadness leads to a coping strategy where coping is the most appropriate strategy, according to Levine (1997). The next step involves cognitive processing to recognize how multiple emotions can combine and to anticipate how one emotion leads to another, until they finally translate emotional knowledge into behaviour.

Goleman's model

Being credited for popularising the concept of emotional intelligence in 1995, Daniel Goleman wrote the landmark book *Emotional Intelligence*. He describes emotional intelligence as "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope." Therefore, emotional intelligence is defined as "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships" (Goleman, 1998, p 317).

The model of emotional intelligence proposed by Goleman involves cognitive ability and personality factors. It focuses on the domain of work performance based on social and emotional competencies, which represent the degree to which an individual has mastered specific skills and abilities which build on emotional intelligence and allow them greater effectiveness in the workplace (Goleman, 2001). The competency-based approach reflects a tradition that emphasizes the identification of competencies that

can be used to predict work performance across a variety of organizational settings, often with an emphasis on those in leadership positions (Boyatzis, 1982; Bray, Campbell, & Grant, 1974; Kotter, 1982; Luthans, Hodgetts, & Rosenkrantz, 1998; McClelland, 1973; Thornton & Byham, 1982). In the book, *Working With Emotional Intelligence* (1998), Daniel Goleman set out a framework of emotional intelligence based on emotional competencies that have been identified in internal research at hundreds of corporations and organizations as distinguishing outstanding performers. The author distinguishes emotional intelligence from emotional competence by defining emotional competence as "a learned capability based on emotional intelligence that results in outstanding performance at work" (Goleman, 1998b).

According to Goleman, our emotional intelligence determines our potential for learning the practical skills that underlie the emotional competence clusters; our emotional competence shows how much of that potential we have realized by learning and mastering skills and translating intelligence into on-the-job capabilities. For example, to be adept in emotional competence like customer service or conflict management requires an underlying ability in emotional intelligence fundamentals, specifically, social awareness and relationship management. Goleman (1998) argued that emotional intelligence underlies emotional competence and that emotional competence is a required antecedent to performance. Emotional intelligence enhances employee potential for learning, and emotional competence translates that potential into task-mastering capabilities.

Dulewicz and Higgs (2000) also distinguished emotional competencies from emotional intelligence and alleged that a competence framework appears to hold more

empirical promise. In relation to organizational application, Dulewicz and Herbert (1996, 1999) demonstrate a clear linkage between competencies and elements of advancement within an organizational context. The relationship between individual attributes and differentiation between "average" and "outstanding" performance is at the heart of the case for considering emotional intelligence by tracking the career progress of General Managers over a seven-year period. The competencies of emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence may be perceived as providing a road map toward making necessary adjustments on the job, managing uncontrolled emotions, motivating oneself, and assessing others' feelings, thereby developing the social skills to lead and motivate. However, existing research mainly draws on physiological research developments, educational-based research and developments in the therapy field. According to Dulewicz and Higgs (2000), research about emotional intelligence in organizational contexts has mainly been based on derivative arguments and largely anecdotal case descriptions.

From the perspective of competence, Goleman (1998) identified four components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. According to Goleman, self-awareness is the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their impact on decision-making. He defined self-awareness as "knowing what we are feeling in the moment, and using those preferences to guide our decision making; having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-confidence" (p. 318). Self-management involves controlling one's emotions and impulses and adapting to changing environments and is defined as "handling our emotions so that they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand; being conscientious and delaying gratification to

pursue goals; recovering well from emotional stress" (Goleman, 1998, p 318). Social awareness includes the ability to sense, understand, and react to other's emotions while comprehending social networks and is defined as "sensing what people are feeling, being able to take their perspective, and cultivating rapport and attunement with a broad diversity of people" (Goleman, 1998, p 318). Finally, relationship management entails the ability to inspire, influence, and develop others while managing conflict (Goleman, 1998).

In an analysis of data on workplace effectiveness, Boyatzis, Jacobs and Goleman (2000) found that the four clusters are related hierarchically. According to these authors, emotional self-awareness is a prerequisite for effective self-management, which in turn predicts greater social skills. A secondary pathway runs from self-awareness to social awareness to social skill. Managing relationships well then depends on a foundation of self-management and empathy, each of which in turn requires self-awareness. Goleman believes this evidence that empathy and self-management are foundations for social effectiveness finds support at the neurological level.

From the perspective of competence, Goleman developed a measure called *Emotional Competence Inventory* (ECI) based on social and emotional competencies in organizational settings with an emphasis on those in leadership positions. The ECI is a 360-degree tool designed to assess the emotional competencies of individuals and organizations. It is based on emotional competencies identified by Goleman (1998) in *Working with Emotional Intelligence* and on competencies from Hay/McBer's *Generic Competency Dictionary* (1996) as well as Richard Boyatzis's *Self-Assessment*

Questionnaire (SAQ). Initial concurrent validity studies using assessments based on Goleman's model have been able to account for a larger amount of variance in work performance than emotional intelligence measures based on the Mayer and Salovey model of emotional intelligence (Bradberry & Greaves, 2003), as ECI demonstrates the utility of this approach for assessment, training, and the development of social and emotional competencies in the workplace.

The ECI is complete in that it can classify each respondent within the range of self and others' ratings. Evidence for content validity is reported in the technical manual through an accurate self-assessment study in which those individuals who were not aware of their strengths and weaknesses also had trouble evaluating themselves on emotional intelligence competencies (Sala, 2002). Measures of criterion validity found that the emotional intelligence of college principals was significantly associated with college student retention. Other researchers (e.g. Miller, 2000; Stys & Brown, 2004) reported emotional intelligence measured by ECI was significantly positively correlated with salary, job success and life success. Construct validity was established through convergent validity studies with a variety of measures of similar constructs. Goleman's model of EI was found to correspond significantly with the sensing/intuiting and thinking/feeling dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Type indicator and with the extroversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness factors of the NEO Personality Inventory. A study of divergent validity found no significant correlations between the ECI and a measure of analytical/critical thinking (Sala, 2002).

Bar-On's model

Bar-On (1998) coined the term Emotional Quotient (EQ) in his doctoral dissertation as an analogue to Intelligent Quotient (IQ). His model of emotional intelligence can be viewed as a mixed intelligence, also consisting of cognitive ability and personality aspects. It includes: the ability to be aware of, to understand, and to express oneself; the ability to be aware of, to understand and relate to others; the ability to deal with strong emotions and control one's impulses; and the ability to adapt to change and to solve problems of a personal or social nature. Emphasising its influence on general well being and adaptation, Bar-On (1997) defines emotional intelligence as "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures."(p. 14)

Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence relates to the potential for performance and success, rather than performance or success itself, and is considered process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented (Bar-On, 2002). It focuses on an array of emotional and social abilities, including the ability to be aware of, understand and express oneself and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-on, 1997). This model hypothesizes that those individuals with higher than average EQ's are generally more successful in meeting environmental demands and pressures. A deficiency in emotional intelligence can mean a lack of success and the existence of emotional problems. According to Bar-On (2002), emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence contribute equally to a person's general intelligence, which then indicates potential success in one's life.

Evaluations of the alternative models

These models have been widely discussed in relevant studies (e.g., Stys & Brown, 2004). Each model from a different angle attempts to interpret and operationalise what emotional intelligence as a newly incepted psychological construct connotes and implies. However, the different conceptualisations for the same construct also create confusion, as emotional intelligence is often classified as a state of cognitive intelligence or a trait. Subsuming emotional intelligence under the "intelligence" domain, Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999) indicated the models proposed by Goleman and Bar-On included not only emotion and intelligence, but also motivation, non-ability dispositions and traits, and global personal and social functioning. Therefore, these broadened emotional intelligence concepts are classified as mixed models (Mayer et al., 1999). They are more closely related to personality traits (Mayer et al., 1999). Thus the model proposed by Mayer et al. (1997) is regarded as an ability model, because it emphasises the cognitive components of emotional intelligence.

This view has been mostly received in consensus, although some researchers (e.g., Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001) demonstrated scepticism. In review of the different opinions, Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) commented that it is difficult to provide an operational definition for emotional intelligence accepted by all, as researchers themselves interested in this area are constantly amending their own definitions of the construct. Goleman and Emmerling (2003) indicate that it is an inherent part of the process of theory development and scientific discovery in any field as specific theories within a mature paradigm begin to emerge and differentiate. Goleman (2002) acknowledges that the existence of several theoretical viewpoints

within the paradigm of emotional intelligence indicate the robustness of the field but not a weakness. As each theory represents the theoretical orientation and context in which each of these authors have decided to frame their theory, all researchers share a common desire to understand and measure the abilities and traits related to recognizing and regulating emotions in ourselves and others (Goleman 1998). All theories in this paradigm tend to understand how individuals perceive, understand, utilize and manage emotions in an effort to predict and foster personal effectiveness (Goleman & Emmerling, 2003).

3.2.4 The importance of emotional intelligence

Given that emotional intelligence is a scientifically founded and empirically validated construct, the issue of assessing and measuring this construct has fundamental significance for research on organizational behaviours. Although emotions have been viewed as unpredictable, irrational and not worth measuring, the conceptualisations of emotional intelligence have helped encounter this criticism and offer a promise of a useful concept for predicting workplace performance. However, the use of emotional intelligence measures in research and organizational settings has been varied and controversial. The reason lies in how the construct should be measured, and which theory it shall be based on. The following section presents a general review of emotional intelligence measures in the relevant literature, from which the concept of trait EI used in the current study is identified. To reinforce the importance of emotional intelligence, its predictive validity is discussed following the issues of measurement.

3.2.4.1 Measures of emotional intelligence

In the emotional intelligence literature, both self-report questionnaires and performance-based tests have been used to measure this construct, which adds confusion to the findings and its relationship with personality and cognitive ability. With the confusion, emotional intelligence researchers have not reached consensus on which method is most suitable to assess it. Carroll (1993) indicated that performance scales are standard for intelligence research because they are based on the capacity to solve mental tasks. Objective performance scales measure objective performance with items having correct or incorrect responses, and are normally used for assessing ability construct. On the other hand, self-report scales of intelligence can be an accurate measure only if people can accurately report their own abilities. They are normally used for assessing personalty construct and for those types of responses concerning self-perceptions, personal reactions, preferences, interests, attitudes, and values (Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, & Dornheim, 1998).

However, Paulhus, Lysy and Yik (1998) found very low correlations between performance and self-report measures of intelligence. In one study, Bar-On's self-report Emotional Quotient Inventory is only modestly correlated (r = 0.46) with the Mayer-Salovey MEIS ability test (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2003). Brackett and Mayer (2003) concluded that the ability and self-report models might likely yield different representations of the same person. On the other hand, self-report measures of emotional intelligence seem more strongly related to personality than objective measures, while objective measures appear more strongly related to cognitive ability than personalty. For example, Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) reported only a weak correlation between MEIS and General Mental Ability (GMA) (r = 0.33).

Ability-based measures

Classifying emotional intelligence as a set of mental abilities, a domain of human performance, Mayer and Salovey (1999) argued that emotional intelligence should be best studied with ability measures. The ability-based emotional intelligence measures, purporting to assess emotional intelligence involving a series of solving items for emotion-based problem, are considered objective based assessments, in that answers on the test are either right or wrong as determined by consensus or expert scoring (MacCann, Roberts, Matthews, & Zeidner, 2004; Roberts, Zeidner, & Matthews, 2001). Mayer et al. (1999) suggested that emotional intelligence should be assessed most directly by asking a person to solve emotional problems, such as identifying the emotion in a story or painting, and then evaluating the person's answer against criteria of accuracy. Therefore, the authors developed an objective, performance-based assessment for emotional intelligence called Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) and its successor MSCEIT (Mayer - Salovey - Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test) by Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2002).

MEIS, which consists of 12 subscale measures of emotional intelligence, indicates that emotional intelligence is a distinct intelligence with 3 separate sub factors: emotional perception, emotional understanding, and emotional management. It found evidence for discriminant validity in that emotional intelligence was independent of general intelligence and self-reported empathy. However, the authors failed to provide evidence for the integration branch of the Four Branch Model.

For this reason, Mayer et al. (2002) designed a new ability measure of emotional intelligence – MSCEIT. The MSCEIT aims to measure the four abilities described in Salovey and Mayer's model of intelligence: the experiential area comprising of Perceiving Emotions Branch and Facilitating Thinking Branch, and the strategic area including Understanding Emotional Meaning Branch and Managing Emotions Branch. Perception of emotion is measured by rating the extent and type of emotion expressed on different types of pictures. Facilitation of thought is measured by asking people to draw parallels between emotions and physical sensations as well as emotions and thoughts. Understanding emotions is measured by asking the subject to explain how emotions can blend from other emotions. Management of emotions is measured by having people choose effective self and other management techniques (Brachett & Mayer, 2003). The MECEIT produced a factor structure congruent with the four-part model of emotional intelligence and it is both reliable and content valid. The authors assert that the MSCEIT meets several standard criteria for a new intelligence: it is objective in that answers on the test are either right or wrong as determined by consensus or expert scoring; its scores correlate with existing intelligence measures while accounting for unique variance; and scores increase with age (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Mayer et al., 2002; Mayer & Geher, 1996).

The measures are claimed to correlate with existing intelligences but independent of personality measure. The meta-analysis conducted by Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) shows that the ability measure of emotional intelligence is indeed strongly associated with general cognitive ability measured by General Mental Ability (GMA). On the other hand, using emotional intelligence measured by MEIS to examine its relationship with personality measured by 16PF, Caruso, Mayer and Salovey (2002)

found that the ability test of emotional intelligence is generally not associated with the 16PF primary factor scores, although the results did show a few statistically significant correlations between emotional intelligence and some branch scores of personality measures. The authors therefore concluded that the ability measure was separate from several standard personalty traits and the ability approach places emotional intelligence in an intelligence framework.

Although Mayer et al. (1999) strongly believe the performance-based assessments are the best approach to measure emotional intelligence since it is classified as a form of intelligence; the method also has its downside. According to Perez, Petrides and Furnham (2005), unlike standard cognitive ability tests, tests of ability EI cannot be objectively scored because there are no clear-cut criteria for what constitutes a correct response. Ability EI tests have attempted to bypass this problem by relying on alternative scoring procedures, which have also been used in the past for addressing similar difficulties in the operationalisation of social intelligence. According to Petrides, Furnham and Frederickson (2004), much of the intrapersonal component of ability EI is not amenable to objective scoring, because the information required for such scoring is available only to the test taker. Psychological indices of emotion have to be validated with reference to people's own reports of their feelings.

Self-report measures

There are quite a few self-report measures for assessing emotional intelligence. The most recognised one is Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). The measure is designed for individuals sixteen years of age and over. Developed as a measure of emotionally and socially competent behaviour that provides an estimate of one's

emotional and social intelligence, the EQ-i is not meant to measure personality traits or cognitive capacity, but rather to measure one's ability to be successful in dealing with environmental demands and pressures (Bar-On, 2002). The use of a self-report measure to assess individuals on this model is consistent with established practice within personality psychology, where self-report measures represent the dominant, if not the only method of assessment.

The EQ-i is a complete test in that it can classify each respondent within the range of EQ scores and can be used in a multitude of settings and situations, including corporate, educational, clinical, medical, research, and preventative settings. The author reports that content validity is adequate in that items for each subcomponent were generated and selected in a systematic approach. Measures of criterion validity found that emotional intelligence measured by EQ-i could accurately differentiate between those who were successful and those who were unsuccessful in various settings. Those individuals who were suspected to intuitively have higher levels of emotional intelligence were found to have EQ-i scores significantly higher than the mean (Bar-On, 2002). Measures of construct validity found no significant correlations between EQ-i and several measures of standard intelligence (Bar-On, 2002), although the EQ-i has been found to be significantly correlated to measures of psychological and subjective well being and to all of the Big Five personality factors as measured by the NEO-PI-R (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). Furthermore, research also has found that total EQ scale was positively correlated with three of the best indicators of emotional functioning in a measure of personality, while being negatively correlated with other indicators of abnormal emotional functioning (Bar-On, 2002). Overall, the EQ-i seems to provide a valid and reliable estimate of an individual's ability to effectively

cope with the pressures and demands of daily life, as conceptualised by Bar-On (2000).

Researchers (e.g., Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004) have raised concerns about self-report measures of emotional intelligence. The issue about the self-report measures normally contains two aspects: one is the test-taker's social desirability response; the other is the overlap with personality measures.

Social desirability can be defined as a response pattern where test-takers systematically represent themselves with an excessive positive bias (Paulhus, 2002). This bias has long been known to contaminate responses on personality inventories (Holtgraves, 2004; McFarland & Ryan, 2000; Peebles & Moore, 1998; Nichols & Greene, 1997; Zerbe & Paulhus, 1987), and act as a mediator of the relationships between self-report measures (Nichols & Greene, 1997; Ganster et al., 1983). Some researchers (e.g., McFarland, 2003) suggest one way of off-setting "faking good" responses is to use the psychometric technique of consensus based technique to create standards for assessing emotional intelligence that cannot be faked.

The main concern about self-report measures is due to the fact this method is normally considered a common way of measuring things such as personality traits. Generally, self-report emotional intelligence measures and personality measures have been said to converge because they both purport to measure traits, and because they are both measured in the self-report form (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2002). Specifically, there appear to be two dimensions of the Big Five that stand out as most related to self-report emotional intelligence measures – neuroticism and extraversion,

particularly the former. Neuroticism has been said to relate to negative emotionality and anxiety (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Intuitively, individuals scoring high on neuroticism are likely to score low on self-report EI measures (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2002).

More studies have shown that self-report measures are independent of intelligence tests, but highly correlated with existing personality questionnaires. The results of meta-analysis conducted by Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) did show that self-report emotional intelligence measures are highly associated with personalty. For example, three of the Big Five factors of personality had correlations with emotional intelligence with r > 0.31. A few recent published studies have shown that Bar-On's self-report Emotional Quotient Inventory correlates strongly with a number of personalty measures. For example, Stys and Brown (2004) reviewed that highly significant correlations were between Emotional Quotient Inventory and four of the Big Five personalty factors; namely, Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness (r = 0.27 to 0.57), and moderately significant correlations were found with the Openness (r = 0.16). Brackett and Mayer (2003) reported that this measure was correlated significantly with all five factors of personality, particularly Neuroticism (r = -0.57). Other self-report measures, such as Goleman's ECI and Schutte et al.'s (1998) self-report emotional intelligence test (SREIT), have been shown to have significant relationships with personality factors. For example, Sala (2002) reported ECI was significantly correlated with three of the Big Five personality factors: Extraversion, Openness and Conscientiousness. Brackett and Mayer (2003) found SREIT was correlated with four of the Big Five factors. Austin, Saklofske and Egan (2004) reported similar findings.

However, it is worth noting that, the interpretations of moderate-to-high correlations between self-report EI and personality have been varied and inconsistent. Some researchers (e.g., Davies, Stankov & Roberts, 1998) have asserted that correlations in the 0.40 range constitute outright construct redundancy, while others have suggested 0.70 (Cohen, 1985). Gignac (2005) indicated that it would be difficult for any self-report individual difference measure to demonstrate exceptional incremental validity above and beyond the Big Five, and recommended that factor analytic methodology be used to test for construct redundancy (as opposed to zero-order correlations), whereas others (e.g., Davies et al., 1998) questioned the psychometric properties of self-report EI inventories.

Despite the question regarding relevance to personalty traits, in their meta-analysis, Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) found that self-report measures of emotional intelligence were used in more settings than other reports and demonstrated most validity. The reasons may lie in that only the individuals who are being assessed better know some aspects of emotional intelligence; or because the questionnaires are more straightforward compared to task-based assessment, and the self-report method has possibilities for unsupervised use (e.g., in postal surveys) (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2003; Austin, Saklofske, & Egan, 2004).

Ability EI and trait EI

The lack of a coherent operational framework of emotional intelligence has led to the haphazard development of the construct and numerous conflicting findings. In recognition of the problem, Petrides and Furnham (2001) suggested the terminology

"ability EI" and "trait EI" to distinguish the two measurement approaches. The measurement of emotional intelligence through self-report questionnaires leads to the operationalisation of the construct as a personality trait, and is classified as trait EI, while the measurement through performance tests lead to the operationalisation of the construct as a cognitive ability, and therefore is classified as ability EI.

Based on this classification, trait EI was concerned with cross-situational consistencies in behaviour, and embedded within the personality framework, and is assessed via validated self-report inventories that measure typical behaviour (e.g., Bar-on, 1997; Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995). This approach to emotional intelligence research draws heavily on personality variables such as empathy, optimism and impulsivity. Considering the five-factor model of personality, trait EI measures are generally found to have large significant correlations with Extraversion and Neuroticism, while smaller significant positive correlations with Openness, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness have also been found (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Schutte et al., 1998). By contrast, the ability EI is much more focused and as explicit as traditional intelligence and can be measured through maximal performance. Therefore, trait EI should not be expected to correlate strongly with measures of general cognitive ability or proxies, whereas ability EI should not be strongly correlated with factors of personality measures.

Furthermore, Petrides and Furnham (2001) clarified that the distinction between trait EI and ability EI is predicated on the method used to measure the construct and not on the elements that the various models are hypothesised to encompass. As such, it is unrelated to the distinction among the models of EI conceptualised by Mayer and

Salovey, Goleman, and Bar-On. The emotional intelligence scale (EIS) designed by Schutte et al. (1998) is a good example for this clarification. EIS is a self-report measure but based on the ability model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It is classified as trait EI because it is measured through self-report questionnaires; however, it is founded on a cognitive-based conceptualisation. This distinction between ability EI and trait EI sheds light on the measure-related confusion and provides basis in selecting an appropriate measure for relevant studies. On the basis of this distinction, the current study adopts the concept trait EI, since a self-report emotional intelligence measure was used.

3.2.4.2 Predictive validity

Having discussed its measurability, the issue of emotional intelligence's predictive validity is crucial to establishing its scientific importance. As early as 1920, Thorndike, in reviewing the predictive power of IQ, found variations in outcome measures not accounted for by IQ (cited by Dulewize & Higgs, 2000). In comparing the predicting utility of emotional intelligence with traditional intelligence, Goleman (1998, p. 19) argued that IQ is estimated to account for only 25 percent in explaining how well people perform in their careers. More accurately, it may be no higher than 10 percent, and in some cases, perhaps as low as 4 percent (Sternberg, 1997). The appeal of emotional intelligence lies in the possibility of accounting for some portion of the remaining variance in predicting work performance and career success which traditional intelligence has left to be unexplained. Indeed, the results from Van Rooy and Viswesvaran's (2003) meta-analysis showed that all emotional intelligence measures demonstrated predictive validity.

However, studies also show that the predictive validity of emotional intelligence is widely varied. It may depend on the study settings, selected criterion as well as the model of emotional intelligence used (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003). Dividing relevant studies to three categories in their meta-analysis, Van Rooy & Viswesvaran (2003) reported that all emotional intelligence measures have a respective operational validity of 0.10, 0.24 and 0.24 for academic settings, life outcomes and employment settings.

Emotional intelligence and study setting

In general, emotional intelligence is not so promising in predicting academic achievement. In fact emotional intelligence measured by Schutte et al.'s (1998) self-report scales was found in one study to be inversely related to academic achievement. Using Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory, Newsome, Day and Catano (1999) found that neither the total score of emotional intelligence nor the sub-dimension scores were significantly related to academic achievement. This is plausible as academic results are more related to an individual's IQ (Goleman, 1998). Emotional intelligence appears to be more prominent in predicting criteria in life settings and work-related outcomes. For example, using both Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory and Schutt et al.'s self-report emotional intelligence scale, Austin, Saklofske and Egan (2004) found that emotional intelligence was positively associated with life satisfaction, social network size and quality, but negatively associated with alexithymia and alcohol consumption.

In work settings, emotional intelligence has been claimed to affect a wide variety of work behaviours. These behaviours include, for example, employee commitment, because emotional intelligence facilitates communication, and emotionally intelligent people make others feel better suited to the occupational environment (Goleman, 1998); job satisfaction, because emotional intelligence may influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures, thus managing stressful work conditions (Bar-On, 1997); team work, because emotionally intelligence people have better social skills which are needed for group work (Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Sjoberg, 2001); and leadership, because leaders with higher level of emotional intelligence may affect the relationship in the work setting. Researchers (e.g., Cooper, 1997) allege that people with high levels of emotional intelligence experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships, lead more effectively, and enjoy better health than those with low levels of emotional intelligence. However, many of these claims should be taken with caution, as some have not been substantiated (Zeider, Matthews & Roberts, 2004).

Apart from the effect of study setting, according to Ashkanasy and Daus (2005), the efficiency of emotional intelligence in predicting the outcome criteria depends on the type of job. The authors further indicate that it is the profession that often requires high emotional labour, such as the job of customer service representatives. Sjoberg and Littorin (2003) noted that emotional intelligence could be an important factor in job performance for jobs that have important social components. In one study, Caruso, Mayer and Salovey (2002) found that emotional intelligence was related to a self-report measure of social behaviour and social needs. The authors conclude that emotional intelligence can be expected to contribute at a reasonable level of

prediction of some criterion outcomes, for example, behaviours involving social components.

Emotional intelligence and emotional labour

The job of service representatives or frontline employees involves high social components, because these employees are situated at the organization-customer interface as the first contact point for customers, and service transactions often involve face-to-face interactions between these employees and customers. This type of occupation also contains high emotional labour demand (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Daus & Ashkanansy, 2005). Most research into emotional labour has been concerned with this group of employees in service industry, and the concept of emotional labour has particular relevance to service encounters. The main reason, according to Ashforth and Humphrey, lies in the uncertainty created by customer participation in the service encounter, and such encounters often have a dynamic and emergent quality; furthermore, the services rendered during an encounter are relatively intangible, making it difficult for customers to evaluate service quality.

Emotional labour is defined as managing emotions for a wage (Hochschild, 1983). It may involve enhancing, faking, or suppressing emotions to modify the emotional expression. According to Hochischild, (1983), emotional labour is performed in one of two ways. First, the labourer may comply with display rules through surface acting. Surface acting involves simulating emotions that are not actually felt. In this way, the labourer feigns emotions that are not experienced. The second means of complying

with display rules is through deep acting, whereby one attempts to actually experience or feel the emotions that one wishes to display.

Emotional labour has its salient benefits for both organizations and individuals. The display feelings during service interactions, according to Hochschild (1983), have a strong impact on the quality of service transactions, the attractiveness of the interpersonal climate, and the experience of emotion itself. Organizationally, selling more products, dealing with customer complaints adequately, ensuring the smooth-running communicative interactions *et cetera,* are all associated with positive performance of emotional work. Individually, emotional labour provides the service employee with a prescribed set of responses and patterns of behaviour that can facilitate the dynamic encounter communication (Mann, 1997).

Given the benefits of emotional labour, however, researchers suggest that managing emotions for pay may be detrimental to the employees (Zapf, Vogt, Seifert, Mertini, & Isic, 1999). The pivot on which emotional labour revolves is the fact that there is a discrepancy between emotions expected and those actually experienced. "What is functional for the organization may well be dysfunctional" for the actor (Ashforth and Humphrey (1993, p96). Hochschild (1983) and others have proposed that emotional labour is stressful and may result in emotional dissonance and burnout. The author argued that portraying emotions that are not felt (surface acting) creates the strain of emotive dissonance that is akin to cognitive dissonance. The dissonance may cause the labourer to feel false and hypocritical. Ultimately, such dissonance can lead to personal and work-related maladjustment, such as poor self-esteem, depression, cynicism and alienation from work (cited by Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). On the

other hand, deep acting may distort these reactions and impair one's sense of authentic self. It may ultimately lead to self-alienation and may impair one's ability to recognize or even experience genuine emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). When a person is unable to express script emotions, they may be experiencing a condition termed burnout (Maslach, 1982).

Nevertheless, Daus and Ashkanasy (2005) suggest that emotional intelligence might moderate or ameliorate the negative consequences of emotional labour. Studies have been undertaken to demonstrate and confirm the important relationships between emotional intelligence and emotional labour in both laboratory and field studies. With simulated customer service representatives, Daus (2002) found that people who could read emotions in faces felt less of an emotional load from the job, and people who could better manage emotions in themselves felt more of an emotional load. In actual customer service representatives and sales personnel, Cage et al. (2004) found that with respect to the dimension of emotional intelligence, understanding emotions was positively related with the faking positive aspect of emotional labour, whereas expressing negative emotions was negatively associated with actual sales performance. Employing police officers as a sample, Daus, Rubin and Cage (2004) and Daus, Rubin, Smith and Cage (2004) quantitatively demonstrated a definitive link between aspects of emotional labour and emotional intelligence. Based on these studies, Daus and Ashkanasy (2005) concluded that emotional intelligence and its four branches proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997) were significantly associated with deep acting of emotional labour; while the branch understanding emotions was associated with surface acting, the other three branches were significantly related to

suppressing negative emotions; finally, using emotions was related to faking positive emotions.

Identified as having the ability of preventing the negative outcome of emotional labour, emotional intelligence, and its aspects of managing one's own and others' emotions, have the implication of affecting job performance from the job requiring high emotional labour, for instance, that of frontline employee in service industry (Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005).

A few empirical studies have been undertaken to show that emotional intelligence is positively related to performance for those jobs logically requiring a high level of emotional intelligence. For example, employing the sample of customer service representatives, Daus (2002) attempted to investigate how emotional intelligence could affect service representatives' job performance that is largely determined by customer interaction. In a laboratory simulation of a customer service event, using MEIS, Daus demonstrated the link between emotional intelligence of the customer service presentative and job performance in handling an angry customer. The results showed that the dimension of reading emotions was negatively related to rated job performance, and managing emotions was positively related to job performance as rated by observers. The author also found that both dimensions were related to work attitudes and emotional labour.

Given that emotional intelligence has been evidenced as a valid predictor in performance for jobs demanding emotional labour, however, the relationship between emotional intelligence and such job performance may be threaded through the link

with every service encounter. Singh (2000) indicated that the service employee's performance is concerned with how the service is delivered, and the service delivery process is represented by a series of employee's encounter behaviours (Gronroos, 1984). In other words, the evaluation of the employee's performance is affected by service employee's behaviours in every interaction with customers. Therefore, emotional intelligence as a factor in the job performance of a service representative is through the link with service encounter behaviours. The direct relationship of service behaviours with performance evaluation indicates that emotional intelligence impacts on a service employee's performance through its effect on the service encounter. For example, service encounter behaviours, those suggested in the SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) for service employees, the employee showing concern for customer, demonstrating awareness and empathy of customer needs, have clear emotional contents (Bardzil & Slaski, 2003). Based on the conceptualisation of emotional intelligence, individuals' abilities to understand and regulate their own emotions and those of others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), people with higher than average emotional intelligence scores display strong self-awareness and better interpersonal skills. In this aspect, emotional intelligence exerts influence on the employee's service encounter behaviours.

3.2.4.3 Emotional intelligence and service encounters

The link of emotional intelligence, service encounter behaviours and service employee performance is plausible, as emotional intelligence has direct effect on the service encounter. According to Hartel, Barker and Barker (1999), a service encounter is characterised as an emotional event. In other words, a service encounter is

emotionally charged. Emotional intelligence as a set of emotional management skills can regulate the emotional level of the encounter, thus affecting the representative's behaviour. The emotions associated with service encounters can be traced from the following aspects: first, customers seek emotional benefits of the services; second, customers' emotions are aroused by the employees' service behaviours; third, customers' emotions are caused by their own behaviours; finally, emotional contagion may construe part of emotional events.

Seeking emotional services

In the first category, customers enter and exit service encounters with associated cognitions and emotions. These cognitions and emotions are largely the result of the cognitive and affective information processing initiated by the service event. In investigating customer emotional responses to service encounter, Price, Arnould, and Tierney (1995) indicate that service encounter can be classified as low-affect contexts such as bank transactions or hotel check-in, and high affect content, referred to emotional arousal associated with the encounter. The authors distinguished two service encounter contexts that have high affective content. The first type, the consumer is motivated by the expected functional benefits of service encounters, but emotional content is nonetheless an important part of interaction and service satisfaction, for example, psychological reactance (bill collectors); invasive procedures on the self (e.g., tattooing); and risk associated with credence goods (e.g., financial advising). In the second type, the consumer is motivated by the affective benefits offered by the service. Examples include martial arts training, and adventure recreations (Arnould & Price, 1993; Siehl, Bowen & Pearson, 1992).

In these contexts, customers seek emotional benefits of services. The service employees convey the affective content of events through their own engagement, emotions, sense of drama and skills (Deighton, 1992; Grove & Fisk, 1992). Competence and efficiency will be expected of service providers (Arnould & Price, 1993). In these circumstances, customers want the employee to interact with them on the basis of their emotional state, rather than according to a standardized script by the management (Price et al., 1995). Therefore emotional labour is not enough, and emotional labour and engineering of emotion will have expanded roles. As emotional intelligence constitutes abilities of displaying strong self-awareness and high levels of interpersonal skills, and emotional intelligent individuals are empathetic, and adaptable (e.g., Bar-On, 2002; Boytzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000; Goleman, 1995; 1998; Sjoberg & Littorin, 2003), hence highly emotionally intelligent people are more likely to harness the emotional level of the encounter (Fineman, 1996). Emotional intelligence can moderate the customer's attitudes and behaviours resulting from the employees' encounter behaviours (Hartel et al., 1999).

The second type of emotional events associated with the encounter may take place in the low-affect context. In this context, customers' emotions may be caused by service employees' encounter behaviours. For example, customers enter into a restaurant, and expect a normal procedure: order taken and food served in time. Once this is achieved, negative attitudes from the customers can be avoided. However, in most situations, employees have emotions too. The emotions may be sourced from role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload, based on the role theory (Bateman & Strasser, 1984; Hrebiniak 1974; Hartline & Ferrell, (1996), as well as from customers

because of the interactive nature of the service encounter. Employees' emotions may affect their service behaviours, which thus affect customers' attitudes.

Emotional response toward services

In identifying five service encounter dimensions: mutual understanding, extra attention, authenticity, competence and minimum standards of civility, Price et al. (1994) examined customers' emotional responses to service provider's service encounter performance. The results show that mutual understanding, extras, authenticity and competency are the significant factors in positive emotional responses to service encounter. However, failing to meeting minimum standards of civility negatively affects positive feelings. On the other side, failing to meet minimum standards of civility is the most important predictor of negative feelings; mutual understanding is a significant predictor of negative emotions at the 0.02 level.

In this circumstance, the influence of service employee's emotional intelligence on customer's quality perception and service satisfaction can be interpreted from two aspects. First, through the aspect of perceiving, understanding and managing the employee's own emotions, emotional intelligence exerts effect on preventing the detrimental side of emotional labour mentioned above that may affect the labourer's performance over the encounter with customers, thus influences the customer's perceptions towards the firm's service quality. On the other hand, according to Hartel, Barker and Barker (1999), emotional intelligence, through the aspect of perceiving, understanding and managing customer's emotions, can be served as a vehicle by

which service providers can affect a customer's emotion formation and appraisal process in service encounters.

Emotions aroused by customer attributions

Third, researchers (e.g., Bitner, Booms & Tetreault, 1990; Hartel et al., 1999) indicate that emotions are not only affected by the service encounter and the employee's response, but also by the customer's attributions concerning the encounter. In other words, a customer may bring his or her own emotions into a service encounter, and their dis/satisfaction is caused by their own behaviours. Bitner et al (1994) found that unsatisfactory service encounters may be due to inappropriate customer behaviours. Their study provides empirical evidence that these difficult customer types do exist and in fact can be the source of their own dissatisfaction. In some service industries, problem customers are the source of 22% of the dissatisfactory incidents. This group may be even larger in industries in which the customer has greater input into the service delivery process.

Under this circumstance, frontline employee's emotional competencies are believed to be important factors in solving customers' problems (Bitner et al., 1990), achieving customer satisfaction (Bardzil & Slaski, 2003). In a few qualitative studies, Bitner (1990) and Bitner et al. (1990) show that customers have positive emotions towards service encounters when employees possess emotionally competent behaviours. Bitner et al also found that an employee's ability to adapt to special needs and requests enhances customers' positive perceptions of the service encounter. Furthermore, several studies have shown that the friendliness, enthusiasm and

attentiveness of contact employees positively affect customers' perceptions of service quality (e.g., Bowen & Schneider, 1985; Rafaeli, 1993). These behaviours have implications of emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 1998).

Emotional contagion

Finally, emotions associated with the service encounter may be accounted for by emotional contagion. According to emotional contagion theory (Hatfield, Cacioppo & Rapson, 1994), emotions are contagious, despite who is the transmitter. Emotional contagion is the interactions that people automatically and continuously tend to mimic and synchronize their movements with the facial expressions, voices, postures movements, and the instrumental behaviours of others. Many scholars have suggested that emotions affect the dynamics of a conversation between a customer-contact employee and customer (e.g., Liljander et al., 1995). Verbal cues, and especially nonverbal cues from the part of sender, which set the emotional tone in a conversation, make up for this process of impression (Weitz et al. 1993). Once a person contacts another, this person arouses the other person. This process of arousal also takes place in the opposite direction. It is suggested that seeing someone express an emotion can evoke that mood regardless of the facial expression mimicking and people become influenced in an unconscious manner (Goleman, 1995).

Nevertheless, the emotional contagion theory explains individual differences, abilities to infect another person or to become infected by another person's emotions. For example, when people mimic and synchronize reactions with one another, some might be powerful transmitters of emotions (they are able to infect others with their

emotions) and others might be powerful catchers of emotions (they assume the senders' emotions) (Hatfield et al., 1994). Transmitters, those who by their innate bodily circuitry transmit their emotions to others, are charismatic, colourful and entertaining, scored high on dominance, affiliation, and exhibition (Hatfield et al., 1994). In many cases, being able to transmit positive emotions to another person might cause this other person to become more accessible to the intention of the conversation (Isen & Means, 1983). On the other side, those susceptible to the emotions of others, are people whose attention tends to be riveted to others. Therefore, they are more likely to be affected by other people's emotions. According to Goleman (1995), those who can infect others or be infected by others' emotions without suffering burnout or emotional dissonance could be perceived as emotionally intelligent people, while burnout and emotional dissonance have been empirically evidenced to be negatively related to one's behaviour and performance (Abraham, 1998a).

Based on the aforementioned classification, the encounter between casino frontline employees and the clients also contains emotional contents. The first is emotional services that casinos deliver, and the emotional benefits out of the emotional motives of gambling that casino players seek; the second is the emotional response towards the key account representative's services; the third is customers' emotional reactions towards the gambling result: winning or losing, in other words, the customers' own attributions. Therefore, the influence of emotional intelligence on service encounter also has implication in the interpersonal interactions between casino frontline employees and casino players, and emotional intelligence can be a factor in affecting these employees' service encounter behaviours.

3.2.4.4 Emotional intelligence and the service encounter in casino key account settings

Gambling involves emotional factors. According to the definition by Productivity Commission (1999), gambling is regarded as a subset of all voluntary human risk taking activities, where the outcome may be guessed at, but cannot be known with certainty. At the same time the definition includes "playing games" which implies a voluntary and recreational element. What casinos deliver, and the customer seeks, is a gaming-related entertainment experience (Macomber, 1999). Risk taking, recreational etc., these gaming related terms are all emotionally loaded. The emotional experience in the casino is sourced from gambling motives.

Most gambling motives are emotional. According to Kale (2003), some gaming behaviour may be out of symbolic motives or mere hedonic motives. Symbolic motives include gaming to maintain a symbolic sense of control over one's destiny, and gaming to symbolically replace love or sexual desire, or "future self" involving a desire of winning the big jackpot. Cotte (1997) explains hedonic motives involve pleasure-seeking motivations, such as positive reinforcement, self-esteem enhancement, and pure pleasure seeking. Empirically, Lee, Lee, Bernard and Yoon (2005) found that challenge seeking is one of the main gaming motives.

Regarding gambling as part of leisure behaviour and leisure consumption, Cotte further (1997) disaggregated eight gaming motives:

1) Gambling as learning and evaluating;

2) Gambling as a high and low emotion, excitement;

3) Gambling as self-definition;

4) Gambling as risk-taking;

5) Gaming as cognitive self-classification;

6) Gaming as emotional self-classification;

7) Gambling as competing; and

8) Gambling as interpersonal interactions.

From self-concept point of view, Loros (2004) claims that gambling has psychological benefits, especially for seniors, who may feel a loss of control of their lives and thus regain a sense of control through gambling, which influence the seniors' self-awareness and contribute to the enhancement of the self-concept and self esteem.

Studies also show that depression is a common condition found in casino players. Regular gamblers have poor tolerance for boredom, and boredom is related to aspects of depression (i.e. Blaszczynski, McConaghy & Frankova, 1990). Porter, Ungar, Frisch & Chopra, (2004) reported some people play in the casino out of loneliness, which sources from individual interpersonal disturbances during childhood, such as loss of a close family member due to divorce, separation, rejection, emotional neglect, and physical abuse. These players are often referred as "action seekers" (Lesieur & Blume, 1991). Their gaming behaviours are motivated by a desire to escape the tedium of modern life (Jang, Lee, Park, & Stokowski, 2000).

Recent studies have illustrated the range and strength of emotions that regular players experience during a sequence of gaming decisions (Coventry 2001; Schellinck & Schrans 1998). The latest theoretical model of human decision making, subjective expected emotion (Mellers, Schwartz & Ritov, 1999) has provided a strong account of

human gambling choices in the laboratory and which has seen recent support in field studies with regular gamblers (O'Connor 2000). The cortical responses of human subjects to the expectation of winning money (Breiter, Itzhak, Kaheman, Dale & Shizgal, 2001) support the view that strong emotional/physiological responses during a session of play are a natural human experience. The conclusion can be made that casino players are emotional, including both positive affect and negative affect (Crawford & Henry, 2004). As Lee et al.'s study found that win seeking is the primary motive that people come to a casino to play; the feeling of fulfilment from winning itself is emotional. On the other hand, "Money is as real for most customers as it is for you. When customers "lose" as they are bound to if they play long enough and often enough, they will be upset and frustrated" (Kale, posted on June 14, 2001).

Customer's emotional feelings sometimes inevitably translate into difficult behaviours that the customer-contact staff have to encounter with (Kale, 2001). Customers are not always right, but the management requires the frontline employees to treat them as if they are (Bitner, 1990). This sometimes leads to emotional dissonance of the contact employees and thus affects their encounter behaviours, which further leads to customer emotional reactions and behavioural intentions. Emotional intelligence, conceptualised as emotional abilities in managing one's own emotions and those of others, may be able to be incorporated into casino settings as the emotional capability possessed by casino key account representatives in regulating the emotional encounters between casino key accounts and the representatives. As proposed by Harter, Barker and Barker (1999), emotional intelligence can be the vehicle of facilitating customer emotional formation and subsequent behavioural intention through adjusting the service encounter behaviours of customer contact employees.

Although emotional intelligence is regarded as a nascent psychological construct, the previous discussion about the history of its development, extant complimentary conceptualisations, and its measurability has demonstrated validity of this construct. Evidence of its predictive validity in working settings has demonstrated potential implications in predicting employee performance. The relationship between emotional intelligence and service encounters has provided theoretical and empirical foundation for its applications in the casino context, specifically the encounters between casino key accounts and representatives, given that the context is emotionally charged as discussed previously. On the basis of above discussions, this study incorporates emotional intelligence to casino settings to propose its relationship with the service performance of casino key account representative being the service employees for casino key accounts. In addition, the current study adopts the concept of trait EI; hence, the following hypothesis is formed:

Hypothesis 1: Trait EI is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives

3.3 The Five Factor Model of personality

3.3.1 Overview

The "Five Factor Model" (FFM) construct of personality has been used in the current study with the following reasons: first, this study adopts the concept of trait EI, which is based on the operationalisation of emotional intelligence as a personality trait, measured through self-report methods, as discussed in the previous section. Regarded as a personality trait, embedded in the personality framework, trait EI needs to demonstrate incremental validity over the personality factor in order to contribute substantially in the theory of personality domain (Brackett & Mayer, 2003). Therefore, the relevant literature about personality is reviewed before discussing the incremental validity of trait EI. Secondly, based on the study conducted by Salgado (2003) that compares the criterion validity of the Big Five personality dimensions when assessed using the Five-Factor Model (FFM) based inventories and non-FFM based inventories, the results suggest that FFM should be used to make personnel selection decisions for practitioners. This study proposed the use of the FFM of personality for investigating its relationship with the service performance of casino key account representatives. The following section reveals the relevant literature about the FFM of personality, from the basic conceptualisation of personality to the development of the FFM, followed by presenting the evidence of the FFM as the

predictor of job performance, its role in jobs involving social interactions, based on which the hypothesis is made.

3.3.2 Personality conceptualisation

Personality as one of the major classes of individual difference variables has received extensive attention in personnel selection studies as a predictor of job performance. Characterised as one's patterns of behaviour to feel and act in a certain way which distinguishes one person from the other, personality is said to be able to provide insight into whether an individual will do a given job, as compared to the other variable, a person's ability, which suggests if an individual can do a given job (Sackett, Gruys & Elligson, 1998). Besides, personality traits have been proposed to be consistent and stable across a lifetime, acting as a type of template for an individual's behaviour (Myers, 1998).

From a socioanalytic perspective, Hogan and Shelton (1998) indicate that personality theories analyse an individual's similarities as well as differences. The similarities can be used to anticipate a person's behaviour and performance, as they reflect the universal features of human nature. On the other hand, the differences, reflecting the major parameters of human performance, can be used to explain a person's behaviours and performance. Furthermore, Hogan and Shelton distinguish personality between inside perspective and outside manner from the social interaction point of view. Personality from an inside perspective consists of people's needs for acceptance, status and predictability as well as people's identities during social interactions; while a person's reputation in interacting with people form the outside

perspective. The inside identity is often used to explain a person's performance, and the outside reputation is used to predict a person's performance. Personality researchers do believe that people in fact have long term and dispositional traits that influence their behavior in work settings. Indeed, during the last two decades, studies have shown that personality measure is a valid predictor of job performance and it has been used as a relevant procedure for personnel selection (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991).

3.3.3 Trait theory

In the development of personality research, there are a few key personality theories: psychoanalytic; humanistic; biological; behavioural, social learning and cognitive; and trait theories. Among those, trait theory has become one of the most predominant and well-accepted personality theories obtained by unweighted summation of scale values and attempts to explain personality in terms of the dynamics that underlie behaviour. Traits are dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and actions (Myers, 1998). Trait personality theories suggest that a person can be described on the basis of a certain number of personality traits.

However, there has been confusion and pessimism in the development of trait personality theory. The reasons lie in, according to Mount and Barrick (1998), first, literally thousands of personality traits have been investigated and/or potentially could be investigated. The number of such traits make a review of research findings in this area unwieldy; second, in a number of cases traits with the same names had different

meanings, and other areas, traits with different names had the same meaning; third, most prior reviews of personality and performance were narrative reviews, which limited the nature of the inferences that could be drawn. Nevertheless, the Big Five Personality Factor Model - often called the "big Five" or the "Five Factor Model" (FFM) – a classification of traits, has become the most widespread personality theory during last two decades.

3.3.4 Development of the FFM of personality

Derived from the early empirical work of Raymond Cattell (1946), the FFM illustrates that personality consists of five relatively independent dimensions which provide a meaningful and comprehensive taxonomy for studying individual differences, and reflect the essence of human nature in individual differences (McCrae & Costa, 1986; Mount & Barrick, 1998). Back in 1932, William McDougall, writing in the first issue of *Character and Personality* (which later became the Journal of Personality), conjectured that personality might be broadly analysed into five distinguishable but separable factors, namely, intellect, character, temperament, disposition, and temper (cited from Digman, 1990). More recently, personality researchers came to a general conclusion that the domain of personality attributes could be adequately described by five superordinate constructs – the Five Factor Model, usually labelled Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Conscientiousness and Agreeableness.

The grouping of five dimensions can be attributed to the lexical approach in the early personality research. The lexical approach was originated in studies of natural

language trait terms (John, Angleitner & Ostendorf, 1988). Beginning with the work of Allport and Olbert (1936), who noted some 4500 trait terms in English, the wealth of vocabulary testifies to the social importance of personality traits, several studies have attempted to specify exhaustively the range of personality traits by examining English language trait names, on the assumption that native speakers would have evolved words for all important individual differences (cited from Costa & McCrae, 1995).

The lexical hypothesis holds that all important individual differences will have been noted by speakers of a natural language at some point in the evolution of the language and encoded in trait terms. By encoding these terms, the basic dimensions of personalty can be discovered. To the extent that the lexical hypothesis is correct, analyses of language will provide a comprehensive taxonomy of personality traits. However, the lexical tradition has played a very small role, as it was limited to an analysis of personality traits represented in ordinary language. According to McCrae and John (2000), lexical studies were ideally suited for the exploration of personality structure; the model they led to could be confirmed, enlarged, or qualified by studies of questionnaires.

In reality, most personality assessments have been based on questionnaires with scales designed for specific practical applications or to measure constructs derived from personality theory (Costa & McCrae, 1995). However, as any other psychological construct, the measure of personality is developed with critics and skepticism. The issues mainly involve self-report personality measures lacking validity, social desirability, and being unsuitable for predicting job performance. Among those, the

most frequent criticism in applied settings is that personality measures are easily faked. With regard to this, Hough and her colleagues (1990) debated that people can fake some of their personality scores when instructed; the base rate of faking during the application process is virtually nonexistent; and even when faking is evident, criterion-related validities change only slightly. Later on, the author examines strategies for dealing with intentional distortion and their effects on criterion-related validities, subgroup differences and selection decisions. Ones, Viswesvaran and Reiss (1996) extend the study by using social desirability as a controlling variable, and conclude that the operational validity of personality measures is left intact.

For the development of the big five factor of personality research, Costa and McCrae made substantiated contributions. The authors have not only developed an inventory to assess the five traits dimensions by the five robust factors of the rating domain, but have used the model and inventory in a series of studies that have demonstrated the ubiquity of the Big Five. According to McCrae and Costa (1985), FFM is not based on any single theory of personality, but has been shown to encompass scales that operationalise a number of theoretical perspectives. It has been recognized as necessary and sufficient to describe the structure of personality at a global level.

By analysing Cattell's Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970, cited from Digman, 1990), Costa and McCrae (1976) pointed to three meaningful clusters of scales, two of which mirrored the Eysenck Neuroticism and Extraversion dimensions (cited from Digman, 1990). Further development of the third dimension led to the creation of the NEO Personalty Inventory (NEO-PI). The three original scales N E O were subsequently joined by Scale A (Agreeableness) and

C (Conscientiousness). Birenbaum and Montag (1986) using an Israeli sample, factored the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire, and also obtained a five-factor solution for the 16PF correlations that was subsequently replicated by Digman (1988).

Using the NEO-PI as markers of the Big Five, Costa and McCrae (1985) have also demonstrated the presence of the five-factor model in the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964), the Jackson Personality Research Form (PRF; Jackson, 1974; Costa & McCrae, 1988), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Myers & McCauley, 1985; McCrae & Costa, 1989), and the California Q-Set – developed by Block (1961) and his colleagues who sought to provide a universal, clinically based language for describing all important aspects of personality (cited from McCrae & Costa, 1986).

Given the recognition of the five components of FFM, many writers (e.g., Wood & Beckmann, 2006; Rothstein & Goffin, 2006), however, have argued that five factors are insufficient to summarize all that we know about individual differences in personality. These authors comment that five factors do not exhaust the description of personality, and they merely represent the highest hierarchical level of trait description. For example, Hogan (1983) suggested that six major dimensions might probably encompass all the particulars of observation. Nevertheless, the principal difference between the six-factor and five-factor model seems to involve a splitting of the usual Extraversion dimension into sociability and activity.

Despite the negative opinions about the FFM, evidences show that these five factors have been obtained in different cultures, and provide a common language for

psychologists from different traditions. It has emerged across languages such as in German, Dutch, Chinese etc. (McCrae & Costa, 1997), across different theoretical perspectives such as in children (Digman & Inouye, 1986) as well as adults (Waller & Ben-Porath, 1987), and across rating sources (e.g., Digman, 1990), as well as self-reports (McCrae & Costa, 1985).

In addition, the different views of a number of personality psychologists were converging on five basic factors of personality. According to Barrick and Mount (1991), the FFM, founded on a solid scientific foundation, could provide a basic phenomenon for personality theorists to explain, a clear measurement framework for organizing research, and a guide to the comprehensive assessment of individuals that should be of value to educational, industrial/organizational, and clinical psychologists. Hence, the FFM has been extensively used in personnel selection and personality research in the field of personnel psychology in recent years. Representing the higher order personality structure, each component of FFM contains certain traits listed below respectively.

The first dimension is Eysenck's (1971) Extraversion / Intraversion. Extraversion implies an energetic approach to introversion. Traits frequently associated with it include being sociable, gregarious, assertive and active. Hogan (1986) interpreted this dimension as consisting of two components, Ambition (initiative, surgency, ambition, and impetuous) and Sociability (sociable, exhibitionist and expressive).

The second dimension is Emotional Stability or Neuroticism (e.g., McCrae & Costa, 1985). Common traits associated with Emotional Stability include secure, stable,

relaxed, self-sufficient, not anxious, tolerant of stress; while Neuroticism includes being anxious, depressed, angry, embarrassed, emotional, worried, and insecure. These two dimensions represent the "big two" described by Eysenck (1971) over 30 years ago.

The third dimension is Agreeableness or Likeability (e.g., Goleberg 1981; Costa & McCrae, 1985). Others have labelled it Friendliness (Guilford & Zimmerman, 1949, cited from Digman, 1990), and Social Conformity (Fiske 1949, cited from Digman, 1990). Agreeableness seeks to measure whether one has a prosocial, co-operative orientation towards others or if they act with antagonism. Traits associated with this dimension involve the more humane aspects of humanity – characteristics such as altruism, nurturance, caring, and emotional support at the one end of the dimension, and hostility, indifference to others, self-centeredness, spitefulness, and jealousy at the other.

The fourth dimension is Conscience. Conscientiousness includes the control of impulse which facilitates tasks and other goal-oriented behaviours (Hergenhahn & Olson, 1999). Because its relationship to a variety of educational achievement measures and its association with volition, it has also been called Will to Achieve or Will (Digman 1989), and Work (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989). There is some disagreement regarding the essence of this dimension. Some have suggested that Conscientiousness reflects dependability; that is, being careful, thorough, responsible, organized, and planful. Others have suggested that in addition to these traits, it incorporates volitional variables, such as hardworking, achievement-oriented, and persevering.

The fifth dimension is Openness to Experience or Intellectence. Dimension V was interpreted as Intellect (Goldberg 1981; Hogan 1983; Digman & Inouye, 1986) and Intelligence (Borgatt, 1964) and Openness (Costa & McCrae, 1985). These are more or less related. McCrae and Costa (1985) analysed Openness as openness to feelings and to new ideas, flexibility of thought, and readiness to indulgence in fantasy.

Given that the FFM is built upon a solid scientific foundation, its popularity lies in its application and utility in occupational settings. In other words, the FFM has implications in job performance.

3.3.5 The FFM of personality and job performance

In a review of the personality-occupational performance literature, Hogan, Hogan and Roberts (1996) indicated that well-constructed measures of normal personality are valid predictors of a wide range of occupational performance, they generally do not result in adverse impact for minority groups, and they can be linked to performance defined in terms of productivity. A few meta-analyses of personality measures have confirmed they are valid predictors of job performance for various occupational groups (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991; Ones & Viswesvaran, 2001).

Barrick and Mount (1991) in their meta-analysis investigated five occupational groups: professional, police, managers, sales, skilled/semi-skilled and three types of job performance criteria: job proficiency, training proficiency, personal data by using Digman's (1990) personality names and definitions: extraversion, emotional stability,

agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. This study differs from previous studies by using an accepted taxonomy to study the relation of personality to job performance criteria. It was not to determine the overall validity of personality but to increase understanding the way of the Big Five personality dimensions related to selected occupational groups and criterion types.

The most significant finding in the study is that Conscientiousness was found to be a consistently valid predictor for all occupational groups studied and for all criterion types. Secondly, Extraversion was shown to be a valid predictor (across criterion types) for two occupations, managers and sales. In another meta-analysis, Conscientiousness has also been found to be a valid predictor in job performance rated by supervisors (Frei & McDaniel, 1998).

Openness to Experience was found to be a valid predictor of one of the criterion categories, training proficiency. The explanation of these findings is that individuals who score high on this dimension are more likely to have positive attitudes toward learning experiences in general. Several researchers have shown that a key component in the success of training programs is the attitude of the individual when she or he enters the training program. This dimension has the highest correlation with measures of cognitive ability (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Therefore, it is possible that Openness to Experience is actually measuring ability to learn as well as motivation to learn.

More recently Hurley (1998a) has found that extroversion and agreeableness are positively associated with workers' service performance ratings that are provided by managers.

There are some discrepancies in the last two components: Agreeableness and Emotional Stability. Frei and McDaniel (1998) reported that both of the two dimensions were predictive of supervisor rating of job performance, while Barrick and Mount (1991) found Agreeableness is not to be an important predictor of job performance. As for Emotional Stability, most of the correlations with job performance were relatively low. One possible explanation, according to Barrick and Mount (1991), may be that those individuals who are highly neurotic are unable to function effectively on their own and, as a result, they are not likely to be in the labour force. More generally, the authors indicated that individuals might have "self-selected out" based on their own interests or perceptions of their emotional stability. Another explanation is that there may not be a linear relation between Emotional Stability and job performance beyond the 'critically unstable' range.

Using a confirmatory approach, Tett, Jackson and Rothstein (1991) conducted a second meta-analysis after viewing the results from that of Barrick and Mount (1991). The authors reported an estimated overall correlation between personality and job performance of 0.24, and argued that the mean validities from confirmatory studies were largely greater than those obtained from exploratory studies. Contrary to the finding from Barrick and Mount (1991), Tett and colleagues found that Agreeableness and Openness to Experience were most highly related to job performance. Salgado's (1998) meta-analysis was carried out in Europe demonstrated that Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability had significant relationships with job performance across criteria and occupations. The validities from the other three components were comparatively lower in this regard. In Salgado's study, apart from Openness to

Experience as found in Barrick and Mount's study, Agreeableness was shown to have relationship with training criteria.

The discrepancies from these findings may suggest that, as indicated by Nikolaou and Robertson (2001), those researchers in the meta-analyses grouped the personality measures not developed within the FFM into the Big Five. In other words, they misclassified some scales into the Big Five. The other reason might be the lack of convergent validity, indicated by the low correlation between the scales measuring the same factor. Hence, Salgado (2003) initiated another meta-analysis to compare the criterion validity of the Big Five by using the FFM-based inventories and non-FFM-based inventories. The results show that the former in general has higher operational validity than the latter inventories. The author therefore suggests the FFM shall be used in personnel selection. This also provides a rationale for the current study to use one of the FFM inventories for assessing the subjects.

Despite the discrepancy, personality measures are indeed shown to relate to job performance. Nevertheless, its variance in explaining the performance depends on the type of job (Sackett, Gruys & Ellingson, 1998). For example, salespeople with high levels of extraversion normally have better overall job performance, because the sales job needs lots of social interaction, and an introverted salesperson would be less effective than an extravert. A highly neurotic accountant who fusses over every detail would be an extremely beneficial addition to a company. Some researchers (e.g., Sinha, 2005) indicated that personality has a great impact on overall productivity for jobs involving interpersonal interactions.

3.3.6 The FFM of personality and performance in jobs involving interpersonal interactions

Hogan, Hogan and Busch (1984) used a multi-dimensional service orientation to demonstrate the importance of prediction in jobs involving interaction with others. They found that people who were more cooperative, self-controlled, dependable, and well adjusted scored higher on service orientation. These measures are representative of the three FFM traits previously identified (Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability). In a meta-analysis, Organ and Ryan (1995) suggest that an additional personality dimension, Extraversion, is a valid predictor of performance in jobs requiring interpersonal interaction. This was supported in Salgado's (1998) meta-analysis study. This may be accounted for by that individuals who are upbeat, outgoing and talkative should seemingly have a higher performance in settings that require interaction with others. However, the relationship between Extraversion and performance for a sample of wholesale sales representatives was not found (Barrick & Mount, 1993). Stewart (1996) reported the Extraversion-performance relationship was moderated by reward structures.

More recently, in a meta-analysis examining the five-factor model of personalty and performance in jobs involving interpersonal interactions, Mount, Barrick and Stewart (1998) reported that three personality factors, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness and Emotional Stability, were significantly related to jobs involving interpersonal interactions, particularly in service settings. Conscientiousness had the highest

correlation with the criterion variable, followed by Agreeableness and Emotional stability. Conscientiousness is said to be at the core of service provision (Barrick & Mount, 1998). Successful service providers are accurate, dependable, responsive and timely (Parasuraman et al. 1986). The construct similarity between its description and Conscientiousness suggests that more conscientious employees provide high quality service.

Although there is some disagreement about the influence of Agreeableness in service settings, Hogan et al.'s (1984) study did show this trait facilitates service performance. Another factor that affects performance in such a job is Neuroticism. According to Mount et al. (1998), service employees scoring high on Emotional Stability are likely to be more relaxed and tolerant of stress, which helps them build credibility and trust with clients. Credibility and trust have been linked to higher quality service (Parasuraman et al., 1986), suggesting that Emotional Stability and service performance will be positively correlated. Extraversion and Openness to Experience in Mount et al.'s study were found to have small but non-zero correlations with jobs involving interpersonal interactions (0.14 and 0.17 respectively). Regardless of the various results, the previous studies paved the foundation for applying the FFM in the current study. Given the job of casino key account representatives involving interactions with casino clients, based on the result found by Mount et al. (1998), the following hypothesis was made using a sample of casino key account representatives:

Hypothesis 2: **the FFM of personality is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives**

3.5 Trait EI and personality

3.4.1 Overview

The following section reveals the relevant literature regarding the relationship between trait EI and personality in order to propose the incremental validity of trait EI over the personality factor in explaining any variance within the service performance of casino key account representatives.

3.4.2 Emotional intelligence and personality

The relationship between emotional intelligence and personality has been widely discussed in the relevant literature, but the degree of the relationship depends on the measures used to assess emotional intelligence. For example, using one of the emotional intelligence measures, BarOn's Emotional Intelligence Quotient and the NEO-PI-R, a measure of the Big Five personality factors, Brackett and Mayer (2003) found that emotional intelligence is highly significantly correlated with Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, but moderately related to Openness to experience. Sala (2002) also found that emotional intelligence measured by Goleman's Emotional Competence Inventory is significantly related to Extraversion, Openness to experience and Conscientiousness. However, when the MSCEIT was used, only Openness to experience and Agreeableness were found to relate to emotional intelligence (Brackett and Mayer, 2003). Surprisingly there is no significant relationship found between the two constructs when the MEIS is adopted (Caruso, Mayer & Salovey, 2002).

The differences lie in how emotional intelligence is measured. In general, when it is assessed through self-report measure, emotional intelligence is more strongly related to personality measure, as indicated in previous literature review (Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides, Furhnam & Frederickson, 2004; Van Der Zee & Wabeke, 2003). The weak relationships of the MSCEIT and MEIS with personality is construed as that the two measures are through performance-based tests, which is more related to cognitive ability measures (Petrides, Furhnam & Frederickson, 2004; Van Der Zee & Wabeke, 2003). Petrides and Furnham (2001) classify the self-report emotional intelligence measures as trait EI, the performance-based measures as ability EI. This distinction accounts for the difference of the incremental validity in the criterion variables explained by emotional intelligence and personality measures.

3.4.3 The incremental validity of trait EI

Apart from comparing correlations of the two constructs, emotional intelligence and personality have been constantly used to compare their individual variance in the criterion variables (e.g., Vakola, Tsaousis, & Nikolau, 2003; Van Der Zee & Wabeke, 2003). Researchers (e.g., Brackett & Mayer, 2003; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004) in the relevant area indicate that emotional intelligence, as a newly incepted construct in the psychology domain, should not only demonstrate criterion and predictive validity, but also incremental validity over those well-established constructs in the field. Due to various measures of emotional intelligence in the literature, such as self-report questionnaires or performance-based tests, caution should be taken in evaluating its incremental validity to account for additional

variance, as different methods of measuring this construct lead to the differences in its incremental validity.

Based on the distinction of trait EI and ability EI, the incremental validity of emotional intelligence is discernible. Ability EI, assessed by performance-based measures, is expected to provide additional variance over the traditional intelligence measures. However, the results from Van Rooy and Viswesvaran's (2003) meta-analysis showed that the ability EI only demonstrated incremental validity over GMA by 0.02, while the incremental validity of GMA over emotional intelligence is as large at 0.31. Moreover, trait EI, assessed by self-report measures should demonstrate incremental validity over the Big Five personality factors, something which has been evidenced by a number of empirical studies (e.g. Austin, Saklofske & Egan, 2005; Saklofske, Austin & Minski, 2003). As the current study adopted a self-report emotional intelligence measure, the following discussion will centre on the incremental validity of trait EI.

In discussing if trait EI is simply or more than a trait, Van Dan Zee et al. (2004) found that trait EI as measured by Bar-On's Emotional Intelligence Quotient was not only substantially related to most dimensions of personality measure, but also explained additional variance over and above the personality measure in the identified two dimensions of competencies: support and leadership. In a study to compare the predictive validity in attitudes towards organizational change, Vakola, Tsaousis and Nikolau (2003) found that the overall emotional intelligence score explained additional variance over personality measure, however, when using the sub-scales of

emotional intelligence, only one dimension of trait EI – the use of emotions scale demonstrated more effect than personalty measure in the criterion variable.

Day, Therrien and Carroll (2005) conducted a study to explore the relationships among emotional intelligence assessed by Bar-On's EQ-i, Big Five personality factors, Type A Behaviour Pattern (TABP), daily hassles, and psychological health/strain factors (in terms of perceived well-being, strain, and three components of burnout). The results showed that the EQ-i was highly correlated with most aspects of personality and TABP. After controlling for the impact of hassles, personality, and TABP, the five EQ-i subscales accounted for incremental variance in two of the five psychological health outcomes. Similar results were found in Chapman and Hayslip's (2005) study. The authors reported that emotional intelligence measured by Schutte et al.'s (1998) self-report emotional intelligence scale significantly and uniquely predicted variance beyond personality measured by NEO Five–Factor Inventory (NEO–FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992) in loneliness and social stress.

A recent study by Petrides, Pérez-González and Furnham (2007) attempted to investigate the criterion and incremental validity of trait EI. Defining emotional intelligence as a constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies, the authors found that trait EI is more related to measures of rumination, life satisfaction, depression, dysfunctional attitudes, and coping. Most relationships remained statistically significant even after controlling for Big Five variance. The authors concluded that trait EI has a role to play in personality, clinical, and social psychology, often with effects that are incremental over the basic dimensions of personality and mood.

The above studies demonstrate trait EI indeed explains additional variance in certain criteria beyond personality measures. However, the existing studies reveal a lack of research on the incremental validity of trait EI over personality in organizational settings. Applying the concepts to a casino setting, the following hypothesis is made by employing the sample of casino key account representatives:

Hypothesis 3: trait EI explains additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives above and beyond the variance explained by the FFM of personality, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience.

3.5 Customer orientation and adaptability

3.5.1 Overview

As indicated in Chapter two, the preferred approach of casino marketing for casino key accounts is relationship marketing (Kale, 2005). According to Wotruba (1996), when a company pursues a relationship marketing approach, its sales force is supposed to adopt relationship selling behaviours. Crosby, Evans and Cowles (1990) refer relational selling behaviour as "a behavioural tendency exhibited by some sales representatives to husband/cultivate the buyer-seller relationship and see to its maintenance and growth" (p.71). As customer retention is the focal point of relationship marketing strategy, relationship selling is the behaviour implemented by sales people to achieve the marketing objective, which has implications for salespersons' performance evaluation. Casino key account representatives, being the service sales people for casinos, bear the onus of establishing and maintaining relationships with casino key accounts; the relationship-oriented behaviours may have influence on their performance.

In the marketing literature, customer orientation and adaptability have been regarded as two personal selling behaviours associated with sales outcomes during the sales interactions with customers, emphasising meeting customers' needs in order to achieve customer satisfaction in the selling context (Franke & Park, 2006). They are also characterised as relationship selling behaviours, referred to as relationship-oriented characteristics (Georges, Guenzi, & Pardo, 2004; Keilor, Parker, & Pettijohn,

1999; 2000). This study incorporates the two constructs into casino key account context to predict the service performance of casino key account representatives. The following section reveals the relevant literature about relationship selling and its significance in selling effectiveness. It further identifies the relevant relationship-oriented characteristics for the current study: customer orientation and adaptability, based on which the hypotheses were made to answer research question 4.

3.5.2 Relationship selling

The evolutionary pattern of personal selling is like Darwin's theory of natural selection: the fittest survive (Lambkin & Day, 1989). Relationship selling, defined as the building of mutual trust within the buyer/seller dyad to create long-term relationships with selected customers, has become the personal selling approach that fits well in today's market situations and a firm's competition strategy (Jolson, 1997; Keilor, Parker, & Pettijohn, 2000). The market situation has changed in the modern economy. The marketplace today in most industries is becoming more and more competitive domestically and globally, which results in quality products and good service alone being inadequate for a company to gain a competitive advantage. The traditional mass markets, which, according to the American Marketing Association (AMA) (1985), involves the integrated analysis, planning, and control of the 'marketing mix' variables (product, price, promotion, and distribution), to create exchange and satisfy both individual and organizational objectives, are becoming more and more fragmented. Today more and more markets are maturing, and the market offerings have become less standardized (Berry, 1995).

In many situations, customers themselves demand unstandardized offerings; furthermore, the emergence of advanced databases recreating in a computer has enabled most firms to know more about their customers. Based on the information gathered on customers' patterns and preferences from the database, the firm is able to treat different customers differently (Palmer & Bejou, 1994). On the other hand, most customers are becoming more and more sophisticated. They no longer want to remain anonymous and want individual treatment. For many categories of goods and services, customers seek superior ongoing relationships with their suppliers. To align with the market situation, a firm's marketing approach thus evolved into a new paradigm – relationship marketing by focusing on establishing, developing and maintaining long-term relationships with customers.

A firm's relationship marketing strategies, in most situations, are implemented by salespeople (Georges, Guenzi, & Pardo, 2004). Being in the boundary spanning position, salespeople are the primary source of communication for customers and have traditionally been a vital link between the firm and its customers (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990). These frontline employees play a key role in forming customers' perceptions of the firm's quality (Weitz & Bradford, 1999). Hence, their behaviours in interacting with customers are important for firms employing them to gain a competitive advantage (Weitz & Bradford, 1999). Given that relationship marketing has become the new marketing paradigm, it appears that the success of a firm's relationship marketing strategy depends to a large extent on the salespeople's selling behaviours.

Wotruba (1996) proposed a direct link between a firm's relationship marketing approach and its salespeople's relationship selling behaviours, which has been empirically examined by George, Guenzi & Pardo (2004). Employing customer orientation, adaptability, team selling, and organizational citizenship behaviours as relationship selling behaviours, George et al. found a significant link between a firm's relationship strategy and most categories of its salespeople's relationship selling behaviours. Relationship selling, as opposed to traditional transaction oriented selling, is an approach that takes into account customer needs and wants, in order to form relationships with customers across all stages of the buyer-seller relationship (Jolson, 1997). Relationship selling behaviours are viewed as a function for customer-contact employees to develop long-term relationships with customers (Anderson, 1996).

The concept of relationship selling has been supported by several empirical studies (Crosby, Evans, & Cowles, 1990; DeComier & Jobber, 1993; MacIntosh, Anglin, Szymanski, & Gentry, 1992). Crosby et al. (1990) view the salesperson's role in the selling of services as "relationship manager". Using a sample of service salespeople in the life insurance industry, the authors found that salespeople's future sales opportunities depend on customer perceived relationship quality, which comprises two components: trust and satisfaction. Specifically, those salespeople who engaged in selling behaviours focused on long-term relationships such as high contact intensity, mutual disclosure, and cooperative intentions had more favourable perceptions of relationship quality by the customers. Their results support the view that relationship oriented selling behaviours can build a strong buyer-seller bond. Another similar study was conducted by Boles, Brashear, Bellenger and Barksdale (2000). Using the three relational-characterised selling behaviours proposed by

Crosby et al. (1990), Boles et al. investigated the relationships between the selling behaviours and sales performance respectively. The results show a positive relationship between sales performance and two of the three dimensions - interaction intensity and mutual disclosure.

From the perspective of sales performance, MacIntosh, Anglin, Szymanski and Gentryet (1992) conducted two studies to find out if higher performing salespeople were those focusing on relationship building with customers. The first study of North American financial service salespeople found that those focusing on customers' trust achieved better performance. Using a sample of North American industrial salespeople working for a distributor of agricultural products, the second study found that those placing importance on relationship building instead of product benefits at early stages of the buyer-seller relationships were greater performers. Hence, based on the two studies, the authors concluded that relationship building and developing trust at early stages of the buyer-seller relationship are important to effective sales performance.

A study conducted by DeCormier and Jobber (1993) arrived at a similar results. However, the authors incorporate personality knowledge and microskills strategies into the use of relationship selling approach. Personality knowledge is referred as understanding the buyer's personality style; and microskills are the means that the salesperson uses to influence the buyer. In this study, DeCormier and Jobber employed two groups. One group had training in the aspects of relationship selling method, and the second group had only product knowledge training. They also divided the relationship selling process into four stages:

1) Introduction that involves rapport, respect and trust building;

2) Qualification by means of gathering information to define the problem;

3) Presentation designed to summarize and finalize the finer details of the sale; and

4) Closing with the focus on asking the prospect to respond to questions about alternatives.

The results indicated that the group who had relationship selling training demonstrated higher selling effectiveness than the other group. However, the authors pointed out that personality knowledge training alone could not produce significant results without the microskills being addressed. They also suggest that relationship selling approach should incorporate the concepts of adaptability, customer orientation as well as satisfaction.

3.5.3 Relationship selling behaviours

There are no commonly accepted selling behaviours in relationship selling literature. Crosby, Evans and Cowles (1990) suggest that relational selling behaviours be characterised by salesperson's demonstration of competence and use of low-pressure selling tactics, and refer such behaviour as "a behavioural tendency exhibited by some sales representatives to cultivate the buyer-seller relationship and see to its maintenance and growth" (p 71). The authors note that it comprises three elements: interaction intensity, mutual disclosure and cooperative intentions.

Keilor, Parker and Pettijohn (1999, 2000) believe relationship selling behaviours include customer orientation, adaptability, service orientation and professionalism. In

one study they used the four elements to examine their relationships with sales force performance satisfaction. At a later stage, they dropped professionalism, used the other three to examine their relationship with sales performance. Guenzi, Pardo and Georges (2003, 2004) incorporated customer orientation and adaptability as relational selling behaviours into their key account management research, but these authors also incorporated team selling and organizational citizenship behaviours into the domain of relationship selling behaviours.

Despite the inconsistency, to be characterised as relational behaviour in the selling context, according to Guenze et al. (2004), it shall avoid revenue generating behaviours, but aim for buyer-seller relationship building directed toward customer retention. The authors also point out this type of behaviour entails customers' perception of trust in the sales force. Other researchers (Boles et al., 2000; Crosby et al., 1990) indicate that there is a link between such behaviours and buyer-seller relationship quality composed of trust and satisfaction. In other words, relationship selling behaviours should have implications for building trust and customer satisfaction, which have been regarded as the antecedents of customer retention (Hennig-Thurau & Klee, 1997). Based on these interpretations, the attention will be paid to the two most recognised relationally based constructs: customer orientation and adaptability in the current study, as which conceive the aforementioned characteristics, as well as their implications in the study context.

3.5.3.1 Customer orientation

As early as 1981, Dubinsky and Staples proposed and empirically tested customer orientation as a preferred selling technique which industry salespeople would use to identify, and cater to, the needs of their customers in order to achieve customer satisfaction. In the following year, Saxe and Weitz designed a scale called selling orientation and customer orientation (SOCO) to measure customer orientation. They defined it as "the practice of the marketing concept at the level of the individual salesperson and customer" (Saxe & Weitz, 1982, p. 343). It includes the following characteristics: A desire to help customers make satisfactory purchase decisions; helping customers assess their needs; Offering products that will satisfy customers' needs; describing products (and services) adequately; avoiding descriptive or manipulative tactics; and avoiding the use of high pressure selling.

Customer orientation and trust

The classification of customer orientation as a relationally characterised behaviour is based on its association with customer relationship retention. Schultz and Good (2000) predicted salespeople's customer orientation is associated with a long-term buyer-seller relationship. The authors indicate that establishing enduring relationships necessitates developing customer trust. Customer trust may be related to customer-oriented selling. A study examining industrial salespeople indicates customer trust can be earned when the salesperson is perceived as being dependable, honest, competent, likable (Swan, Trawick, & Silva, 1985). Salespeople with these characteristics are likely to practice customer-oriented selling.

Additional evidence comes from a meta-analysis of empirical studies of customer trust in the salesperson. The study finds a positive relationship between benevolence (defined as fair, ethical, and cooperative) and customer trust (Swan, Bowers & Richardson 1999). The customer-oriented salesperson demonstrates characteristics of benevolence by keeping the customer's interests in mind, which undoubtedly would involve being fair and ethical. Finally, the ability to ask questions (strategic ability) and find creative solutions to customer problems (entrepreneurial ability) was positively related to customer trust in a broad sample of key account salespeople (Sengupta, Krapfel, & Pusateri, 2000). Williams (1998) suggests that customer orientation corresponds with the coordinative style of negotiation behaviour (Dabholkar, Johnston, & Cathey, 1994) since it reflects non-opportunistic behaviour that stresses customer focused solutions and mutual benefits. The coordinative style facilitates mutual trust and commitment, two prerequisites for relationship development (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Empirically Schultz and Good (2000) found that a salesperson's customer orientation was significantly related to long-term relationship orientation through the link with customer trust.

Customer orientation and customer satisfaction

According to Saxe and Weitz (1982), this approach emphasises long-term customer satisfaction rather than short-term objectives. They indicate that highly customer-oriented employees engage in behaviours aimed at increasing customer satisfaction, avoiding actions which sacrifice customer interest to increase the probability of making an immediate sale. Empirically, Goff, Boles and Stojack (2001) found that a

salesperson's customer orientation explains significant amounts of the variance in satisfaction with the customer contact employee, which, in turn positively influences satisfaction with the dealer, product and manufacturer. Their findings extend previous studies by demonstrating that a customer contact employee's customer orientation influences consumer satisfaction with a physical product through the mediating constructs of satisfaction with the contact employee and dealer. The finding conforms to that of Oliver and Swan (1989b) who found that customer satisfaction with the salesperson led to satisfaction with the dealer, which, in turn, leads to product satisfaction.

Drawing on a different perspective of four-dimensional customer orientation conceptualization, Hennig-Thorsten (2004), in a sample of nearly 1000 consumers from book/CD/DVD retailers and travel agencies, find that service employee's customer orientation is strongly related to customer satisfaction, also significantly impact the customer's emotional commitment to the service salesperson. Although the results show slight and non-significant relationship between customer orientation and customer retention in the case of travel agencies, the employee's ability in solving customer-related issues has influence on customer retention in the case of media retailers.

Customer orientation in the services context

Although the original conceptualisation of customer orientation was based on industrial salesperson, and mainly applied in selling contexts (e.g., Saxe & Weitz, 1982), Kelley (1992) argued that customer orientation played a more important role

for service employees in service firms than in other firms because of the intangibility, heterogeneity, and inseparability of services, as the behaviour of service salesperson affects the customers' perception of service quality (Bitner et al., 1990). Customer orientation has been frequently used in service settings (e.g., Honeycutt et al., 1995; Howe et al., 1994; O'Hara et al., 1991; Siguaw et al., 1994; Siguaw & Honeycutt, 1995; Swenson & Herche, 1994).

In service contexts, Brown et al. (2002) define customer orientation as service employees' tendency or predisposition to meet customer needs in an on-the-job context. They propose two dimensions in a service setting: the needs dimension and the enjoyment dimension. The needs dimension represents employees' beliefs about their ability to satisfy customer needs. This dimension is based on Saxe and Weitz's (1982) conceptualisation of customer orientation. The enjoyment dimension represents the degree to which interacting with and serving customers is motivated for an employee to serve customers by meeting their needs. Based on the requirements that must be met by service employees to satisfy consumers' needs during employee-consumer interaction processes, Hennig-Thurau and Thurau (2003) define customer orientation as the employee's behaviour in person-to-person interactions and suggest a three-dimensional conceptualisation: 1) An employee's customer-oriented skills; 2) His or her motivation to service customers; and 3) His or her self-perceived decision-making authority. The authors argue that only if all dimensions exist, an employee can behave in a fully customer-oriented sense. This was empirically evidenced by Hennig-Thurau (2004) and emphasized the non-compensatory trait of customer orientation dimensions.

The original scale for measuring customer orientation, SOCO, developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982) can be also applied to the service context. However, Daniel and Darby (1996) indicate that that the selling-orientation component of the SOCO scale is not applicable in most service contexts. Employing two samples of patients and nurses, Daniel and Darby modified the original SOCO, and created a new customer orientation scale (COS) with intention to apply to service settings, by dropping the elements related to selling component of the scale. The authors suggest that COS can be used to measure customer orientation for service providers for those working at non-sales types of service operations. Empirically, Brown et al. (2002) reported that customer orientation explains a significant percentage of variance in service employees' self-reported service performance. Based on this finding, incorporating customer orientation into casino setting, a relationship between customer orientation and the self-rated service performance of casino key account representatives is proposed:

Hypothesis 4a: customer orientation is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives

3.5.3.2 Adaptability

Adaptability, or adaptive selling is defined as, "altering of sales behaviours during a customer interaction or across customer interactions based on perceived information about the nature of the selling situation" (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986, p. 175). One of the conditions suitable for adaptive selling, according to Weitz, Sujan and Sujan (1986), is that "salespeople encounter a wide variety of customers with different needs". Therefore, adaptability becomes one of the key advantages of personal selling as a marketing tool (McIntyre, Claxton, Anselmi, & Wheatley, 2000).

Spiro, Perreault and Reynold (1977) noted that buyer and seller strategies are interdependent and may be modified based on actual sales negotiations. Spiro and Weitz (1990) incorporate the following into the practice of adaptive selling: Recognition that different selling approaches are needed in different sales situations; confidence in the ability to use a variety of different sales approaches; confidence in the ability to alter the sales approach during the customer interaction; the collection of information to facilitates adaptation; the actual use of different approaches (p. 61). Thus, adaptive selling may present the framework for using the appropriate selling approach for each customer. Jolson (1997) believes adaptability in selling context be a part of the relationship selling process, as it entails salesperson's adjustment during sales interactions based on his or her perceptions of customers' needs. This view was

confirmed by Williams (1998), as adaptability has implication for the salesperson to delay immediate gratification and aim for long-term relationship.

Adaptability and satisfaction

Adaptive selling is classified as relationship selling due to its nature of adapting to the specific needs and beliefs of each customer and implementing a sales presentation tailored to each customer. This has implication for customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is often a determinant of customer retention, as indicated in relationship marketing literature (e.g., Storbarka et al., 1994). In conceptualising of the sales process, Spiro et al. (1977) recognized that the buyer-seller relationship is affected by the personal characteristics of both the individual buyer and seller. These factors lead to the need for adaptation of interpersonal strategies by the seller. While salespeople have the opportunity to match their behaviour to the specific customer and situation they encounter, the salesperson is able to evaluate each selling situation and adapt his or her behaviour to the appropriate expectations of the buyer. When customer needs are satisfied, the potential of establishing long-term relationship can be anticipated.

Although few studies have linked adaptability directly with customer satisfaction, the evidenced relationship between adaptability and sales performance or sales effectiveness has implications for customer satisfaction and customer retention. According to Schultz and Good (2002), when a customer is satisfied with the salesperson, a relationship between the buyer and seller can be built and developed; once the relationship is established, the customer tends to buy more from the salesperson who thus achieves sales effectiveness. Empirically, this selling approach

has been evidenced to have direct impact on a salesperson's performance (e.g., Franke & Park, 2006; Park & Holloway, 2003; Spiro & Weitz, 1990). A meta-analysis conducted by Franke and Park in late 2006 reports that there is strong positive relationship between adaptability and self-rated performance.

Adaptability in service settings

Adaptiveness is also applicable in service settings. Adaptability in service contexts is reflected as service employees being flexible and adapting their behaviours to meet the changing needs and requests of customers during service encounter interactions. Hartline and Ferrell (1996) define adaptability in service settings as "the ability of customer-contact service employees to adjust their behaviour to the interpersonal demands of the service encounter" (p 55). It can be described as a continuum ranging from conformity to service personalisation, in which employees must adapt to serve individual customers. The authors indicate that this definition is consistent with that of adaptive selling in the sales management literature proposed by Spiro and Weitz (1990). They are functionally equivalent, because both definitions include two common components: 1) the ability to adjust behaviour and 2) interpersonal situations (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996).

Bitner et al. (1990; 1994) indicated that service employees need to be able to recognise customers' various needs and inappropriate behaviours in the service encounter can result in dissatisfaction. Being adaptive is the ability of the boundary spanners to adjust their behaviour to the interpersonal demands of the service encounter, and it can be described as a service personalization, in which employees

must adapt to serve individual customers (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996). Empirically, Humphrey and Ashforth (1994) provide evidence that employee adaptability is linked with customers' perceptions of the service encounter. Bitner (1990) and Bitner et al. (1990) show that service employees' adaptability in meeting customers' special needs and requests leads to customer encounter satisfaction. Hartline and Ferrell (1996) attempted to establish a relationship between service employee's adaptability in service encounter and customer's perceived service quality; but the result showed no association between the two constructs.

However, the direct relationship between adaptability and performance has not been evidenced in service context. Researchers in sales literature advocate personal selling as being the only promotional vehicle which allows its messages to be adapted and adjusted specifically to meet the communication needs of the receiver. William and Spiro (1985) examined the communication styles of sales representatives and customers and determined that self-oriented styles tend to reduce the sales amount and that task-oriented communicators did not perform well with any type of buyer. The authors concluded that the one who adapts their communication style appropriately to interact with the customer is proved to be most successful salesperson. An important aspect of practising effective adaptive selling behaviours is having knowledge of the customer's communication style (Weitz, 1978).

Weitz (1978) was the first one to have posited the relationship between salesperson adaptive selling and performance. The author suggests that the salesperson must recognize and adapt to fit different customer communication styles. Weitz's (1978) model of the sales process suggests that the salesperson's success in influencing the

customer is related to his or her ability to perform five activities. The five activities are: developing impressions, formulating strategies, transmitting messages, evaluating reactions, and making appropriate adjustments. The adjustments should be made throughout the whole selling process. Empirically, he found the ability of the salesperson to adjust to the customers led to greater sales performance, by testing the impression formation and strategy formulation constructs of the model with industrial salespeople and their customers. Anglin, Stoltman and Gentry (1990) also found that high sales performers engaged in more adaptive selling behaviour than low performers.

However, previous findings regarding the relationship between adaptive style and performance are inconsistent. For example, Predmore and Bonnice (1994) found a strong relationship between adaptive selling and sales success. Weilbaker (1990), in two studies involving pharmaceutical salespeople, found adaptive selling was positively related to some measures of performance, but unrelated to others. Using a sample of Korean automobile salespeople, Park and Holloway (2003) found that salesperson adaptability contributed to sales performance and job satisfaction. This study implies the possibility of applying adaptive approach in non-English speaking culture. Given the wide range of findings regarding adaptability and performance relationship in other settings, this research re-examines this relationship by placing them in casino settings, specifically the encounter between casino key accounts and key account representatives; hence the following hypothesis is formed:

Hypothesis 4b: adaptability is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives

In examining the determinants of selling effectiveness, Szymanski (1988) noted that customer orientation is a concept which puts emphasis on the customer's product or service acquirement, as indicated in the definition provided by Saxe and Weitz (1982) that customer orientation is referred as "the degree to which salespeople practice the marketing concept by trying to help customers make purchase decisions that will satisfy customer needs" (p. 344). Szymanski argued that a successful deal was not only accounted for by the strategy focusing on a firm's offering such as products or services, but by the employee's adaptability in sales presentations during the interactions with customers.

On the other hand, as indicated by Saxe and Weitz (1982), highly customer-oriented employees engage in behaviours aimed at increasing long-term customer satisfaction, avoiding actions which sacrifice customer interest to increase the probability of making an immediate sale. Although using customer orientation leads to long-term benefits, the authors also indicated that opportunity cost arises by sacrifising short-term sales, because in some situations the impact of an immediate sale outweighs the potential impact of future sales. This particularly applies to casino context.

Although casino marketers are aware of the benefits of having long-term relationships with customers, casino customers do not always appreciate the casino's customer retention tactics. Particularly there is no cost for them to switch to the new "supplier", who always attempts to match or exceed what the competitor offers (Klebanow,

2004). On the other hand, as gaming is "playing games of chance to win money", which is to win by chance of luck (Productivity Commission Submission, 2004), but luck of winning is opportunistic, because "most gamblers would be the first to concede that recreational casino gambling is a sure way to lose money. They are aware that the odds of various games are against them" (Kale, 2003). Any gaming activity has risk of losing, not all customers can afford the risk for long term. Being customer-oriented by trying to satisfy these customers' needs does not guarantee a long-term business relationship with them, or the on-going relationship does not generate benefit for the casino. In this case, customer-orientated behaviours may be an advantage taken by the unproductive customers.

Furthermore, in "When, Why and How to 'fire' a customer", Steven Karoul (2006), the former Vice President of Casino Marketing for Foxwoods Resort Casino, stated that "not all customers are good for your casino's overall well being", especially those abusive and conducting cheating behaviours in casinos. Being customer-oriented by offering "Comp" or other free items may endanger the casino in high risk of losing money when the offering is provided to those unprofitable customers. Therefore, the contact employee shall be able to identify different types of customers and tailor the services; inappropriate behaviours may end with customer's negative word-of-mouth (Lam, 2005).

Being adaptive means the customer-contact employee tailors encounter behaviours to the customer, and makes rapid strategy adjustments based on the observed customers' reactions to the behaviours (Weitz, Sujan, & Sujan, 1986). In defining the adaptive style in selling encounter, Spiro and Weitz (1990) indicate that adaptiveness indicates

the concept of the recognition that different approaches are needed in different situations; confidence in the ability to use a variety of different approaches; and confidence in the ability to alter the approach during the customer interaction. Marks, Vorhies and Badovick (1996) interpret this as a customer-contact employee's beliefs of being adaptive in interaction with customers. The authors further indicate that, in some situations, these beliefs do influence behaviour and translate beliefs into performance. In the context of casino key account representatives with key accounts, being adaptive may imply less customers being offended; less angry customers may imply less complaint which implies better job performed by the representative. Based on the above corollary, it can be proposed that:

Hypothesis 4c: Compared to Customer orientation, adaptability is the better predictor of the service performance of casino key account representatives

3.6 A hierarchical relationship between basic personality traits, surface traits, and performance evaluation

3.6.1 Overview

Results of a meta-analysis conducted by Churchill, Ford, Hartley and Walker (1985) indicate that personal factors play an important role in determining salespersons' performance. More recently Frei and McDaniel (1998) also found in their meta-analysis that personality traits are predictive of job performance. Although significant, only a small portion of variance in job performance was explained by personal factors (e.g., Boles, Brashear, Bellenger, & Barksdale, 2000; Hurley, 1998). The weak relationship between personality traits and performance rating thus suggests the incorporation of surface trait, proposed by Brown, Moven, Donavan and Licata (2002).

The term "surface traits" was first used by Allport (1961) to describe a collection of surface behaviours as opposed to specific focal behaviours such as specific service behaviours, for example, number of calls taken, number of smiles, response time (cf. Brown et al., 2002). The surface behaviours are classified as traits, according to Mowen and Spears (1999). The reason is that they represent an enduring tendency to behave within particular situational contexts. Therefore, surface traits are contextual, representing "dispositions, inclinations or tendencies to behave in certain ways in certain situations and are more abstract than concrete behaviours" (Brown et al., 2002,

p. 112). Compared to surface traits, basic personality traits are enduring dispositions to behave across diverse situational contexts. The difference between surface traits and basic traits is the former is context specific and results from the interaction of basic traits and the situational context.

The induction of surface traits lies in that, according to Brown et al. (2002), personality traits may be too far from actual focal behaviours to be able to predict employee performance well, which is reflected from that basic personality traits do not appear to account for a large proportion of variance in ratings of employee performance in a direct model. While surface traits, compared to basic personality traits, are regarded as being closer to the specific behaviours that form performance rating, and also believed to be able to increase the ultimate performance. Therefore, the surface traits surface between the time that the basic personality traits operate to influence the performance result and their direct impact on the performance, and the effect of personality factors exert on performance is indirect and through surface traits. In other words, the surface traits mediate between personality factors and performance evaluation.

On the basis of the above argument about basic traits and surface traits, Brown et al. (2002) applied the concepts in a service setting, and proposed a hierarchical model of a surface trait that mediated between basic traits and service employees' service performance. The model included personality factors as basic traits and customer orientation as a surface trait. The authors further proposed that the incorporation of the surface trait as a mediator would increase the variance of performance ratings over

the model without mediation. The results of their study confirmed the hierarchical model and supported their propositions.

Based on the conceptualisation of service encounter, the concept of a surface trait can be considered as being equivalent to that of service encounter behaviours. Service encounter is defined as "the dyadic interaction between a customer and service work" (Surprenant & Solomon, 1987, p. 74). Service encounter behaviours are referred to those activities a service employee conducts during a specific interaction with the client, which often form customers' perception of service quality and customer satisfaction (Farrell, Souchon, & Durden, 2001; Winsted, 2000). Service quality and customer satisfaction have implications for the frontline employee's performance, because a satisfied customer tends to come back for purchasing more products or services that will ultimately affect the employee's performance evaluation (Schultz & Good, 2000). The specific interaction is a situational context, therefore, every service encounter is a context, and the behaviours over the encounter are contextual.

On the basis of Brown et al.'s (2002) research findings, the current study will propose a hierarchical relationship of service encounter behaviours as the surface traits between the basic personality traits and the service performance of casino key account representatives. The basic personality traits include trait EI and the FFM of personality in the current study. As indicated in previous literature, trait EI is regarded as a personality trait and embedded in the personality framework, (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The surface traits involve customer orientation and adaptability.

Apart from being regarded as relationship-oriented characteristics, customer orientation and adaptability have also been viewed as service encounter behaviours in service settings (e.g., Farrell et al., 2001; Winsted, 2000), because customer orientation is referred to as "the ability of the service provider to adjust to his or her service to take account of the circumstances of the customer" (Daniel & Darby, 1996, p 133), and adaptability as "the ability of contact employees to adjust their behaviour to the interpersonal demands of the service encounter" (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996, p 55). Furthermore, customer orientation and adaptability have been evidenced as surface traits mediating between basic traits and the actual performance outcome (McIntyre, Claxton, Anselmi, & Wheatley, 2000). McIntyre et al. found that a person's cognitive style, such as information intake by intuiting and information processing by thinking predicted his or her adaptability and customer orientation, which exerted influence on the self-perceived selling performance. The study also showed that a salesperson's customer orientation was related to and preceded by adaptability.

Based on the previous discussion, the current study will place customer orientation and adaptability as two separate surface traits or service encounter behaviours into the proposed hierarchical relationship between the identified basic personality traits and the service performance of casino key account representatives. The hierarchical relationship Brown et al. (2002) proposed and tested can also referred to as a mediation or a mediational model. It takes place when a variable surfaces between the time the independent variables operate to influence the dependent variable and their impact on the dependent variable (Sekaran, 1984). The variable is named as mediator or intervening variable. According to Sekaran, it acts as a function of the independent

variable, helping to conceptualise and explain the influence of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable. In Brown et al.'s (2002) hierarchical model, the surface trait surfaces as a function of the basic personality traits influencing the performance outcome. Therefore, the surface traits can be referred to as mediators, and the basic personality traits as independent variables. Based on this conceptualisation, customer orientation and adaptability can be posited to be the mediators in the mediational model of the current study; the basic personality traits are the independent variables; and the service performance of casino key account representatives is the dependent variable.

According to Judd and Kenny (2006), a mediational model is a causal model. The most commonly utilised approach to establishing a mediation is Baron and Kenny Steps (Baron & Kenny, 1986), which include four steps: Step 1 is to show that the independent variables correlate with the dependent variable; Step 2 is to show that the independent variable correlates with the mediator; Step 3 is to show that the mediator affects the dependent variable; the last step is to establish a mediation by controlling the mediator in the equation. The process of testing a mediational model will be elaborated in Chapter 4. The current study adopts this approach. Based on the four steps, establishment of the mediational model in this study entails the basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality in the study) relating to the proposed mediators (customer orientation and adaptability in the study) as well as the performance ratings as the dependent variable; it also entails the proposed mediators relating to the dependent variable. The relationships of the basic personality traits and the proposed mediators with the performance outcome have been proposed in previous sections of this chapter. To develop a mediational model, a relationship

between the basic personality traits and the proposed mediators needs to be established. Hence, the following section reviews the relevant literature to identify the relationship and extend it to the casino context.

3.6.2 Emotional intelligence and customer orientation

Viewed as the practice of the marketing concept at the level of the individual marketing person and customer, customer orientation is an approach consistent with the building of long lasting positive relationships between the buyer and the seller (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987; Saxe & Weitz, 1982). This concept requires the employee to determine customers' needs and adapt him/herself to satisfying those needs better than its competitors. In the context between casino key accounts and the representatives, customer orientation can be referred to as casino key account representatives practicing the concept of long-term relationship building with casino premium players through customer satisfaction.

In Goleman's (2002) four-cluster emotional competence framework, the fourth cluster is referred as the relationship management skills. Goleman indicated that this emotional competent ability is crucial for building relationships with others. Saarni (1999) proposed that emotional intelligence can be an essential component of social development and contributes to the quality of interpersonal relationships. Empirically, Schutte and colleagues (2001) investigate the relationships of emotional intelligence to seven aspects of interpersonal relations. The results show that emotional intelligence is significantly and positively related to empathic perspective, taking one

dimension of empathy; furthermore, emotional intelligence is found to be significantly and positively associated with social skills.

Being customer-oriented entails the frontline employee's empathy in identifying customer's needs in order to satisfy them. The customer may have different needs in different encounters, and different customers may have different needs in the same encounter. For example, winning customers may want the casino key account representatives to recommend non-gambling entertainment activities; the player with a huge loss may require some extra complimentary services. The casino representative needs to be empathetic enough to identify and understand the variety of the client's needs in order to deliver appropriate services to them. Sometimes the needs contain emotional elements caused by the client's winning or losing. The employee needs to understand the player's emotions so to understand his or her demands. In some situations, the client can be over demanding, which is beyond the empowerment of casino key account representatives, hence the representative has to exhibit negotiation skills.

Williams (1998) suggests that customer orientation corresponds with the coordinative style of negotiation behavior (Dabholkar, Johnston, & Cathey 1994) since it reflects non-opportunistic behavior that stresses customer focused solutions and mutual benefits. The coordinative style facilitates mutual trust and commitment, two prerequisites for relationship development (Morgan & Hunt 1994). In a simulated context, Ogivie and Carsky (2002) linked emotional intelligence with negotiation and stated that negotiators with high levels of emotional intelligence can achieve better outcomes in negotiations. The reasons lie in that negotiators who recognize emotional

responses in themselves and others, will be better able to understand the reasons for responses, and thus adopt coordinative style to achieve better outcomes. Understanding how emotions change and transition is also important because the process of negotiation experiences both positive and negative emotions. In other words, emotional intelligence facilitates negotiation.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and customer orientation has been rarely evidenced in the relevant literature. However, Rozell, Pettijohn, and Parker (2004), using salespeople from a nationwide company that specializes in medical devices as a sample, explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and salesperson's customer orientation. The results show a significantly positive relationship between the two concepts. But the authors recommend further research should be done in this area across a variety of industries as their sample only represents an educated group in a very specialized industry. Transferring the two constructs to casino key account context, the following relationship is hypothesised:

Hypothesis 5.1.a: Trait EI is positively related to customer orientation

3.6.3 Emotional intelligence and adaptability

No two customers are alike, and different casino players are spurred to patronise a casino out of different gambling motives (e.g., Cotte, 1997), each bringing with them another set of infinitely variable expectations and valuation criteria. Different customers have different expectations in their needs and wants. The same customer may have different experiential expectations and valuations criteria from one occasion to another (Macomber, 1999).

As indicated by Watson and Kale (2003), premium market is composed of both domestic and international clientele: local premium players and international mobile high rollers. People from different countries have different cultures, manners, especially Asians' superstition and communication styles. A report made by US Department of Commerce Tourism Industries (2000) shows that the amount of Asian

players runs the top list among the overseas market. According to Shelly Mansholt, a representative of MGM Mirage, "Asians are well-known for being among the high-end gaming customers." Understanding these Asian players' behaviours, communication methods, values and superstitions are extremely important so that the casino can create an environment that will induce Asian customers to play and return to the casino. For example, Chinese elder people are highly respected and shall not be called by their first name. While in Western countries calling someone by the first name may represent friendliness, for Chinese, this would be felt as a disrespectful way to communicate with an elder person (Galletti, 2002). Therefore, according to Galletti, casino frontline employees need to be adaptive during interaction with these casino clients. Adaptability is an approach where the customer-contact employee can substantially control not only his or her strategy, but also the interaction process (Spiro, Perreault, & Reynold, 1977). Following one's own culture or manner may cause a negative impression or insult a guest. Creating a memorable and lasting impression in the guest's mind has positive impact on casino customers' satisfaction and intention to return. However, Weitz et al. (1986) note that the effectiveness of using the adaptive approach is affected by the frontline employee's ability and skills to practice the technique. The ability and skills are gained from knowledge of the structure of encounter situations; encounter behaviours, and contingencies that link specific behaviours to situations. Therefore the knowledge gaining is also an information collection process. During the process, Boorom, Goolsby and Ramsey (1998) found that the relational communication skills of attentiveness (willingness to listen and observe non-verbal cues), perceptiveness (ability to interpret observations of the customer), and responsiveness (knowing what message to present and when to present it) all were correlated with the ability to adaptive approaches to the customer.

Emotional intelligence in the literature has constantly been linked with a person's communication skills. More emotionally intelligent people are said to succeed at communicating their ideas, goals and intentions in more convincing ways (Goleman, 1998). Perception is another dimension of emotional intelligence. In a casino context, as the interactions between casino key accounts and the representatives contain high emotional contents, being able to perceive the customer's emotions can facilitate the communication process, which leads to adaptive responsiveness. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formed by using a sample of casino key account representatives:

Hypothesis 5.1.b: **Trait EI is positively related to adaptability.**

3.6.4 The FFM of personality, customer orientation and adaptability

More than two decades ago, Weitz (1981) indicated that personal characteristics affect selling behaviours. Research in this area has been mainly focusing on selling behaviour and its consequences, mostly, sales performance and customer satisfaction. Very few studies have been involved with antecedents of a salesperson's selling behaviours. In the marketing literature, antecedents of customer orientation and adaptability have been limited to a number of personal factors, such as gender, tenure, age, personality, motivational direction, and unethical behaviour. Personality measures do exert influences on customer orientation and adaptability in both selling and service context. For example, Brown et al. (2002) examined the impact of personality on customer orientation that further affects service provider's performance. The results show that personality factor does explain the variance in employee's customer orientation. Weitz and Spiro (1990) examined the relationship

between personalty and a salesperson's adaptability in selling. Their results show positive relationship between salesperson's adaptive selling and the personality traits examined.

However, the personality measures used in relevant literatures have been inconsistent. For example, Brown et al. (2002) adopted the following personality factors, introversion, instability, agreeability, conscientiousness, openness and activity; while Spiro and Weitz (1990) used: self-monitoring, empathy, androgyny, being an opener and locus of control. The research in this area shows a lack of studying the impact of the Big Five Factor model on customer orientation and adaptability. Using the five Factor Model of personality in this study, the following relationships were proposed by employing a sample of casino key account representatives:

Hypothesis 5.2.a: **Customer orientation is related to the Five Factor Model of personality, namely Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, and Neuroticism.**

Hypothesis 5.2.b: Adaptability is related to the Five Factor Model of personality, namely Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, and Neuroticism.

The previous sections have discussed the research questions and made relevant hypothesis on the basis of theoretical foundation. Given establishment of the proposed relationships, in conjunction with the hierarchical relationship theory proposed by

Brown et al. (2002) and conditions of developing a mediational model by Baron and Kenny (1986), the following hypotheses can be made:

Hypothesis 5.3.a: customer orientation and adaptability mediate between basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality) and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

In proposing the mediational model between basic personality traits and performance ratings, Brown et al. anticipated that the model would account for more variance in performance ratings than would a model that does not include the surface trait. Consistent with Brown et al.'s study, the current study develops the following proposition:

Hypothesis 5.3.b: The mediational model, with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables, accounts for a great portion of variance in performance ratings than a direct model with no mediation.

3.7 Summary

Based on the research problem identified in Chapter 1, this chapter has reviewed the relevant literature in order to provide the theoretical foundation for the research questions. Relevant hypotheses concerning each of the research questions were then formed. Specifically, hypothesis 1 was developed to answer research question 1 at the end of the first section on emotional intelligence; hypothesis 2 was posited to answer research question 2 at the end of the second section on the FFM of personality;

hypothesis 3 concerns itself with research question 3 and was proposed in the section on trait EI and the FFM of personality; three hypotheses, namely hypotheses 4a, 4b and 4c, were formed to answer research question 4 in the section on customer orientation and adaptability; and a number of hypotheses were put forward in relation to research question 5 in the last section on a hierarchical relationship. In the next chapter, the research methods used to collect data about the hypotheses are discussed.

Chapter 4: Research method

4.1 Overview

The preceding chapters defined the research problems and the proposed theoretical framework and constructs used in this study. This chapter now turns our attention to the methodology employed to investigate the research problems. The first section of the chapter begins this process by once again summarising the research questions and hypotheses to be empirically tested. The second section then describes the sample characteristics and the survey method applied in this study, while section three details the measures and scaling adopted. In the final section of the chapter, the techniques of data analysis used to our test hypotheses are outlined and explained.

4.2 Research framework

There are five research questions addressed in this study. The first is to determine whether emotional intelligence, a newly developed psychological construct, can be incorporated into the casino context to analyse its relationship with the service performance of casino key account representatives. The second is to determine the relationship between personality measures and the service performance of casino key account representatives by using the FFM of personality. The third verifies the incremental validity of emotional intelligence as a personality trait over the FFM of personality in explaining the variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives. The fourth is to determine whether customer orientation and adaptability as two customer relationship-oriented characteristics can be incorporated into casino context to analyse their relationship with the service performance of casino key account representatives. The last identifies the positions of these constructs in a hypothesised hierarchical relationship based on the basic personality traits – surface traits theory. These research questions have been converted to a number of hypotheses formed in Chapter 3 based on the relevant literature review.

It is worth noting that emotional intelligence is the focal construct of this study. It is referred to as trait EI, as explained in Chapter 3. Other constructs identified in the research questions play a supporting role in helping determine the appropriateness of emotional intelligence in terms of its application to different contexts, predictability, incremental validity, and its underlying conceptualisation. These issues have been elaborated in Chapter 3. Emotional intelligence is predicted to exert effect on the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, this effect is also proposed to be mediated by intervening variables, based on the relationships between basic personality traits, surface traits and performance evaluation proposed

and tested by Brown et al. (2002). Considered as a basic personality trait embedded in a personality framework, emotional intelligence is hypothesised to impact on the performance evaluation through the mediating effect of customer orientation and adaptability respectively. The two constructs are identified as surface traits in this indirect relationship. They are also referred to as relationship-oriented characteristics, adopted in the current study to determine their relationships with the service performance of casino key account representatives. The incorporation of the FFM of personality factor helps to explain the incremental validity of emotional intelligence in the selected study context, as well as to broaden its application into the casino industry based on Salgado's (2003) finding. In addition, the analysis of the FFM in this study confirms the distinction between trait EI and ability EI, as asserted by Petrides and Furnham (2000) and discussed in Chapter 3.

Providing answers to the research questions is accomplished by positing a series of corresponding and testable hypotheses. There are five such primary hypotheses, each of which has been carefully formulated from a review of the literature. These hypotheses, which are summarised below, are subjected to empirical testing in the next chapter.

Research question 1: Is trait EI related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

This research question is answered by Hypothesis 1 – Trait EI is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Research question 2: Is the FFM of personality related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

This research question is addressed by Hypothesis 2 – The service performance of casino key account representatives is positively related to the FFM of personality, specifically Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience, but negatively related to Neuroticism.

Research question 3: Does trait emotional intelligence explain additional variance of the service performance of casino key account representatives over the effects of the FFM of personality?

This research question is answered by Hypothesis 3 – Trait EI explains additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives above and beyond the effect of the FFM of personality, specifically, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience in this study.

Research question 4: Is customer orientation and adaptability related to the service performance of casino key account representatives? Which is the better predictor of the service performance of casino key account representatives?

This research question is answered by three hypotheses - Hypothesis 4a, 4b and 4c:

Hypothesis 4a – Customer orientation is positively related the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Hypothesis 4b – Adaptability is positively related the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Hypothesis 4c – Compared to customer orientation, adaptability is the better predictor of the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Research question 5: Do customer orientation and adaptability respectively mediate the relationships between basic personality traits composed of trait EI and the FFM, and the service performance of casino key account representatives? Does the model with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables account for a great proportion of variance in performance rating than does a direct model without mediation?

This research question is answered by a number of hypotheses (Hypothesis 5.1.a., 5.1.b, 5.2.a., 5.2.b, 5.3.a and 5.3.b) formed on the basis of Baron and Kenny's (1986) four steps method for establishing a mediational model. The necessity of developing these hypotheses has been discussed in Chapter 3. They are listed below:

Hypothesis 5.1.a: Trait EI is positively related to customer orientation

Hypothesis 5.1.b: Trait EI is positively related to adaptability.

Hypothesis 5.2.a: Customer orientation is related to the Five Factor Model of personality, namely Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to experience, and Neuroticism.

Hypothesis 5.2.b: Adaptability is related to the Five Factor Model of personality, namely, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to experience and Neuroticism.

Hypothesis 5.3.a: Customer orientation and adaptability mediate between basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality) and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Hypothesis 5.3.b: The mediational model, with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables, accounts for a great portion of variance in performance ratings than a direct model with no mediation.

In the following section, the research methods used for the purposes of hypotheses testing are presented. The section describes the sample frame, details research instruments and reports procedures for data collection.

4.3 Participants

To generate the data required to test the hypotheses, a survey was conducted in a casino located in Australasia. This particular casino was chosen for the following reasons. First, it is one of the largest and most successful casinos in the world. Second, it has VIP gaming rooms specially catering for key accounts, including individual Casino Rebate Program (CRP) players, and Junket group players organized by a junket representative or operator. Compared to customers in the general gaming area, these players have to meet the minimum check-in amount set by the casino (the figure varies across different casinos) before they are allowed to play in the VIP gaming rooms. Third, this casino practices a relationship marketing approach for these key accounts, assisted by a very advanced CRM system. Fourth, being one of the world's largest casinos, it has a sufficient population of casino key account

representatives working in the VIP gaming areas from which a suitable sample can be drawn for this research.

Another reason for selecting this casino is that the majority of the gaming population in the Asia-Pacific region are Asians. Asian players, particularly Chinese, are well known as avid gamblers. China has the earliest and longest recorded history of gambling. Access Asia Limited (2002) recorded that Keno was first played in China since 3000 years ago, and some of today's most popular casino games such as blackjack and poker are also thought to have been invented in China. Playing Mahjong is a common social gambling activity in China and among Chinese overseas today.

Having a long history of gambling may be one of the major reasons why the Chinese are well known as high rollers. The popularity of gambling with Chinese can also in part be accounted for by the different regulations and controls imposed by governments across Asia. Macau, for example, is the only place within China allowed casino operations. Similarly, the monopoly of Casino De Genting Malaysia has been enshrined in the law of that country since its inception in 1960s. The Singapore government has recently granted two casino licenses in 2006 ending a year-long debate on the topic, and the casinos are now under construction. A similar decision to issue casino permits in Taiwan has yet to be finalised.

These situations imply the willingness of gamblers, especially those of Chinese extraction, to travel considerable distances to visit a casino. According to Desmond (2007), ninety percent of casino visitors in Macau, are Chinese. Of these, over 50 percent are from Mainland China. These players, particularly those from the northern

part of China, have to travel to Macau by air. The clientele in the Genting VIP gaming room, apart from other parts of Malaysia, are mainly from Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, as well as China. Taking the geographic factor and the hassle of traveling into account, playing Mahjong at home may be preferable if the gambler is not keen enough for the casino atmosphere and aims of high-end rolling. If a gambler from China flies especially to Australia, but only hangs patronises a low-end gaming area, then the hassles of applying for visas and steep flight costs may discourage such a player's enthusiasm to make the trip. It takes, for example, a minimum of 14 days to have the visa application to Australia processed, and around ninety percent of the applications are rejected. (The air ticket for economy class typically costs AUD $ 1,500 to 2,000, and non-VIP gamblers normally have to pay for accommodation-related expenses. (The researcher herself used to assist visa applications and air ticketing for her clients

This sampling frame raises three issues which must be acknowledged. First, one and only one casino has been identified for this research because of the desire to control for a variety of extraneous, uncontrollable variables such as, differences in corporate values, cultural values, market performance, and geographic location. Second, questions of transferability are not relevant to this study. The key focus of this study is not to establish the universality of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Rather, it is to explore the relationships between the universal constructs within the one sample.

Since the job function of casino key account representatives is to "cultivate relationships with players", as described by Brokopp (1999), our prospective sample included two groups of employees: Guest Service Assistants (GSA) and Player

Development Executives (PDE). The job of GSA is to look after in-house premium players, for example, assisting them with airport reception, air ticketing, hotel reception, as well as organizing their food, beverage, and in-house entertainment. The job of the PDE is similar to that of the GSA, although this group of employees may also be required to travel and visit potential players in order to encourage their future patronage. Finally, because the current study focuses on the high-end market, the sample selected was obviously limited to those employees working in the VIP gaming area.

4.4 Materials

This section presents the measures used in the present study. The theoretical model for this study is represented by two independent variables: trait EI and the FFM of personality; two mediators: customer orientation and adaptability; and one dependent variable: the service performance of casino key account representatives. This section details the scales and scale items employed in the measurement of constructs. As for scale reliability, only the five dimensions of the FFM were provided with Cronbach Alpha coefficients in the following section, because other constructs are factor analysed in next chapter, where the values of their coefficients are reported.

4.4.1 Trait Emotional Intelligence

Following the conceptualization of trait EI by Petrides and Furnham (2000), this study used the self-report EI test (SREIT) designed by Schutte, et al. (1998). This measure is based on the ability model developed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It is a 33-item self-report measure that includes items such as "By looking at their facial expression,

I recognize the emotions people are experiencing" and "I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them." According to Schutte et al. (1998), the scale produced correlations with theoretically related constructs, such as alexithymia, attention to feelings, clarity of feelings, mood repair, optimism and impulse control. It also showed good internal consistency and test–retest reliability, predictive validity, and discriminant validity with strong results for each analysis (detailed below). These positive attributes led to its adoption in the current study.

After creating a pool of 62 items representing aspects of the relevant construct, Schutte et al. (1998) used expert evaluation to establish face validity and readability of the scale. A pilot test was performed in order to study the factor structure of the scale. The factor analysis resulted in what appeared to be a general factor of emotional intelligence with 3 other minor factors. Three minor factors were discarded because they were not conceptually distinct from the items in factor 1. The 33 items that loaded on the first factor were determined to be generally similar to Salovey and Mayer's (1997) model and to fit the model relatively well. The 33 items which loaded on Factor 1 represented model categories such as: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion, and utilization of emotion. The authors concluded that this scale measured a homogeneous construct of emotional intelligence.

The first internal consistency reliability estimate was shown to be 0.90, with a crosscheck of the measure in a second study resulting in 0.87. Another study resulted in a test-retest reliability of 0.78 over two weeks. Schutte et al. (1998) tested predictive validity of the scale by testing it among students and comparing their emotional intelligence scores with their cumulative grade point averages. Results

showed that emotional intelligence was predictive of cumulative grade point average. Scores on the self-reported emotional intelligence scale given in the first part of the academic year were found to significantly predict students' grade point averages at the end of the academic year.

The authors also tested discriminant validity with Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores and the big five personality dimensions measured by the NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1991). Scores on the SAT and scores on the self-report emotional intelligence scale by Schutte et al. scale were not related (r = -0.06). The scale was not correlated with four of the big five dimensions of personality. However, higher emotional intelligence scores were significantly related to greater openness to experience (r = 0.54). The authors concluded that redundancy is not an issue as the correlation is not unacceptably high. In addition, compared to other emotional intelligence tests, SREIT are shorter thus reducing response fatigue and acquiescence. Rooy and Viswesvaran (2003) in their meta-analysis reported that this scale was most frequently used. The cumulative evidence thus far appears to suggest that the *SREIT* is a reasonably reliable scale to measure self-perceived emotional intelligence. Data were collected on a five-point Likert scale, on which a 1 represents *strongly disagree* and a 5 represents *strongly agree,* to indicate to what extent each item describes them. Higher total scores reflect a higher degree of self-report emotional intelligence.

4.4.2 The FFM of Personality

This study used the 44-item Big Five Inventory (BFI) developed by John, Donahue, and Kentle (1991). The BFI uses short phrases based on the trait adjectives that

represent the lexical tradition reflected in the work of Goldberg (1981), Norman (1963), Digman (1990), and are known to be prototypical markers of Five Factor Model of personality factors (John, 1990). The purpose of developing the short inventory would allow efficient and flexible assessment of the five dimensions when there is no need for more differentiated measurement of individual facets. In addition, short scales not only save testing time, but also avoid subject boredom and fatigue. Burisch (1984) argues that no or low response would be incurred if the test looks too long.

In addition, comparing to NEO questionnaires and Goldberg's (1992) 100-item trait descriptive adjectives (TDA), the former representing the most validated Big Five measures in the questionnaire tradition, the latter the most commonly used measure consisting of single adjectives, BFI with its short-phrase item format provides more context than Goldberg's single adjective items but is less complex than the sentence format used by the NEO questionnaires (John & Srivastava, 1999). For example, the Openness adjective "original" became the BFI item "Is original, comes up with new ideas" and Conscientiousness adjective "persevering" served as the basis for the item "Perseveres until the task is finished." The advantages of BFI are its efficiency in administration time, and the items are easier to understand than NEO-FFI items and the single trait adjectives of TDA which may possibly be ambiguous in their meanings (John & Srivastava, 1999).

In terms of convergent validity, BFI has a convergent-discriminant correlational pattern with other measures tapping the five factors (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992). John and Srivastava (1999) showed the strongest convergence between BFI and TDA

(mean r = 0.81), followed by a mean r = 0.73 between BFI and NEO-FFI. The resulting scales show good internal consistency (Benet-Martinez & John, 1998; John et al., 1991). Cronbach's alpha's internal reliability of the BFI scales typically range from 0.75 to 0.90 and average above 0.80 to 0.90, with a mean of 0.85 in the U.S. and Canadian samples. In this study, the reliabilities of the five factors are: Agreeableness, 0.80; Conscientiousness, 0.73; Extraversion, 0.72; Neuroticism, 0.62; Openness, 0.72. Although Neuroticism in this study showed an internal consistency measure which was below 0.70, the inter-item correlation for the items fell within an optimal range recommended by Briggs and Cheek (1986), that is, between 0.20 and 0.40.

4.4.3 Customer Orientation

To assess the level of customer orientation of casino key account representatives, a modified selling orientation – customer orientation (SOCO) scale was used in this study. The original SOCO scale was designed by Saxe and Weitz (1982). The scale consists of 24 items, 12 of which assess salespeople's degree of selling orientation and 12 of which assess salespeople's degree of customer orientation. It was developed to assess the customer orientation of sales personnel, and was originally administered to two samples of salespeople that included both industrial and consumer salespeople. Extensive testing showed the measure to be a reliable and valid instrument. Cronbach's alpha level for the first sample was 0.86, and the second was 0.83. Saxe and Weitz conducted a test–retest measurement and found that after a 6-week interval the correlation was 0.67, which indicates that the scale had a satisfactory level of stability. The scale was further scrutinized by a panel of expert judges for content validity. When each item was examined for whether it was representative of

"customer orientation" or "selling orientation" the overall average of agreement was 79 percent, and therefore determined to have acceptable content validity (Saxe & Weitz, 1982).

Michaels and Day (1985) also examined the SOCO scale in their replication. The results of this replication showed an internal consistency reliability measurement of 0.91, which is higher than the Saxe and Weitz results of 0.86 and 0.83. Further, the factor structure in the replication study was similar to that of the original study. According to Dunlap et al. (1988), "The SOCO scale does appear to be a robust and useful measure of the customer orientation of salespeople." (p. 186). In another study, Brown et al. (1991) used 348 consumers to test a modified version of the SOCO scale. These authors report the internal consistency, using the coefficient alpha technique, of the modified SOCO scale to be 0.81. Although the reported level of internal consistency was slightly lower than those found in the two previously studies, it is still high enough to indicate that the overall properties of the scale were unchanged by the modification, thereby allowing researchers to modify the SOCO scale to fit a variety of situations.

Hoffman and Kelly (1994) revised the 24-item SOCO to measure service providers' customer-orientated behaviours in a hospital setting by dropping the 12 items representing selling behaviours. The resulting 12-item scale tested on customer contact personnel has Cronbach alpha of 0.90. Daniel and Darby's (1996) also modified the original SOCO scale and developed a 13-item measure called customer orientation scale (COS) to assess the customer orientation level of service providers. The authors adopted Hoffman and Kelly's (1994) 12 items of the modified SOCO

scale, plus one more item from the original SOCO scale, which relates to customer rather than to sales orientation. Their study showed a standardized Cronbach alpha 0.86 for COS. The authors suggest the modified COS can be used to measure customer orientation among service providers. As casino key account representatives are the service providers for casino high-end markets, the scale used in the current study was based on Daniel and Darby's 13-item COS. The 13 items were altered to suit the casino context. One member of the casino management provided expert input to this adaptation. The participants were required to indicate their agreement with each item, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Higher scores reflect a higher degree of employee customer orientation. The factor analysis and Cronbach alpha coefficient for this scale will be reported in the next section.

4.4.4 Adaptability

To assess the adaptability of casino key account representatives, a service-context version of ADAPTS developed by Hartline and Ferrell (1996) was used. The original ADAPTS scale was designed by Spiro and Weitz (1990) for measuring adaptive selling consisting 16 items. These 16 items were developed from surveys of salespeople in 10 divisions of a major national manufacturer of diagnostic equipment and supplies. Spiro and Weitz investigated the nomological validity of this adaptive selling scale by examining the correlations between the ADAPTS scale and antecedent measures of personality, intrinsic motivation, experience, management style, and sales performance as an outcome measure. Significant correlations were

found between ADAPTS and personality measures, as well as self-assessed performance.

Hartline and Ferrell operationalised adaptability as the ability of service employees to adjust his or her behaviour to the interpersonal demands of the service encounter; the authors modified the original adaptive selling scale by dropping 6 redundant items and changing the wording of the remaining items to eliminate the personal selling aspects within each statement. The final 10-item scale assesses customer-contact employees' ability to adapt to changing service encounters by altering their approach towards customers. The current project used this modified scale to suit the study context. The participants were required to indicate their agreement with each item, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Higher scores reflect a higher degree of employee adaptability. The factor analysis and Cronbach alpha coefficient for this scale are presented in the next section.

4.4.5 Performance

The performance measure used in this study was based on the staff performance appraisal (hereafter, the appraisal) that the casino uses to assess the relevant employees' performance. The employees of the casino are rated on performance and contributions to the company operations. This is measured against the total requirements and standards of the job and against other employees performing similar work. The appraisal comprises 14 factors, as follows:

1) Punctuality and Attendance,

2) Job Knowledge,

3) Quantity of work,

4) Quality of work,

5) Attitude towards supervision,

6) Human Relations and Customer Relations,

7) Work Cooperation,

8) Adaptability,

9) Dependability,

10) Interest,

11) Initiative,

12) Diligence,

13) Discipline,

14) Appearance.

Because the interest of the current study is performance that contains social components in terms of employee-customer relationship, and service related behaviours, 8 items out of the listed factors were selected for performance analysis of this study, namely, item 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14. This study used self-report method. Self-report measures have been frequently used in previous research (e.g., Brown et al. 2002; Busch & Bush, 1978; Sujan et al., 1994). Churchill et al. (1985) indicated self-report performance measures did not appear to produce any inflated assessment bias. Each item was assessed on five-point scales, 1 refers to the lowest, 5 the highest. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this scale is reported in the next chapter.

4.5 Procedure

4.5.1 Survey distribution

Ethics approval has been obtained from Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. The approval letter is given in the Appendix. The casino management gave permission to conduct research on the condition that the name of the casino remains anonymous throughout the course of the project. The survey was conducted in two stages. First, a web survey was attempted as a pilot test. Emotional intelligence, measured by Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT, 2002), and personality, measured by Cattell's (1993) 16 PF, fifth edition, two independent variables, were tested on line. The response rate was less than 2 percent. The researcher was informed by the casino marketing Vice President (VP), who had approved the survey, that some casino hosts have no access to internet at work and that those who have internet access are not allowed to use it for personal purposes. As all employees employed by this casino property live in staff quarters provided by the casino, most have no computer or the internet access in their dormitory. Second, those who attempted to respond to the web-survey, found it too long and rarely were able to complete it.

Subsequently a paper-pencil test substituted for the web survey. The self-report questionnaire was developed to collect information regarding emotional intelligence, the Five Factor Model of personality, customer orientation, adaptability, the service performance of casino hosts, and the employees' demographic characteristics. Assurance of anonymity was given to respondents in the instructions for each of these

documents. The survey packets included a cover letter, introducing and explaining the objectives and significance of this survey, a wholehearted thank-you message to the potential participants; a consent form, a questionnaire, and an envelope in which to seal their responses. Subjects were provided with detailed instructions on how to participate in the study. They were asked to complete the confidential questionnaire, seal it in the envelope provided, and deposit it in the open slot of a sealed collection box located in the employee common area. Postage was provided for by the Vice President of Casino Marketing who committed to prepare the collection box for mailing and return the box to the researcher at Victoria University. The survey questionnaire was distributed to all prospective participants during their work shift. They were allowed to complete the survey at home or during their work shift on weekdays, when the casino is not extremely busy. Two months later, the completed questionnaires were posted to the researcher.

4.5.2 Survey response

Out of 250 surveys distributed to the employee volunteers, 152 usable responses (61 percent) were returned. The results are summarised in Table 2. Of the total usable sample, 65 were male, 87 were female. The age of participants ranged from 18 years old to 55, and 90 percent of participants were in the age range between 18 to 35 years old. This indicates that most responding frontline employees tend to be young. Among all the respondents, 37 (24.3 percent) of them only finished secondary school, 37 (24.3 percent) have completed diploma or trade certificate. Surprisingly, the majority of participants had a university degree or above. Amongst those, 43 (28.3 percent) held bachelor's degrees, 30 (19.7 percent) held a graduate diploma, and 1

postgraduate diploma. Furthermore, most respondents have been working in frontline

positions for between 2 to 10 years (95, 62.5%), while 14 of them had worked there

for over 10 years.

Table 2

Demographic profile

Group	n	Percent
Gender		
Female	87	57.9
Male	65	42.1
Education		
Secondary school	37	24.3
Diploma or trade school	37	24.3
Bachelor's degree	43	28.3
Master degree	30	19.7
Postgraduate diploma	1	0.7
Others	4	2.6
Age		
18-25	92	60.5
26-35	46	30.3
36-45	12	7.9
46-55	2	1.3
Tenure		
Less than 1 year	43	28.3
1 - 2 years	51	33.6
3 - 5 years	26	17.1
6 - 10 years	18	11.8
11 -15 years	5	3.3
16 - 2 years	2	1.3
20 years above	7	4.6

4.6 Plan of data analysis

This section describes the data analysis used to test hypotheses in this thesis. It identifies relevant techniques of factor analysis and the reliability coefficient for the research constructs. A detailed analysis plan for each research question is then revealed.

Multiple Regression is the main analytical technique used in the current study. Prior to reporting the results of hypothesis testing, factor analysis is also presented to examine the reliabilities for the scales used in this study. This is desirable because the scales for measuring the study constructs have been modified to suit the research needs. Normality assessment for the hypotheses testing is also conducted in order to ensure that the assumptions of multiple regression analysis are met.

It is worth noting that the principal component analysis (PCA) technique is employed in the current study for factor analysis. PCA attempts to produce a smaller number of linear combinations of the original variables in a way that captures most of the variability in the pattern of correlations. It helps the original variables to be transformed into a smaller set of linear combinations with all of the variables being

used. According to Stevens (1996, p. 363), PCA is psychometrically sound and simpler mathematically, and it avoids some of the potential problems with 'factor indeterminacy' associated with factor analysis. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001, pp. 610-611) commented that PCA is a better choice for an empirical summary of the data set. Furthermore, Cronbach's coefficient alpha is used to report the scale reliabilities. Reliability concerns the extent to which a measurement provides stable and consistent results (Carmines and Zeller, 1979), and contains one important dimension: internal consistency (Zikmund, 1995). It refers to the degree to which the items that make up the scale correlate with each other to measure the same variable (Zikmund, 1995). According to Pallant (2005), Cronbach's (1951) coefficient alpha is regarded as the most popular reliability coefficient of internal consistency between items in a unidimensional scale, and it estimates the degree to which the items in a scale represent the domain of the construct being measured.

Having discussed the factor analysis and reliability coefficient techniques, the following section details the analysis plan for each hypothesis identified from relevant literature review in relation to the research questions. As mentioned previously, research question 1, 2 and 3 each involve a single hypothesis. However, to attain an answer to research question 4, three related hypotheses need to be tested. Similarly, as research question 5 involves mediation testing, a number of relevant hypotheses based on the mediational model theory proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986) are required there too.

Research question 1: Is trait EI related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

This question is addressed by hypothesis 1: Trait EI is positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives. Prior to analysing the proposed relationship, trait EI is subjected to factor analysis to examine its underlying dimensions, as suggested by Petrides and Furnham (2000). The identified dimensions are employed to analyse the hypothesis, while multiple regression analysis is conducted with the dimensions of trait EI as predictors, and the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as criterion variable in the regression equation model.

Research question 2: Is the FFM related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

This research question is tested by hypothesis 2: the service performance of casino key account representatives is positively related to Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness and Openness, while negatively related to Neuroticism. Multiple regression analysis is conducted to examine the proposed relationship. The five personality factors are entered in the regression equation, with the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as criterion variable in the regression analysis.

Research question 3: Does trait EI explain additional variance of the service performance of casino key account representatives over the effects of the FFM of personality?

This research question is answered by hypothesis 3: trait EI explains additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives over the FFM of personality. To test this hypothesis, a hierarchical regression analysis is conducted, with the FFM of personality entered at Step 1, the identified dimensions of trait EI entered at Step 2, while the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as the criterion variables in the regression equation.

Research question 4: Are customer orientation and adaptability related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

To answer this research question three hypotheses, namely hypotheses 4a, 4b and 4c, need to be evaluated. The first two hypotheses test if customer orientation and adaptability are positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives respectively. The final hypothesis tests if adaptability is a better predictor in the service performance of casino key account representatives. Prior to testing the relationships, both customer orientation and adaptability are subjected to factor analysis to identify their underlying factor structure. Multiple regression analyses are conducted to test hypotheses 4a and 4b, with the identified dimensions of customer orientation and adaptability entered in the regression equation, and with the service performance of casino representatives serving as the criterion variable.

Multiple regression analysis is also used for investigating hypothesis 4c. However, in this regression equation, the total scores of customer orientation and adaptability are used, as the underlying structure of each construct is not the focus of this test.

Research question 5: Do customer orientation and adaptability respectively mediate the relationships between basic personality traits composed of trait EI and the FFM of personality with the service performance of casino key account representatives? Does the model with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables account for a great proportion of variance in performance rating than does a direct model without mediation?

This research question involves a few hypotheses to test the mediation relationships between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable. Two mediators: customer orientation and adaptability are involved in this study, and they are analysed separately. Furthermore, the unidimension of the two constructs is used for the mediation analyses. For the hierarchical relationship of the two mediators between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives, a unidimensional trait EI is used.

The hypotheses are tested on the basis of the four procedures or steps (hereafter the steps) recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986). The four steps are most commonly used in mediating testing (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). The first step is to show that the independent variable X is correlated with the dependent variable Y, using Y as the criterion variable in the regression equation and X as a predictor. The second step is to show that the independent variable X is correlated with the presumed mediator M, using M as the criterion variable in the regression equation and X as a predictor. The third step is to show that the presumed mediator affects the outcome variable, using Y as the criterion variable in a regression equation and X and M as predictors. The last step is to establish that the presumed mediator M mediates the X-Y relationship with M being controlled. In this study, X refers to the Five Factor Model of personality

factors and trait EI respectively. M refers to customer orientation and adaptability respectively. Y referred to the service performance of casino key account representatives. The statistics analysis techniques for testing each step of the mediation models is detailed in the next chapter.

This form of analysis is widely acknowledged as the most rigorous test of mediation effects (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Williams & Attaway, 1996). Using this method in the analysis allows for the effects of control variables and main-effect variables to be excluded from the final result so that the variance due to the mediator variable is clear. At the end of Chapter 5, based on the results of hypothesis testing, post-hoc analyses are presented, which include a t-test to examine the perceived differences between men and women in emotional intelligence, customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives. ANOVA is also used to examine the effect of different age groups, education groups and tenure groups with emotional intelligence, customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives respectively.

It is worth noting that, some of the categories need to be recoded to make them suitable for ANOVA analysis. The original 7 categories of the education variable are collapsed to 4 categories, as very few cases were reported above master degrees. For those who reported master degree and above, master degrees are relabelled to be bachelor degree above. The four categories of the age variable are recoded to three categories, as only 2 cased reported in last category. Hence, the last two categories are combined to be one and labelled to be 36 years and 36 years above. The seven categories of the tenure variable are collapsed to 5 categories. The last three

categories are combined to one and became the fifth category, labelled as 10 years above.

Prior to the hypothesis analyses, the means and standard deviations for all the independent and dependent variables are obtained through the SPSS command, as well as the correlation matrix pattern for all variables in the current study.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has presented the research framework of the thesis. It began by summarising the research questions and the hypotheses constructed to answer those questions. The following section described the methods and characteristics of sampling and surveying used. In particular, the reasons for sampling just one casino and for selecting the particular casino used in this thesis have been detailed. In the instrument section, the rationale for choosing particular measures were elaborated. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the data analysis techniques employed in the hypothesis testing.

Chapter 5: Analysis and results

5.1 Overview

The preceding chapter summarised the research questions and hypotheses that are to be tested in this chapter. It also discussed the sampling and survey method adopted. The research instrumentation and the underlying structure of the variables were also elaborated, while a discussion of issues involving data analysis concluded the chapter. This chapter has two sections. The first section presents analysis of the data, which itself is broken down into two sub-sections: preliminary analyses and assumption checking for multiple regression analyses. The preliminary analyses involve three steps. The first step presents the descriptive statistics for the research variables. The second step reports the reliabilities of scales measuring the study variables. Because some of the scale items have been reworded, factor analysis is conducted prior to checking the scale reliabilities. As indicated in Chapter 4, multiple regression is the primary statistical technique used here to test hypotheses, and the second sub-section discusses the extent to which the data meet the assumptions required to satisfy the conditions for robust regression analysis. Finally, the results of the analysis and hypothesis testing are reported in the second section. The organisation of this chapter is summarised in the following diagram.
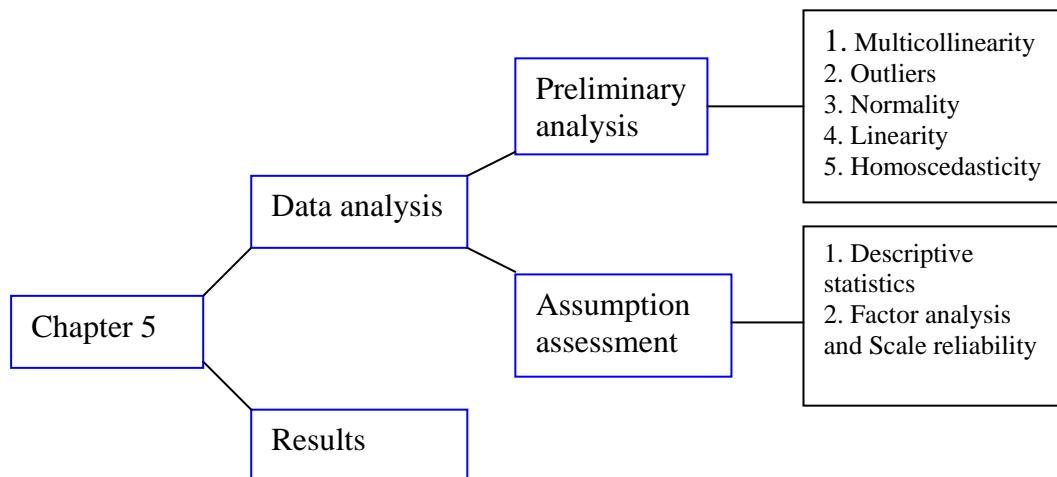
Figure 3. Organization of Chapter four

5.2 Data analysis

The purpose of this section is to prepare the data for analysis. The nature of each variable is explored. Descriptive statistics such as the mean, standard deviation, the lowest and highest scores, and the 5 percent Trimmed Mean recorded from the sample are provided. The 5 percent Trimmed Mean value indicates a recalculated new mean value by removing the top and bottom 5 percent of the cases. By comparing the original mean and the new trimmed mean, the difference indicates the degree to which the influence of the extreme scores is exerted on the mean. Minor difference suggests the normality of the mean. Except for the FFM of personality, the rest of the variables are subjected to factor analysis in order to examine the underlying structure of the measurement scales. Reliability of the total scores and that of the sub-dimensions identified for each variable are subsequently reported.

5.2.1 Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics for the research variables are shown in Table 3. Among all the variables, Agreeableness anchored at the high end of the scores, while Neuroticism at the low end ($M = 21.30$). This might suggest that people with characteristics of agreeableness, such as nurturing or caring, are more suitable for frontline positions. On the other hand, frontline employees, the casino key account

representatives in this study, as emotional labourers, are not supposed to be emotionally negative. Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Openness to experience, Adaptability, Emotional Intelligence and Performance Evaluation had mean scores in the Average category, with the exception that the customer orientation mean score which was in the High category. The minor differences between the trimmed mean and the original mean for all the variables suggest there was no strong influence for violating normality in this regard.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for all the Variables

Variables	Min	Max	Mean	5 percent trimmed mean	SD
Extraversion	16	40	27.15	27.08	3.97
Agreeableness	23	45	35.16	35.17	4.76
Conscientiousness	25	45	33.35	33.17	4.19
Neuroticism	12	30	21.3	21.36	3.82
Openness	23	48	34.53	34.43	4.29
Trait EI	82	146	113.46	113.44	12.79
Customer orientation	33	60	47.68	47.77	5.76
Adaptability	25	50	35.63	35.42	4.84
Performance	13	30	20.75	20.67	3.34

(N = 152)

5.2.2 Factor analysis and reliability

This section presents the factor analysis results for the measures of trait emotional intelligence, customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives. The underlying structures of each variable and the Cronbach alpha coefficients for each variable and the identified dimensions are revealed. Principal components analysis (PCA) is used as the factor analysis technique. As indicated in the last chapter, PCA is a set of psychometrically sound techniques of factor analysis used to produce a smaller number of linear combinations of the original variables that account for most of the variability in the pattern of correlations. It is worth noting that Factor here refers to Component in PCA. The two terms are used interchangeably in the current study.

Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of the data for factor analysis is assessed. Two criteria are recommended for assessing suitability. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the first criterion is the sample size, while the second is the strength of the inter-correlations among the items. The rule for sample size is generally that the larger, the better. However, Tabachnick and Fidell do concede that a sample size of 150 cases is also considered sufficient. As for inter-correlations among items, the authors recommend an inspection of the correlation matrix for evidence of coefficients greater than 0.30. Furthermore, two statistical measures, Bartlett's test of

sphericity (Bartlett, 1954) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy (Kaiser, 1974), were also used to assess the factorability of the data. According to Pallant (2005), for factor analysis to be considered appropriate, Bartlett's test of sphericity should be significant ($p<0.05$), and, with the KMO index normally ranging from 0 to 1, the minimum value for a suitable factor analysis should be 0.06.

In conjunction with what the relevant literature suggests, three techniques are used in the current study to determine the number of factors to retain. The first technique is Kaiser's criterion, or the eigenvalue rule. The eigenvalue of a factor represents the amount of the total variance explained by that factor. This rule indicates that only factors with an eigenvalue of 1.0 or above should be retained for further examination. The second technique is Catell's scree test (Catell, 1966). The scree test presents the plots of eigenvalues for all the factors. Among the plots there is point at which the shape of curve changes direction and become horizontal. This approach suggests that all the points above the curve should be retained, as those which explain the most variance in the data (Pallant, 2005). The third technique is parallel analysis. It concerns comparing the size of eigenvalues with those obtained from a randomly generated data set of the same size (Choi, Fuqua, & Griffin, 2001). This approach to identifying the correct number of components to retain has been shown to be the most accurate, with both Kaiser's criterion and Catell's scree test tending to overestimate the number of components (Hubbard & Allen, 1987; Zwick & Velicer, 1986). In this study only those eigenvalues exceeding the corresponding values generated from the random data set were retained. This technique has been recommended by some scholars as the most accurate approach of determining the correct number of factors

(Pallant, 2005). Based on these criteria, the analyses and results of PCA for the aforementioned variables are presented below.

5.2.2.1 Self-report emotional intelligence scale

Although Schutte et al. (1998) argued for a single-factor structure for the self-report emotional intelligence scale (SREIS), other researchers (Petrides & Furnham, 2000; Saklofske, Austin, & Minski, 2003) have derived a four-factor solution. According to Petrides and Furnham (2000), the scale failed to show emotional intelligence as a single factor. The authors warned that data obtained with the SREIT should undergo factor analysis to confirm the four-factor structure found in their analysis, as they were unsure of the stability of their solution.

Because there is a question of the stability of the *SREIT* factor structure, the emotional intelligence scale is subjected to PCA using SPSS version 15. The analysis is carried out using raw-score data collected from the 33-item scale.

This study had 152 cases, and an inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of all coefficients of 0.30 and above (see appendix A), therefore, the two conditions were confirmed. Furthermore, The KMO value was 0.87, exceeding the recommended value of 0.60 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis revealed the presence of nine components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 28.73, 6.37, 5.34, 4.85, 4.22, 3.71, 3.45, 3.38 and 3.06 percents of the variance respectively. An inspection of the Screeplot revealed the possibility of one explaining 28.73 percent of the total variance. A parallel analysis in which the actual eigenvalues were compared to average eigenvalues derived from a series of randomly generated data sets suggested the presence of three factors explaining 40.44 percent of the variance. This finding confirms the cautionary note that Petrides and Furnham (2002) made: "we may have overestimated the number of factors, which means that some of them (especially the fourth) might not emerge in other data sets" (pp. 318-319). However, for the sake of interpretability, it was decided to retain four components for further investigation in the current study. A varimax rotation was conducted to identify the meaningful subscales (Table 4). Based on items with loading of 0.40 or above, the four sub-components that were present were labeled "Mood Regulation", "Appraisal of Emotions" "Social Skills" and "Utilisation of Emotions" with Cronbach alpha coefficients of 0.88, 0.72, .071, and 0.63 respectively. The results in terms of the four factors and item loading were consistent with the finding reported by Petrides and Furnham (2002). The coefficient value for the last component was lower than 0.70, also consistent with the finding by Petrides and Furnham who indicated they might have overestimated the number of factors. The results are demonstrated in Table 4.

Because the results from the Screeplot provided by SPSS suggest that one factor be retained, and the total score of trait EI measure is used for some hypothesis analyses (discussed in next section), one factor solution of this measure is also revealed here. The Component Matrix shows that all items were provided with loadings above 0.30.

However, item 5, 8 and 11 were not loaded on this component; therefore, the three items are excluded from the analysis (see Appendix A). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the one-factor trait EI in the current study is 0.92, which is comparable to that which was reported by Schutte et al. (1998).

Table 4

Principal Component Analysis of Self-report Emotional Intelligence Scale

	F1	F2	F3	F4
1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others	0.564			
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcome them	0.524			
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try	0.530			
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important	0.638			
9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them	0.656			
12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last	0.552			
16. I present my self in a way that makes a good impression on others	0.475			
19. I know why my emotions change	0.72			
21. I have control over my emotions	0.587			
22. I easily recognise my emotions as I experience them	0.673			
24. I compliment others when they have done something well	0.541			
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail	0.453			
31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles	0.562			

4. Other people find it easy to confide in me		0.425		
5. I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people		0.485		
8. Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living		-0.617		
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing		0.500		
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them		0.544		
30. I help other people feel better when they are down		0.417		
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice		0.499		
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do		0.495		
11. I like to share my emotions as I experience them			0.670	
13. I arrange events others enjoy			0.618	
14. I seek out activities that make me happy			0.422	
15. I am aware of the non-verbal messages that I send to others			0.523	
25. I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send			0.487	
10. I expect good things to happen				0.463
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me				0.517
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas				0.76
23. I motivate myself by imaging a good outcome to tasks I take on				0.468
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas				0.700
Variance explained	28.73%	6.37%	5.34%	4.85%
Eigenvalue	9.48	2.10	1.76	1.60

Randomly generated average eigenvalues	2.01	1.87	1.75	1.66
SD (100 replications)	0.08	0.06	0.06	0.05
Cronbach alpha coefficients from Petrides and Furnham (2000)	0.90	0.93	0.73	0.55
Cronbach alpha coefficients from the current study	0.88	0.72	0.71	0.63

5.2.2.2 Customer orientation

As indicated in the last section, the measure of customer orientation has been modified. The 13 items of customer orientation scale (COS) were subjected to factor analysis using SPSS version 15. Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis is assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix reveals the presence of many coefficients of 0.30 and above. The KMO value was 0.86, exceeding the recommended value of 0.60, and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity reached statistical significance. $P < 0.0005$, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principalcomponents analysis reveals the presence of three components with eigenvalues over 1, explaining 39.18, 12.88 and 7.92 percents of the variance respectively. An inspection of the Screeplot revealed a clear break after the second component. Using Catell's (1966) scree test, it was decided to retain two components for further investigation. This was also supported by the results of Parallel analysis, which showed only two components with eigenvalues over the corresponding values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (13 variables X 152 subjects).

A varimax rotation was conducted to identify the meaningful subscales (see appendix). The results are presented in Table 5. The result from the Component Matrix demonstrates that there is no factor loading on item 13. This is plausible as

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item 13 was adapted from the selling-orientation component of the original SOCO scale developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982). Hence, item 13 was excluded from the current study. Based on items with loading of 0.40 or above, the retained two components solution explained a total of 52.06 percent of the total variance, with Component 1 contributing 30.73 percent and Component 2 contributing 21.34 percent. This interpretation of the two components was consistent with Daniel and Darby (1997) on the modified COS. Hence Component 1 was named Professional Relationship, strongly loaded with item 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12. Component 2 was named Information Exchange, strongly loaded with item 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5; The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the two components were 0.85 and 0.78 respectively. The value of Cronbach alpha coefficient for the total score of COS was 0.86, which was generated for mediation analysis.

As in some hypothesis analyses, the total score of customer orientation measure is used (discussed in the next section). The one-factor solution is revealed here. The Component Matrix shows that only 12 items were loaded on Component 1, with loadings above 0.30. Item 13 did not loaded on this component (see appendix B for results). Therefore, this study used the retained 12 items to generate the uni-factor for customer orientation measure. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for this scale is 0.86.

Table 5

Principal Component Analysis of Customer Orientation Scale

	F 1	F2	
6. I answer customers' questions about our service procedures as accurately as I can	0.680		
7. I try to figure out what a customer's needs are	0.752		
8. Good employees have the customer's best interests in mind	0.755		
9. I offer the service that is best suited to the customer's needs	0.574		
10. I paint too rosy a picture of our casino services to make them sound as good as possible	0.586		
11. I try to achieve my goals by satisfying customers	0.844		
12. I try to find out which services of our casino would be most suitable to a customer	0.759		
1. I try to give customers an accurate explanation of what our casino's services can do for them		0.736	
2. I try to get customers to discuss their needs with me		0.764	
3. I imply to a customer that something is beyond my control (which is not)		0.691	
4. I try to influence a customer by information rather than by pressure		0.611	
5. I try to help customers achieve a pleasant entertainment experience in our casino		0.583	

Variance explained	30.73%	21.34%	
Eigenvalue	5.09	1.68	
Randomly generated average eigenvalues	1.51	1.38	
SD (100 replications)	0.08	0.05	
Cronbach alpha coefficients from the current study	0.85	0.78	

5.2.2.3 Adaptability

As stated in the last section, the measure of adaptability has been modified, and the 10 items of adaptability scale were subjected to factor analysis using SPSS version 15. Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.30 and above. The KMO value was 0.83, exceeding the recommended value of 0.60, and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity reached statistical significance, $p < 0.0005$, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principal components analysis revealed the presence of two components with eigenvalues over 1, explaining 36.05 percent and 13.32 percent of the variance respectively. An inspection of the Screeplot revealed a clear break after the second component. Using Catell's (1966) scree test, it was decided to retain two components for further investigation. This was also supported by the results of Parallel analysis, which showed only two components with eigenvalues over the corresponding values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (10 variables X 152 subjects).

A Varimax rotation was conducted to identify the meaningful subscales (see Appendix C). The results are presented in Table 6. Based on items with loading of 0.40 or above, the retained two components solution explained a total of 49.38 percent of the total variance, with Component 1 contributing 27.88 percent and Component 2 contributing 21.50 percent. The interpretation of the two components was consistent with that suggested by Marks, Vorhies and Badovick (1996), The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the two components were 0.75 and 0.64 respectively. The value of Cronbach alpha coefficient for the one factor adaptability is 0.86, which was generated for mediation analysis (discussed in next section).

Table 6

Principal Component Analysis of Adaptability Scale

	F1	F2
1. I don't change my approach from one customer to another	0.634	
2. I try to understand how one customer differs from another	0.694	
3. I am very sensitive to the needs of my customers	0.519	
4. I vary my approach from situation to situation	0.747	
5. I treat all customers pretty much the same	0.759	0.501
6. I find it difficult to adapt my style to certain customers		0.467
7. When I feel that my approach is not working, I can easily change to another approach		0.541
8. I feel confident that I can effectively change my approach when necessary		0.646
9. I like to experiment with different approaches		0.792
10. Every customer requires a unique approach		
Variance explained	27.88%	21.50%

Eigenvalue	3.61	1.33
Randomly generated average eigenvalues	1.42	1.22
SD (100 replications)	0.07	0.05
Cronbach alpha coefficients from the current study	0.75	0.64

5.2.2.4 The service performance of casino key account representatives

PCA using SPSS version 15 was undertaken to investigate the underlying structure of the adapted performance measure (see Appendix D). Prior to performing PCA the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.30 and above. The KMO value was 0.77, exceeding the recommended value of 0.60, and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity reached statistically significance, $p < 0.0005$, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Principalcomponents analysis revealed the presence of three components with eigenvalues over 1, explaining 36.93, 15.09 and 13.28 percents of the variance respectively. An inspection of the Screeplot revealed a clear break after the second component. The results of Parallel analysis showed only one component with eigenvalues over the corresponding values for a randomly generated data matrix of the same size (8 variables X 152 subjects). Hence, one component was decided to retain for the current study.

In the Component Matrix (Table 7), two items, namely quantity of work and appearance were not loaded on factor 1, thus excluded from the current study. The six retained items were used in the analysis. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the performance scale was 0.78. The value is above 0.70, so the scale can be considered reliable with the sample.

Table 7

PrincipalComponent Analysis of the Service performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

	Component 1
Quality of work	0.744
Human Relations and Customer Relations	0.762
Adaptability	0.519
Interest	0.728
Initiative	0.767
Diligence	0.615
Variance explained	36.93%
Eigenvalue	2.96
Randomly generated average eigenvalues	1.35
SD (100 replications)	0.07
Cronbach alpha coefficients from the current study	0.78

5.2.3 Normality assessment

As indicated in Chapter 4, multiple regression is the main statistical technique used in the current study. A few of assumptions about the data need to be examined before conducting multiple regression analysis. Violations of these assumptions may affect the appropriateness of adopting this statistical technique and the results it generates (Pallant, 2005). Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) list four conditions for the suitability of regression analyses.

The first is sample size. Stevens (1996) recommends that 15 cases per predictor shall be needed for a reliable regression equation for social science research. Tabachnick and Fidell have given a formula for calculating the sample size requirements: $N > 50 + 8m$ (m stands for the independent variables used). Since this study has six independent variables, a minimum of 98 subjects is required. The sample size used in the current study clearly exceeds this requirement.

The second is the assumption of multicollinearity. A few conditions are required to be met in order not to violate the assumption. First, the relationships among the independent variables should not be too high. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggest the cut-off point for the correlation coefficient is 0.70. Second, the correlation between the independent variables and dependent variable should at least be 0.30 or above. Third, the tolerance value should not be too small, for instance, less than 0.10, and the VIF value should not be too high, for instance, more than 10. Tolerance indicates how much of the variance of the specified independent variable is not explained by the other independent variables in the regression model, while the VIF value is the inverse of the tolerance value. When the tolerance value is less than 0.10 or the VIF value is above 10, multicollinearity may be present.

The third condition relates to outliers. Tabachnick and Fidell define outliers as those with standardised residual values above 3.3 or less than –3.3. Outliers exert substantial effect on multiple regression analysis, therefore it is necessary to identify and manage them. They can be identified from the standardised residual plot, the Scatterplot, Cook's Distance obtained from SPSS. If the value for Cook's Distance is greater than 1, problem caused by outliers is implied. A large amount of outliers are suggested to be deleted from the data set or given a score for that variable (Pallant, 2005; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

The fourth condition concerns the assumptions of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independence of residuals, which refer to various aspects of the distribution of scores and the nature of the underlying relationship between the variables. These assumptions can be inspected from the residuals scatterplots in the

regression analyses. Residuals are the differences between the obtained and the predicted dependent variable scores. The residuals for normality should be normally distributed about the dependent variable scores. The residuals for linearity should have a straight-line relationship with dependent variable scores. The variance of residuals about the dependent variable scores for homoscedasticity shall be the same for all scores.

In general, the major assumptions for the data set to suit multiple regression analysis are summarised in Table 8 below:

Table 8

Assumptions of Multiple Regression

Assumption of multicollinearity	1) The correlations between the independent variables and dependent variable must be above 0.30 respectively
	2) The correlations between each of the independent variables must not be more than 0.70.
	3) The Tolerance value must be more than .10, and the VIF value must not be more than 10
Assumption of outliers	The value for Cook's Distance should be less than 1
Assumption of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity	1) The Normal Probability Plot should lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right
	2) The Scatterplot of the standardised residuals should be roughly rectangularly distributed.

Based on these conditions, this section examines the assumptions about the data involving the research questions and hypothesis testing, specifically, for research on question 1, the relationships between each of trait EI dimensions, and their

relationships with the service performance of casino key account representatives (the dependent variable) respectively; for research question 2, the relationships between each of the five factors of personality, and their relationships with the dependent variable of the study respectively; for research question 3, the relationship between dimensions of trait EI and personality factors; for research question 4, the relationship between customer orientation and adaptability, and their relationship with the dependent variable respectively; for research question 5, the relationships between each of trait EI dimensions with customer orientation and adaptability (mediators) respectively, the relationships between each of the five factors with the mediators respectively. All the correlations concerning the investigated relationships were investigated by using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient

5.2.3.1 Trait EI and performance ratings

The results from the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient are presented in Table 9. It shows that the relationships between each dimension of trait EI were correlated but none of the correlations were beyond the cut-off point ($r = 0.70$). The correlations between three of the trait EI dimensions and the service performance of casino key account representatives were above 0.30. In addition, the Tolerance values were more than 0.10, and the VIF values were less than 10. Hence, Multicollinearity is not violated.

Table 9

Correlations between Dimensions of Trait EI and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives (CKAR) and the Values of Tolerance and VIF

	MR	AE	SK	UE	Perf	Tolerance	VIF
Mood Regulation (MR)		0.60	0.55	0.63	0.51	0.46	2.17
Appraisal of Emotions (AE)			0.42	0.54	0.32	0.59	1.70
Social Skills (SK)				0.51	0.28	0.65	1.53
Utilisation of Emotions (UE)					0.54	0.53	1.89
CKAR's Performance (Perf)							

As for outliers, only a few outlying residuals were found in this regression analysis, so no action shall be taken. Furthermore, the maximum value for Cook's Distance is 0.09, suggesting no major problems. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 4 lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, which suggests the linearity was not violated. The residuals of the Scatterplot in Figure 4 were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre. Based on these results, the assumptions for multiple regression analysis were not violated.

Figure 4. Normal P-P Plot of regression standardised residual and the scatterplot

Dependent Variable: TPERF

Dependent Variable: TPERF
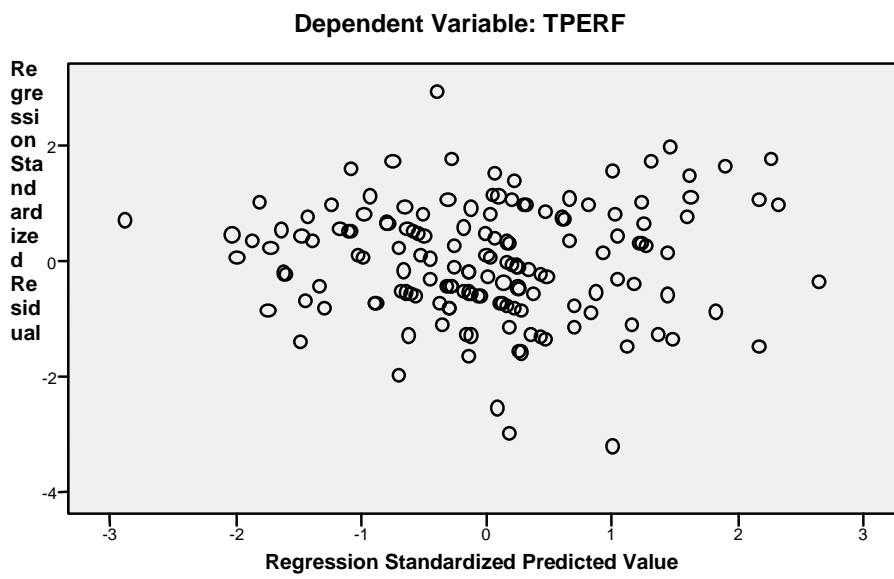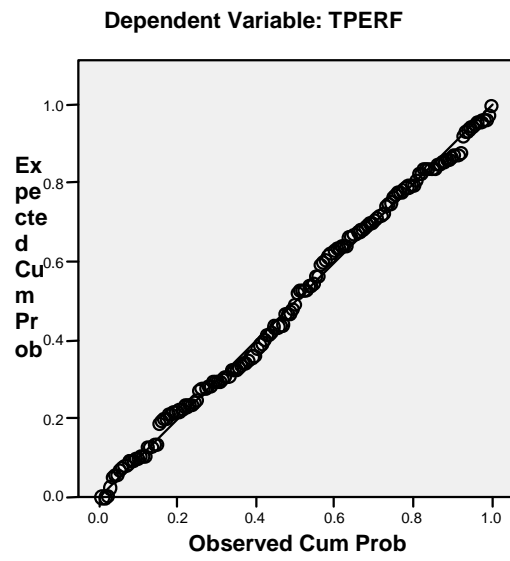
5.2.3.2 The FFM of personality and performance ratings

The correlations between the personality factors and the service performance of casino key account representatives are presented in Table 10. by using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The results show all the correlation coefficients between the independent variables were less than 0.70, and the correlations with the dependent variable were above 0.30. The Tolerance values were more than 0.10, VIF values were less than 10. Thus, the assumption of Multicollinearity was not violated.

Table 10

Correlations between the Five Factors of Personality and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives, and the Values of Tolerance and VIF

	E	A	C	N	O	Perf.	Tolerance	VIF
Extraversion (E)		0.45	0.57	-0.52	0.53	0.51	0.54	1.87
Agreeableness (A)			0.66	-0.41	0.36	0.42	0.55	1.82
Conscientiousness (C)				-0.51	0.49	0.55	0.43	2.35
Neuroticism (N)					-0.37	-0.41	0.66	1.52
Openness (O)						0.44	0.67	1.50

(Perf. = the service performance of casino key account representatives)

The maximum value for Cook's Distance is 0.12; therefore, no major problem from outliers was suggested, although a few outlying residuals were found in the regression analysis. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 5 lie in a reasonably

straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, and the residuals of the Scatterplot in Figure 5 were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre. Hence, the major assumptions for multiple regression were not violated.

Figure 5. Normal P-P Plot of regression standardised residual and the scatterplot

Dependent Variable: TPERF

Dependent Variable: TPERF
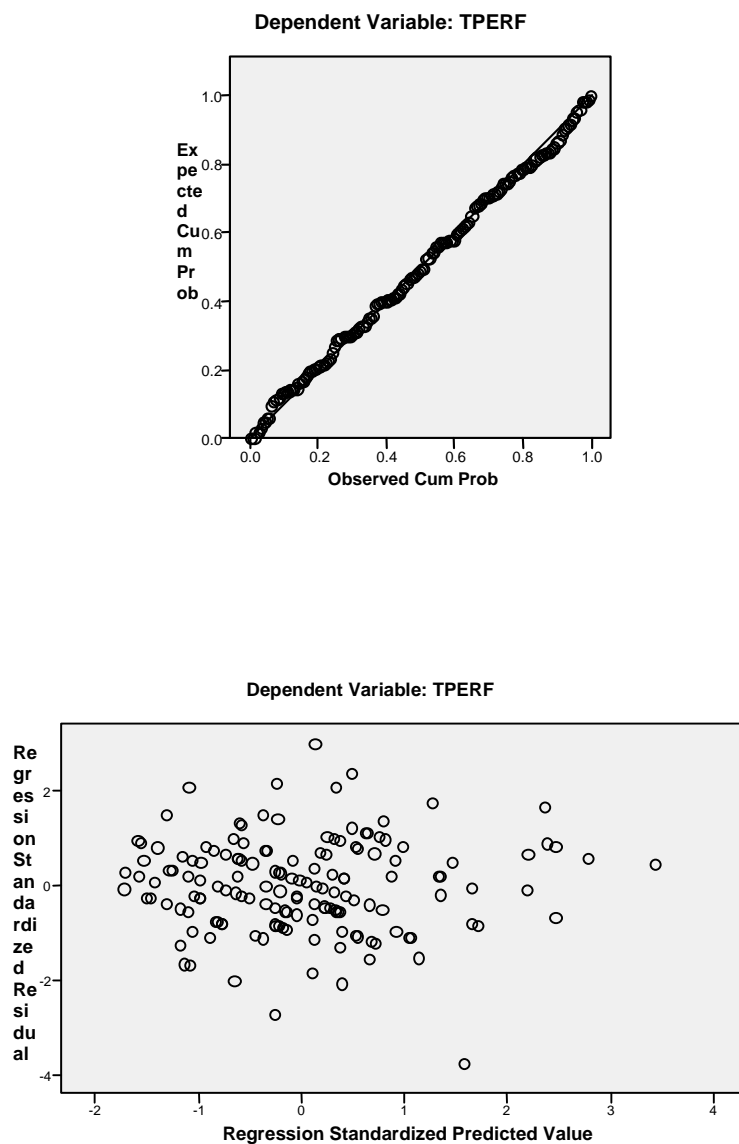
5.2.3.3 Trait EI and the FFM of personality

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The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients reported in Table 11 show that the correlations between the dimensions of trait EI and the FFM of personality were all less than 0.70, which suggests that the two constructs as independent variables can be entered simultaneously in the standard regression equation.

Table 11

The Correlations between Dimensions of Trait EI and the Five Factors of Personality

	Mood regulation	Appraisal of emotions	Social skills	Utilisation of emotions
Extraversion	0.52	0.40	0.20	0.44
Agreeableness	0.61	0.42	0.39	0.48
Conscientiousness	0.59	0.39	0.34	0.54
Neuroticism	-0.40	-0.12	-0.09	-0.29
Openness	0.53	0.39	0.42	0.44

5.2.3.4 Customer orientation, adaptability and performance ratings

The correlation coefficient between Information Change and Professional Relationship, the two dimensions of customer orientation, was 0.51, and the two dimensions of customer orientation were correlated with the service performance of casino key account representatives at $r = 0.36$, and $r = 0.38$ respectively. In addition, the tolerance value was 0.74, and VIF value 1.36. Hence, the assumption of Multicollinearity was not violated for this regression model.

The results from conducting multiple regression technique by SPSS show that the maximum value for Cook's Distance is 0.60, suggesting that the outliers were at accepted levels. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 6 also lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, and the residuals of the Scatterplot in Figure 6 were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre. These results suggest normality for conducting multiple regression analysis.

Figure 6. Normal P-P plot of regression standardised residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: TPERF

Scatterplot
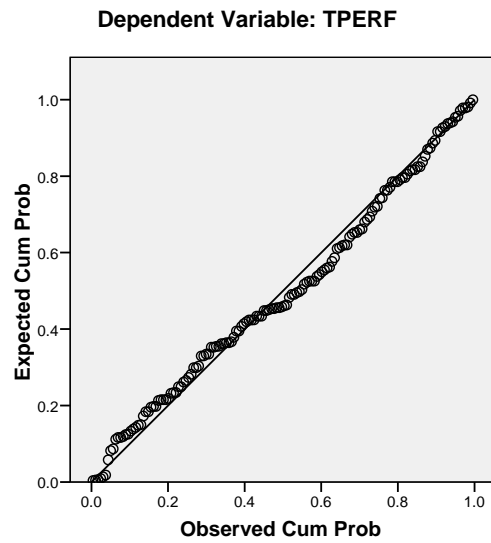
Dependent Variable: TPERF
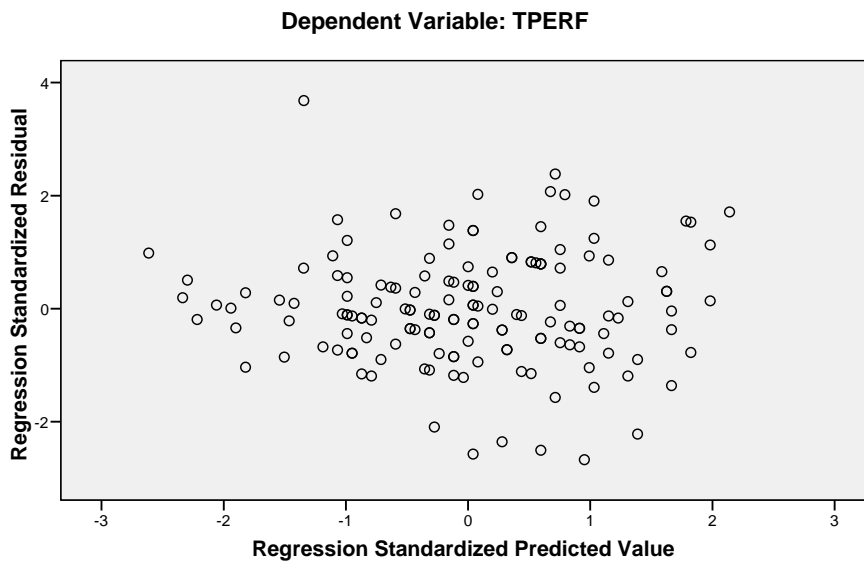
The correlation between Adaptability Behaviour and Adaptability Belief, the two dimensions of adaptability was 0.51. Furthermore, the dependent variable – the

service performance of casino key account representatives was correlated with Adaptability Behaviour at r = 0.64, with Adaptability Belief at r = 0.37. Both were above 0.30. Both the tolerance and VIF values also suggest no violation of Multicollinearity.

As for outliers, only a few outlying residuals are found in this regression analysis, with the maximum value for Cook's Distance being 0.10. Therefore, no serious problem was suggested for the effect of outliers. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 7 lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, and the residuals of the Scatterplot were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre. These conditions suggest the appropriateness of conducting multiple regression for this proposed relationship.

Figure 7. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardised Residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: TPERF

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: TPERF
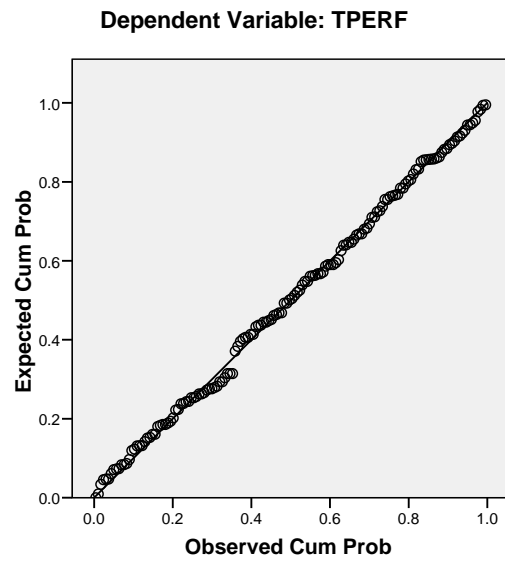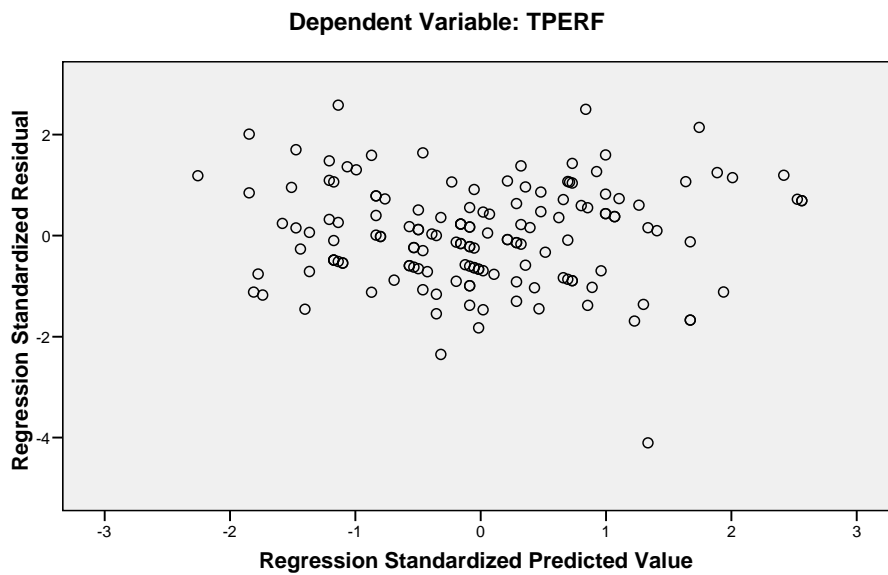
5.2.3.5 Trait EI and customer orientation

The relationships between trait EI and customer orientation were investigated by calculating the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The results show that three out of the four correlation coefficients between the independent variables and dependent variable were above 0.30. Specifically, the correlation coefficient of customer orientation with mood regulation was 0.60, with social skills was 0.26, with utilisation of emotions was 0.44, and with appraisal emotions was 0.47. The results from performing Collinearity Diagnostics show that the Tolerance values were more than 0.10, VIF values were less than 10. Hence, Multicollinearity was not violated.

No action was taken for the outliers as only a few outlying residuals were found, with the maximum value for Cook's Distance being 0.20. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 8 lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, which suggests the linearity was not violated. The residuals of the Scatterplot in Figure 8 were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre.

Figure 8. Normal P-P plot of regression standardised residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: CO

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: CO
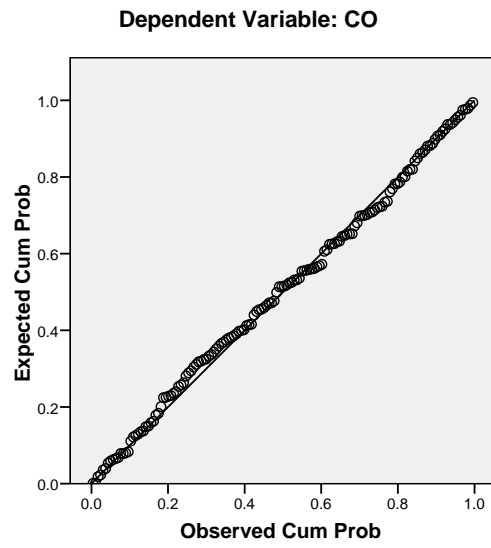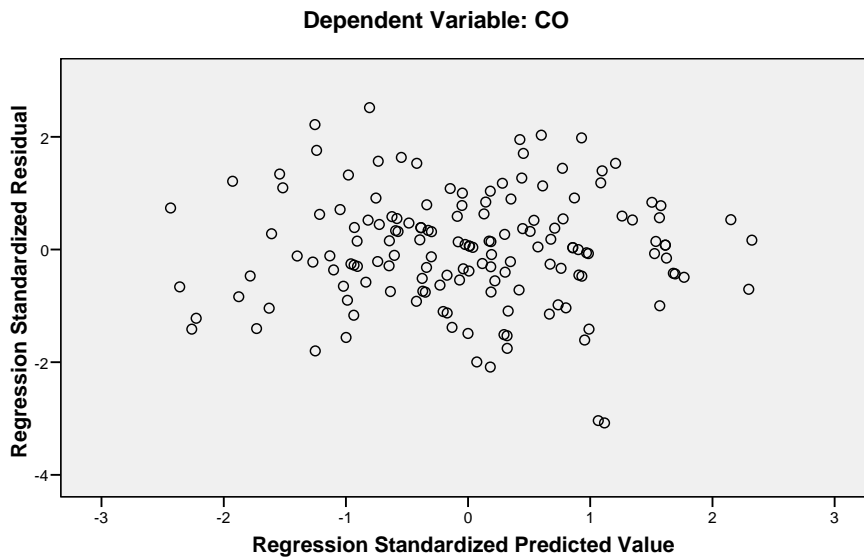
5.2.3.6 Trait EI and adaptability

Pearson product correlation analysis shows that the four dimensions of trait EI have correlations with adaptability as the criterion variable at r = 0.66, 0.42, 0.40, and 0.57 respectively - more than 0.30. Besides, the results of the Collinearity Diagnostics show that the Tolerance values were more than 0.10, and VIF values were less than 10. Hence, the Multicollinearity assumption was not violated.

Outliers were at the accepted level, with the maximum value for Cook's Distance at 0.11. The points on the Normal Probability Plot in Figure 9 lie in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right, which suggests the linearity was not violated. The residuals of the Scatterplot in Figure 9 were rectangularly distributed, with most of the scores concentrated in the centre. Based on these results, multiple regression analysis for this posited relationship was suitable.

Figure 9. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardised Residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: ADAPT

Scatterplot
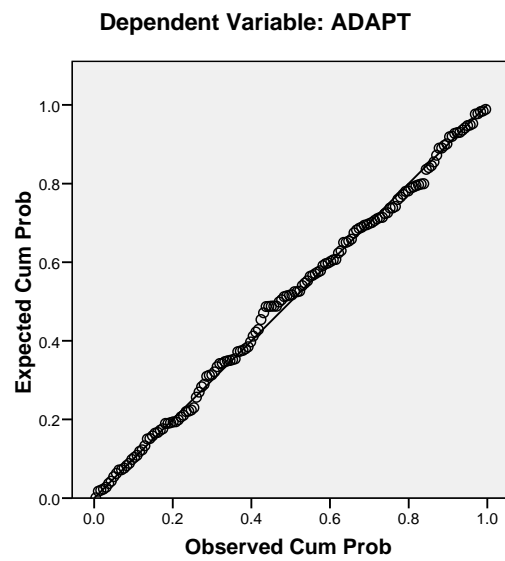
Dependent Variable: ADAPT
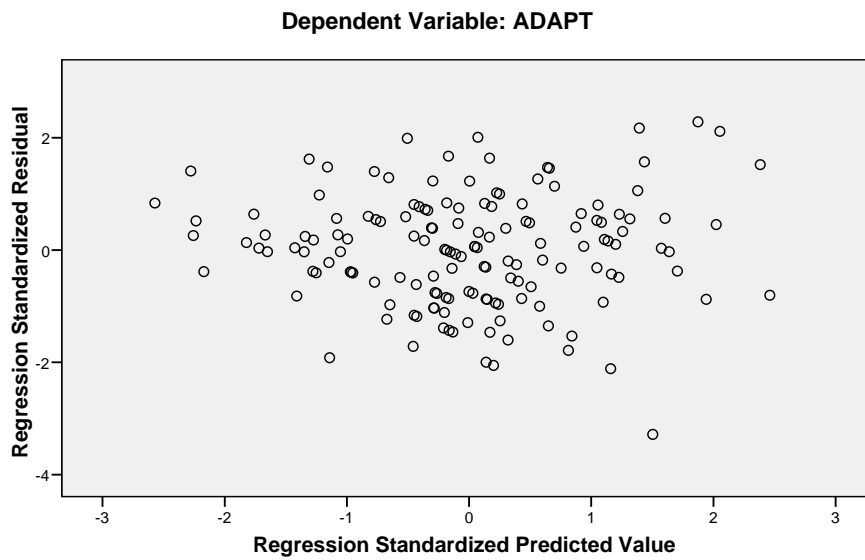
5.2.3.7 The FFM of personality and customer orientation

The results of conducting Pearson product correlation coefficient show that the relationships between each of the personality factors as the independent variables and customer orientation as the criterion variable were above the cut-off point (0.30) suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). The correlation coefficients for Extraversion was r = 0.41, for Agreeableness r = 0.36, for Conscientiousness r = 0.37, for Openness to Experience r = 0.41, and for Neuroticism r = 0.34. In addition, the tolerance and VIF values were at accepted level according to the Collinearity Diagnostics. Therefore, the assumption of multicollinearity was met.

Outliers were not an issue in this case. The standardized residual fell within –3.3 to 3.3, with a Cook's distance value 0.18. The Normal Probability Plot and the Scatterplot in Figure 10 of the standardised residuals suggest no major deviations from normality.

Figure 10. Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardised Residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: CO

Scatterplot

Dependent Variable: CO
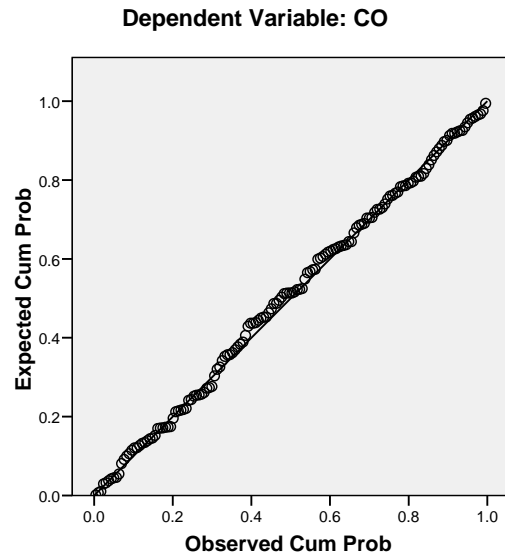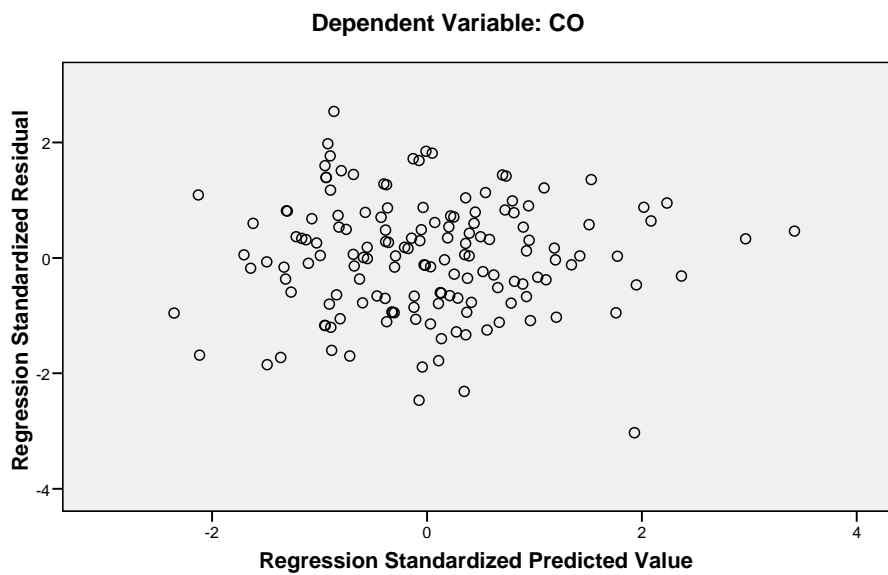
5.2.3.8 The FFM of personality and adaptability

The Pearson product-moment correlations between the five personality factors and adaptability were 0.49 for Extraversion, 0.43 for Agreeableness, 0.49 for Conscientiousness, 0.45 for Openness to experience, and 0.38 for Neuroticism. Performing Collinearity Diagnostics shows that the Tolerance values for the five dimensions of personality factors were above 0.10, and the VIF values were below 10; therefore, the multicollinearity assumption was not violated.

The Normal Probability Plot and the Scatterplot in Figure 11 of the standardised residuals suggest no major deviations from normality. The standardized residual fell within -3.3 to 3.3, with a Cook's distance value 0.18, which indicated no major problems were detected to violate assumptions for regression analysis.

Figure 11. Normal P-P plot of regression standardised residual and the scatterplot

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: ADAPT

Scatterplot
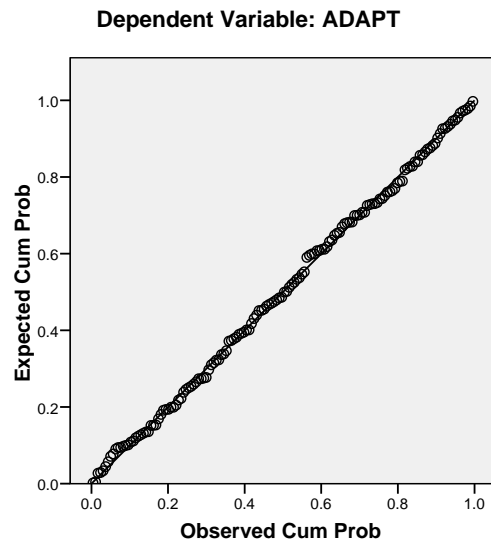
Dependent Variable: ADAPT
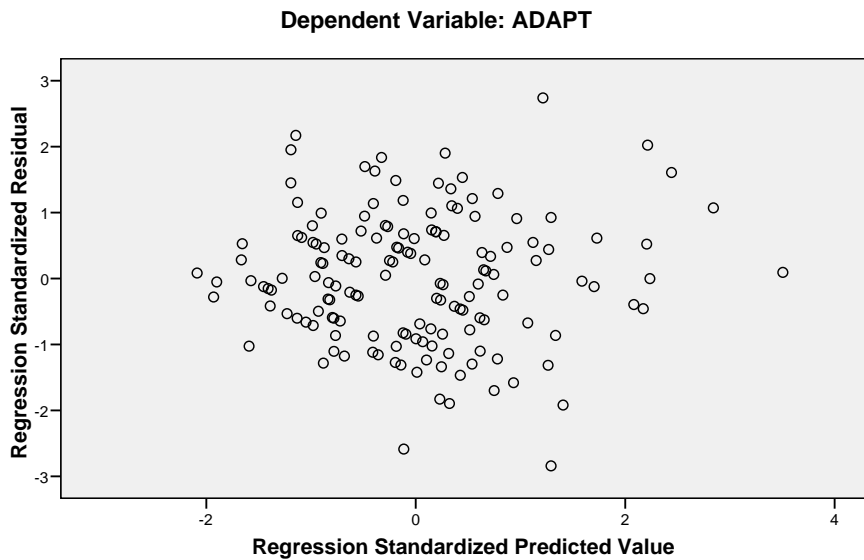
The above section presented factor analysis results and scale reliabilities for trait EI,

customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account

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representatives. It also examined normality for relevant multiple regression analysis employed for hypothesis testing in the current study. The following section reports the results of the hypothesis testing. Post-hoc analyses conclude the section.

5.3 Results

This section presents the analysis and results of the hypothesis testing. In addition to these results, post-hoc analyses are undertaken with respect to the relationships of age, gender, education and tenure with emotional intelligence, customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives respectively. A summary of the findings for all hypotheses is provided at the end of the chapter.

5.3.1 Hypothesis 1: Trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives

Hypothesis 1 involves testing the relationship between trait EI as the predictor and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the dependent variable. Based on the results that four items were identified from the principal component analysis of trait EI, the four dimensions were entered in the regression equation to investigate the unique variance in the dependent variable explained by each of the dimensions.

The results from multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 12. It shows that the four dimensions of trait EI explained 35 percent of variance in the service

performance of casino key account representatives, or R square = 0.35, $F_{(4, 147)}$ = 19.76, $p < 0.0005$, which indicates a statistically significant result was obtained from the regression model.

However, review of the coefficients table shows that only two sub-dimensions of trait EI made statistically significant unique contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. They are Component 1, mood regulation and Component 4, appraisal of emotions, with Beta = 0.34, t = 3.48, $p < 0.001$ and Beta = 0.41, t = 4.47, $p < 0.0005$ respectively. As the full model reached statistical significance, hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 12

Multiple Regression Analysis of Trait EI as Predictor of the Service Performance of Casino key account representatives

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Mood Regulation	0.34	3.48	0.00
Social Skills	- .07	-0.80	0.42
Utilisation of Emotions	-0.09	-1.04	0.30
Appraisal of Emotions	0.41	4.47	0.00
df (4, 147)	F = 19.76	Sig. F = .00	R Square = 0.35

5.3.2 Hypothesis 2: The FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives

This hypothesis involves investigation of the Five Factor Model of personality factors (FFM) as predictors in explaining variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives. This analysis used multiple regression technique, as all the assumptions for an appropriate regression analysis examined before were not violated. In the regression equation, the five factors of personality were entered as the independent variables, and the service performance served as the criterion variable.

The results are presented in Table 13. It shows that the whole model from the five personality factors explained 38 percent variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives. In other words, R square = 0.38, F (5, 146) = 17.83, p < 0.0005. However, among the five personality factors, only Extraversion and Conscientiousness made statistically significant unique contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives. The beta weight for Extraversion was 0.20, t = 2.25, p <0 .05, for Conscientiousness was 0.29, t = 2.92, p < 0.01.

Examination of the Coefficients table shows that Conscientiousness makes the strongest contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives, followed by Extraversion, Openness to Experience (Beta = 0.14, t = 1.73), Neuroticism (beta = -0.09, t = -1.09) and Agreeableness (beta = 0.05, t = .55). As the full model reached statistical significance, hypothesis 2 was confirmed.

Table 13

Multiple Regression Analysis of the FFM of Personality as Predictors of the Service

Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Extraversion	0.20	2.25	0.02
Agreeableness	0.05	.55	0.58
Conscientiousness	0.29	2.92	0.00
Neuroticism	-0.09	-1.09	0.27
Openness to Experience	0.14	1.73	0.08
df (5, 146)	F = 17.83	Sig. F = .00	R Square = 0.38

5.3.3 Hypothesis 3: The incremental validity of trait EI over the FFM of personality

Hypothesis 3 proposes that trait EI explains additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives over the FFM of personality. This hypothesis was tested using hierarchical regression analysis, where the total score of trait EI was used. The FFM of personality, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience were entered at Step 1, and trait EI was entered at Step 2.

The hierarchical regression results are presented in Table 14. It demonstrates that the whole model explained 42 percent variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives, R square = 0.42, $F (6, 145) = 17.25$, $p < 0.0005$. After the personality factors were controlled for, it resulted in a change in R Squared of 0.04, F Change = 9.29, Sig. F Change < 0.005. Thus, trait EI was found to make a statistically significant contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives by explaining an additional 4 percent of the variance in the criterion variable, over and above the effects of the FFM of personality.

As an inspection of the coefficients table reveals, when both the FFM of personality and trait EI are entered into the regression equation, only Conscientiousness of the FFM of personality and the total trait EI score made statistically unique contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. The beta weight for Conscientiousness was 0.23, $t = 2.35$, $p < 0.05$, for trait EI was 0.28, $t = 3.05$, $p < 0.005$.

Since the total trait EI score was found to explain additional variance in the dependent variable over the FFM of personality factor, and was also found to make statistically unique contribution to the dependent variable, a further hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken to examine which dimension of trait EI made the largest contribution in providing the additional variance in the service performance. In this regression equation, the FFM of personality were entered at Step 1 as control, and the four dimensions of trait EI were entered at Step 2, with the service performance of casino key account representatives served as the criterion variable. The results obtained from the Coefficients table indicate that only Component 4, utilisation of

emotions, made a statistically significant contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives. This also indicates this dimension contributed to explaining the additional variance in the criterion variable. The beta weight obtained from this analysis for the utilisation of emotion was 0.30, $t = 3.31$, $p < 0.005$.

Table 14

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Incremental Validity of Trait EI in Explaining

Variance of the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives over

the FFM of Personality

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Step 1			
Extraversion	0.20	2.25	0.02
Agreeableness	0.05	0.55	0.58
Conscientiousness	0.29	2.92	0.00
Neuroticism	-0.09	-1.09	0.27
Openness to Experience	0.14	1.73	0.08
Step 2			
Total trait EI	0.29	3.05	0.00
Mood Regulation	0.13	1.21	0.22
Social Skills	-0.07	-0.82	0.41
Utilisation of Emotions	-0.05	-0.57	0.57
Appraisal of Emotions	0.30	3.31	0.00
df (6, 145) F = 17.25	Sig. = 0.00	R Square= 0.38	
R Square Change = 0.04	F Change = 9.29	Sig. F Change= 0.00	

5.3.4 Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c: Customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives

This analysis involves hypotheses 4a, 4b and 4c. It aims to determine how well the two relationship-oriented characteristics – customer orientation and adaptability -- predict the service performance of casino key account representatives, and whether adaptability scale is the better predictor of the dependent variable. Multiple regression was undertaken to analyse the proposed relationships, with the customer orientation scale (COS) and the adaptability measure entered into the regression equation as predictor variables, and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the criterion variable.

Examination of Table 15 demonstrates that the R Squared value for the model was 0.36, which indicates that both COS and adaptability scale explained 36 percent variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives. This result was statistically significant, $F(2, 149) = 41.63$, $p < 0.0005$.

The coefficients reveal that both COS and adaptability scale made statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, adaptability measure was shown to have the larger beta coefficient, which is 0.49 ($t = 6.38$, $p < 0.0005$), compared to COS. The beta weight obtained for COS was 0.17 ($t = 2.23$, $p < 0.05$). This means adaptability scale made a stronger contribution to explaining the criterion variable. Based on the finding, hypotheses 4a, 4b and 4c were supported.

Table 15

Multiple Regression Analysis for Customer Orientation and Adaptability as
Predictors of the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Customer Orientation	0.17	2.23	0.03
Adaptability	0.49	6.39	0.00
dF(2, 149)	F = 41.63	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.36

Because the factor analysis revealed that both COS and the adaptability measure had two sub-dimensions, namely, information exchange and professional relationship for COS, adaptability behaviour and adaptability belief for adaptability scale, further analysis was undertaken to find out whether both of the sub-dimensions made statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives, and which sub-dimension made the greater contribution to the dependent variable.

Multiple regression was conducted to investigate the variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives accounted for by two sub-dimensions of COS. Review of Table 16 shows that the whole model explained 18 percent of the variance in the dependent variable, $F(2, 149) = 16.75$, $p < 0.0005$). The results given in the coefficients table indicate that the sub-dimensions, information exchange and professional relationship, made statistically significant contributions to

the service performance of casino key account representatives. The beta weight for information exchange was 0.23 (t = 2.61, p < 0.01), for professional relationship was 0.28 (t = 3.10, p < 0.005), with the latter explaining a larger proportion of the variance in the dependent variable.

Table 16

Multiple Regression Analysis for the Sub-dimensions of Customer Orientation as Predictor of the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Information Exchange	0.23	2.61	0.01
Professional Relationship	0.27	3.10	0.002
dF(2,149)	F = 16.75	Sig. F = 0.00	

R Square = 0.18

The results in Table 17 from the multiple regression analysis of the two sub-dimensions of adaptability measure indicate that the total score of adaptability accounted for 41 percent of the variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives, $F (2, 149) = 51.52$, $p < 0.0005$. However, examination of the coefficients table shows that only the dimension of adaptability behaviour made a statistically significant contribution to the dependent variable. The beta weight for this dimension was 0.61 (t = 8.29, $p < 0.0005$). Adaptability belief only explained a minor variance in the performance evaluation, (beta = 0.06, t = 0.88, $p > 0.05$), which indicates its contribution was not statistically different from zero.

Table 17

Multiple Regression Analysis for the Sub-dimensions of Adaptability as Predictor of the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Adaptability Behaviours	0.61	8.29	0.00
Adaptability Beliefs	0.06	0.88	0.38
df(2, 149)	F = 51.52	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.41

5.3.5 Hypothesis 5.1.a: Trait EI and customer orientation

Hypothesis 5.1.a examines the relationship between trait EI and customer orientation scale (COS). The four dimensions of trait EI were entered in the regression equation as the predictor variables, COS served as the criterion variable.

Table 18 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis. It shows that trait EI in total explained 26 percent variance in customer orientation, $F_{(4, 147)} = 25.60$, $p < 0.0005$. Review of the coefficients reveals that only mood regulation and social skills made statistically significant contributions to customer orientation, with Beta = 0.55, t = 5.86, $p < 0.0005$ for mood regulation, and Beta = -0.22, t = -2.66, $p < 0.01$ for social

skills. As the full model reached statistical significance, hypothesis 5.1.a was supported.

Table 18

Multiple Regression Analysis for Trait EI as the Predictor of Customer Orientation Scale

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Mood Regulation	0.55	5.86	0.00
Experiencing Emotions	-0.22	-2.66	0.01
Utilisation of Emotions	0.15	1.89	0.06
Appraisal of Emotions	0.16	1.89	0.06
df (4, 147)	F = 25.60	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.41

5.3.6 Hypothesis 5.1.b: Trait EI and adaptability

Hypothesis 5.1.b examines the relationship between trait EI and adaptability. Multiple regression analysis was undertaken to investigate the proposed relationships.

The results in Table 19 indicate that the whole model explained 48 percent variance in adaptability measure, $F_{(4, 147)} = 33.47$, $p < 0.0005$. However, examination of the coefficients results reveals that only mood regulation (Beta = 0.51, t = 5.83, p <

0.0005) and appraisal of emotions (Beta = 0.27, t = 3.28, p < 0.001) made statistically significant contributions to the adaptability measure. Based on the result of the full model, hypothesis 5.1.b was supported.

Table 19

Multiple Regression Analysis for Trait EI as the Predictor of Adaptability

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Mood Regulation	0.51	5.83	0.00
Social Skills	-0.03	-0.44	0.66
Utilisation of Emotions	-0.00	-0.03	0.97
Appraisal of Emotions	0.27	3.28	0.001
df (4, 147)	F = 25.60	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.41

5.3.7 Hypothesis 5.2.a: The FFM of personality and customer orientation

Hypothesis 5.2.a proposes the existence of a relationship between the FFM of personality and the customer orientation of casino key account representatives (the criterion variable). To test this hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was undertaken to investigate the relationships of the Five Factor Model of personality factors with customer orientation of casino key account representatives, and how much variance in customer orientation can be explained by each personality factor.

The results of this regression analysis in Table 20 indicate that the FFM of personality produced 26 % variance in customer orientation, $F_{(5, 146)} = 10.03$, $p < 0.0005$. Investigation of the coefficients table shows that the largest beta coefficient was Openness 0.23, t = 2.58, followed by Extraversion 0.17, t = 1.70, and Agreeableness 0.16, t = 1.64. Conscientiousness and Neuroticism had very low beta values. Among the five personality factors, Openness was the only variable making statistically significant contribution to the prediction of customer orientation, $p < 0.05$. As the full model reached statistical significance, hypothesis 5.2.a was supported.

Table 20

Multiple Regression Analysis for the FFM of Personality as the Predictor of Customer Orientation

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Extraversion	0.17	1.70	0.09
Agreeableness	0.16	1.64	0.10
Conscientiousness	0.00	0.04	0.97
Neuroticism	-0.11	-1.20	0.23
Openness to Experience	0.23	2.58	0.01
df (5, 146)	F = 10.03	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.26

5.3.8 Hypothesis 5.2.b: The FFM of personality and adaptability

Hypothesis 5.2.b investigates the relationship between the FFM of personality and adaptability. To test this hypothesis, multiple regression analysis was undertaken to examine the relationships of the five personality factors as the independent variables with adaptability of casino key account representatives as the criterion variable.

Review of this regression analysis results in Table 21 demonstrates that personality factors as the predictor variables produced an R square 0.35, F (5, 146) = 15.52, p < 0.0005. This indicates that the FFM of personality explained 35 percent variance in adaptability measure, and this effect was statistically significant. Furthermore, examination of the coefficients table reveals that Openness and Extraversion were the only two personality factors to make statistically significant contributions to the prediction of customer orientation. The beta coefficient for Openness was 0.19, t = 2.37, p < 0.05, for Extraversion was 0.19, t = 2.09, p < 0.05. Although Conscientiousness and Agreeableness did not achieve statistical significance in explaining variance in the adaptability measure, they did exert some influence on the criterion variable, with a beta weight of 0.16, for Conscientiousness and 0.14 for Agreeableness. Because the full model reached statistical significance, on this basis, hypothesis 5.2.b was supported.

Table 21

Multiple Regression Analysis for the FFM of Personality as Predictors of

Adaptability

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Extraversion	0.19	2.09	0.04
Agreeableness	0.14	1.60	0.11
Conscientiousness	0.16	1.57	0.12
Neuroticism	-0.07	-0.08	0.43
Openness to Experience	0.19	2.37	0.02
df (5, 146)	F = 15.52	Sig. F = 0.00	R Square = 0.35

Based on the results from the previous analyses, both the FFM of personality and trait EI were found to be valid predictors of the two relationship-oriented characteristics: customer orientation scale (COS) and adaptability measure. Further analyses were undertaken to investigate whether trait EI could provide additional variance in COS and adaptability respectively over and above the FFM of personality. Hierarchical regression analysis is employed for this purpose, with the FFM of personality, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience entered at Step 1; the four dimensions of trait EI entered at Step 2, and with COS serving as the criterion variable.

The results are shown in Table 22. It shows that trait EI explained an additional 19 percent of the variance in COS after the effects of personality factors were removed.

This is indicated by the R Square change $= 0.19$, Sig. F Change $= 0.00$, $F_{(9, 142)}$ $= 12.47$, $p < 0.0005$.

When both the FFM of personality and trait EI were entered the regression equation, the results from the coefficients table reveal that none of personality factors made statistically significant contributions to COS. However, three dimensions of trait EI provided statistically significant contributions to the level of customer orientation. The beta weight for mood regulation was 0.48, $t = 4.54$, $p < 0.0005$, for social skills was -0.22, $t = -2.64$, $p < 0.01$), and for utilisation of emotions was 0.18, $t = 2.22$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 22

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Incremental Validity of Trait EI in Explaining

Variance in Customer Orientation over the FFM of Personality

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Step 1			
Extraversion	0.17	1.70	0.09
Agreeableness	0.16	1.64	0.10
Conscientiousness	0.00	0.04	0.97
Neuroticism	-0.11	-1.20	0.23
Openness to Experience	0.23	2.58	0.01
Step 2			
Mood Regulation	0.48	4.54	0.00
Social Skills	-0.22	-2.64	0.01
Utilisation of Emotions	0.18	2.22	0.02
Appraisal of Emotions	0.15	1.63	0.10

df (9, 142)   F = 12.47   Sig. F = 0.00   R Square = 0.44

R Square Change = 0.19   F Change = 11.81   Sig. F Change = 0.00

The same analysis process was taken to investigate the additional variance in adaptability scale explained by trait EI over the FFM of personality, with the five personality factors, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Extraversion, and Openness to experience entered at Step 1, trait EI entered at Step 2, and adaptability served as the criterion variable.

The results from Table 23 indicate that trait EI provided an additional 16 percent of the variance in adaptability after the effects of personality factors were controlled for. This result was statistically significant, indicated by the Change of R Squared of 0.16, Sig. F Change = 0.00, $F_{(9, 142)} = 15.94$, $p < 0.0005$.

Examination of the coefficient table shows that only two dimensions of trait EI made statistically significant contributions to the adaptability scale, the beta weight for mood regulation was 0.42, $t = 4.17$, $p < 0.0005$, for appraisal of emotion was 0.22, $t = 2.62$, $p < 0.01$. However, none of the FFM of personality was shown to have a statistically significant beta value.

Table 23

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Incremental Validity of Trait EI in

Explaining Variance in Customer Orientation over the FFM of personality

Predictor	Coefficients		
	Beta	t	Sig.
Step 1			
Extraversion	0.19	2.09	0.03
Agreeableness	0.14	1.6	0.11
Conscientiousness	0.16	1.57	0.11
Neuroticism	-0.07	-0.79	0.42
Openness to Experience	0.19	2.37	0.01
Step 2			
Mood Regulation	0.42	4.17	0
Social Skills	-0.03	-0.41	0.68
Utilisation of Emotions	0.03	0.38	0.7
Appraisal of Emotions	0.22	2.62	0.01

df (9, 142)   F = 15.94   Sig. F = 0.00   R Square = 0.50

Sig. F Change = 0.00   R Square Change - 0.16   F Change = 11.10

5.3.9 Hypothesis 5.3.a: Customer orientation and adaptability as the mediators between basic personality traits (trait EI and the FFM of personality) and the service performance of casino key account representatives

This hypothesis involves four mediation analyses. The first one assesses the mediation role of customer orientation (COS) between trait EI as the independent variable and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the dependent variable. The second one analyses the mediation role of adaptability scale between trait EI and the performance ratings. The third and fourth analyses concern the mediation roles of COS and adaptability between the FFM of personality and the dependent variable. The hypotheses testing is conducted on the basis of the four criteria for establishing a meditational model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986), a model which has been discussed in Chapter 4. The four mediation analyses used in this test are detailed below.

COS as the mediator between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives

To analyse this mediation, based on the first criterion of Baron and Kenny Steps, the relationship between trait EI as the independent variables and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the criterion variable needs to be assessed. This relationship has been tested in hypothesis 1. The results showed that the whole model explained 35 percent variance in the criterion variable, $p < 0.0005$. Furthermore, mood regulation and utilisation of emotions were shown to make

statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives.

The second criterion examines the relationship between trait EI as the independent variable and COS as the presumed mediator. This condition has been assessed in hypothesis 5.1.a. The results from hypothesis 5.1.a indicated that trait EI explained 41.10 percent of variance in COS with $p < 0.0005$. Among the four dimensions, mood regulation (Beta = 0.34, $p < 0.005$) and appraisal of emotions (Beta = 0.41; $p < 0.0005$) made statistically contributions to COS.

The third criterion investigates if customer orientation scale as the presumed mediator explained variance in service performance (the dependent variable). This condition was tested by a simple regression analysis, with the total score of customer orientation scale used in the regression equation. The results indicated that customer orientation made a statistically significant contribution to the dependent variable. The beta value for customer orientation was 0.43 ($p < 0.0005$).

The fourth criterion assesses if the effect of trait EI on the service performance of casino key account representatives became zero or is reduced after controlling for COS. Review of the results shows that the variance explained by the whole model reduced from 36.3 percent to 18 percent. The beta weight for mood regulation reduced from 0.34 to 0.26 ($p < 0.05$), for appraisal of emotions from 0.07 to 0.04, for social skills from 0.11 to 0.09, and for utilisation of emotions from 0.41 to 0.38 ($p < 0.0005$). Based on the results, it indicates that COS did mediate between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives, however, the

mediation effects was not reduced to zero. Therefore, it appears that the indirect effects were partially mediated by COS. The results are presented in Table 24. This mediation was partially supported.

Table 24

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Customer Orientation Scale as Mediator between Trait EI and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

IV	Beta	Mediator	Beta	DV	DE	IE
Mood regulation	0.55				0.34***	0.26*
Appraisal of emotions	-0.22			TSPOC	-0.10	-0.04
		COS	0.17			
Social skills	0.14			KR	-0.09	-0.07
Utilisation of emotions	0.16				0.41***	0.38***

COS = customer orientation scale

TSPOCKR = the service performance of casino key account representatives

IV = independent variables

DV = dependent variable

DE = direct effect of independent variables on the dependent variable

IE = indirect effect after the inclusion of COS as a control

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01,

***p < 0.001

Adaptability as the mediator between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives

This test aims to assess the mediation role of adaptability between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Based on Baron and Kenny's (1986) four steps for mediation testing, the first criterion was to examine the relationship between trait EI as the independent variables and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the dependent variable. As indicated in hypothesis 1, this condition was not violated.

The second criterion examines the relationship between Trait EI as the independent variable and adaptability as the presumed mediator. This condition has been reflected in hypothesis 5.1.b. The results indicated that trait EI explained 48 percent variance in the adaptability scale, $p < 0.0005$. In this regression model, mood regulation and utilisation of emotions made statistically significant contributions to the criterion variable. The beta weight for mood regulation was 0.51, $p < 0.0005$; the beta weight for utilisation of emotions was 0.27, $p < 0.005$.

The third criterion investigates if adaptability as the presumed mediator still explains variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives (the dependent variable). A simple regression analysis was conducted to assess this criterion. Examination of the results indicates that the beta weight for adaptability is 0.58, $t = 8.73$, $p < 0.0005$. This finding indicates that adaptability did make a statistically significant contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives. Therefore, this condition was met.

The fourth criterion determines if the effect of trait EI on the service performance of casino key account representatives became zero or was reduced after controlling for the effect of adaptability. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted, with adaptability entered at Step 1, the four dimensions of trait EI entered at Step 2, and with the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as the dependent variable. The results shown in Table 25 indicate that the change of R Squared value was 0.08, $p < 0.005$. The beta weight for mood regulation was reduced from 0.34 ($p < 0.005$) to 0.16, for appraisal of emotions from -0.07 to -0.06, for social skills from -0.09 to -0.09, for utilisation of emotions from 0.41 ($p < 0.0005$) to 0.31 ($p < 0.005$). Because the indirect effects did not become zero, it can be concluded that adaptability partially mediated between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives; hence, the mediation analysis was partially supported.

Table 25

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Adaptability Scale as Mediator between Trait EI
and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

IV	Beta	Mediator	Beta	DV	DE	IE
Mood regulation	0.51				0.34***	0.16
Appraisal of emotions	-0.03	ADAPT	0.58	TSPOCKR	-0.10	-0.06
Social skills	0.00				-0.09	-0.09
Utilisation of emotions	0.27				0.41***	0.31**

ADAPT = adaptability scale

TSPOCKR = the service performance of casino key account representatives

DV = dependent variable

DE = direct effect of independent variables on the dependent variable

IE = indirect effect after the inclusion of COS as a control

*p < 0.05, **p< 0.01, ***p< 0.001

Customer orientation as a mediator between the FFM of personality and the service
performance of casino key account representatives

The first step of this mediation analysis, based on Baron and Kenny's four steps, was to examine the relationship between the personality factors as the independent variables and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the dependent variable. This relationship was analysed in hypothesis 2. All the five personality factors were moderately to highly correlated with the dependent variable. The results from the regression analysis indicated that the whole model explained 38 percent variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives, $p < 0.0005$. Among the five personality factors, Extraversion (beta = 0.20, $p < 0.05$) and Conscientiousness (Beta = 0.29, $p < 0.005$) made statistically significant contributions to the dependent variable. Therefore, this criterion was met.

The second step examines the relationship between the FFM of personality as the independent variable and customer orientation as the presumed mediator. This condition has been tested in hypothesis 5.2.a. The results showed that the whole model explained 26 percent variance in customer orientation, $p < 0.0005$, with Openness to experience making a statistically significant contribution. Hence this second criterion was met.

The third criterion investigates if customer orientation as the presumed mediator explained statistically significant variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives (the dependent variable). This analysis has been undertaken previously and the results indicate that this condition was met.

The fourth step assesses if the effect of personality factors on the service performance of casino key account representatives became zero or was reduced after controlling for customer orientation. Hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken for this condition, with customer orientation entered at Step 1 and the FFM entered at Step 2. The results in Table 25 indicate that the variance explained by the whole model reduced from 38 percent to 22 percent. The coefficients of each personality factors were also reduced. The beta weight for Extraversion reduced from 0.20 to 0.17. The beta weight for Agreeableness went from 0.05 to 0.02. The beta weight for Conscientiousness declined slightly from 0.292 to 0.291. The beta weight for Neuroticism fell from -0.09 to -0.07. The beta weight for Openness went from 0.14 to 0.10. Based on these results, this mediation analysis was partially supported.

Table 26

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Customer Orientation as the Mediator between the FFM of Personality and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

IV	Beta	Mediator	Beta	DV	DE	IE
Extraversion	0.17				0.20	0.17
Agreeableness	0.16				0.05	0.02
Conscientiousness	0.00	COS	0.17	TSPOCKR	0.29	0.29**
Neuroticism	-0.11				-0.09	-0.07
Openness	0.23				0.14	0.10

COS = customer orientation scale

TSPOCKR = the service performance of casino key account representatives

DV = dependent variable

DE = direct effect of independent variables on the dependent variable

IE = indirect effect after the inclusion of COS as a control

$*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001$

Adaptability as a mediator between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives

To assess the mediation role of adaptability between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives, the first criterion examines the relationship between the personality factors as the independent variables and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the dependent variable. This condition has been tested in hypothesis 2. The results indicated this condition was met.

The second criterion examines the relationship between the personality factors as the independent variable and adaptability scale as the presumed mediator. The results obtained in hypothesis 5.2.b revealed that all five personality factors were moderately correlated with adaptability. The whole model explained 35 percent variance in adaptability, with Extraversion and Openness to experience making statistically significant contributions to the criterion variable. The beta weight for Extraversion was 0.19 ($p < 0.05$), for Openness was 0.19 ($p < 0.05$). Hence, the second criterion was met.

The third criterion investigates if adaptability as the presumed mediator explains variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives (the dependent variable). The results from previous analysis indicate this condition was met.

The fourth criterion assesses if the effect of personality factors on the service performance of casino key account representatives became zero or was reduced after controlling for adaptability. The results in Table 27 demonstrate that the variance explained by the whole model was reduced from 38 percent to 12 percent. The coefficients of each personality factor were also reduced. The beta weight for Extraversion was reduced from 0.20 to 0.14. The beta weight for Agreeableness declined from 0.05 to zero. The beta weight for Conscientiousness fell from 0.29 to 0.24. The beta weight for Neuroticism went from -0.09 to -0.07. The beta weight for Openness was reduced from 0.14 to 0.07. These findings indicate that adaptability is partially mediated between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Table 27

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Adaptability as the Mediator between the FFM of Personality and the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

IV	Beta	Mediator	Beta	DV	DE	IE
Extraversion	0.09				0.20	0.14
Agreeableness	0.14				0.05	0.00
Conscientiousness	0.16	ADAPT	0.58	TSPOCKR	0.29	0.24*
Neuroticism	-0.07				-0.09	-0.07
Openness	0.19				0.14	0.07

ADAPT = adaptability scale

TSPOCKR = the service performance of casino key account representatives

DV = dependent variable

DE = direct effect of independent variables on the dependent variable

IE = indirect effect after the inclusion of adaptability as a control

*p < 0.05, **p< 0.01, ***p< 0.001

5.3.10 Hypothesis 5.3.b: The variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives is explained by customer orientation and adaptability as the mediators in the meditational model

The testing of this hypothesis involves fours regression analyses, two of which assess the additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives explained by customer orientation and adaptability respectively in the meditated relationship between trait EI and the performance ratings; the other two evaluate the mediation between the FFM of personality and the performance ratings. The analyses are detailed below.

Variance by customer orientation mediating between trait EI and performance ratings

Hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken to examine the additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives explained by COS, the mediator, with Trait EI entered at Step 1, COS entered at Step 2, and the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as the criterion variable.

Review of the results in Table 28 indicates that COS as the mediator explained an additional 1 percent of the variance in the dependent variable after controlling for the effects of trait EI, R Square Change = 0.01, F Change= 3.07, Sig. F change = 0.08, F $(5,146) = 16.64$.

Table 28

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Additional Variance in the Service
Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives explained by Customer
Orientation when Controlling Trait EI

Predictor	Results		
			R Square
Step 1	Beta	R Square	Change
Control variable			
Mood regulation	0.34***		
Appraisal of emotions	-0.10	0.35	
Social skills	-0.09		
Utilisation of emotions	0.41***		
Step 2			
Customer Orientation	0.17		0.01

df (5, 146)	$F = 16.64$ Sig. $F = 0.00$
F Change = 3.07	Sig. F Change = 0.08

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$

Variance by adaptability mediating between trait EI and performance ratings

Hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken to examine the additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives that was explained by the mediator, with the four dimensions of trait EI entered at Step 1, adaptability entered at Step 2, and the service performance of casino key account representatives serving as the criterion variable.

The results in Table 29 show that adaptability as the mediator explained additional 8 percent variance in the dependent variable, R Square Change = 0.07, F Change = 16.30, Sig. F Change = 0.000, $F_{(5,146)} = 20.71$, $p < 0.0005$.

Table 29

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Additional variance in the Service Performance of Casino key account representatives explained by adaptability when Controlling Trait EI

Predictor	Results		
Step 1	Beta	R Square	R Square Change
Control variable			
Mood regulation	0.34***		
Appraisal of emotions	-0.10	0.35	
Social skills	-0.09		
Utilisation of emotions	0.41***		
Step 2			
Customer Orientation	0.17		0.07
df (5, 146)	F = 20.71 Sig. F = 0.00		
F Change = 16.30	Sig. F Change = 0.00		

*p < 0.05, **p< 0.01, ***p< 0.001

Variance by customer orientation mediating between the FFM of personality and performance ratings

This analysis was undertaken by hierarchical regression. It examined the additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives explained by customer orientation, the mediator in the analysis. Five personality factors were entered at Step 1; customer orientation was entered at Step 2, while the service performance of casino key account representatives served as the criterion variable.

The results in Table 30 show that customer orientation as the mediator explained an additional 2 percent variance in the dependent variable, R Square Change = 0.02, F Change = 5.79, Sig. F Change = 0.02, $F_{(6,145)} = 16.31$, $p < 0.0005$.

Table 30

Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Effect of Customer Orientation as the Mediator on the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Predictor	Results		
Step 1	Beta	R Square	R Square Change
Control variable			
Extraversion	0.20		
Agreeableness	0.05	0.38	
Conscientiousness	0.29		
Neuroticism	-0.09		
Openness	0.14		
Step 2			
Customer Orientation	0.17		0.02

df (6, 145)   F = 16.31   Sig. F = 0.00

F Change = 5.79   Sig. F Change = 0.02

Variance by adaptability mediating between the FFM of personality and performance ratings

Hierarchical regression analysis was undertaken to examine the additional variance in the service performance explained by the mediator, adaptability, with the five personality factors entered at Step 1, adaptability scale entered at Step 2, and with the service performance of casino key account representatives acting as the criterion variable.

The results obtained from this regression analysis are shown in Table 31. It demonstrates that adaptability as the mediator explained an additional 8 percent variance in the dependent variable after controlling for the effects of the FFM, R Square Change = 0.08, F Change = 20.24, Sig. F Change = 0.000, $F_{(6,145)} = 20.19$, $p < 0.0005$. This finding reveals that the mediational model with adaptability as the mediator explain more variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives than that of the direct model.

Table 31

Hierarchical regression analysis for the Effect of Adaptability as the Mediator on the

Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Step 1	Beta	R Square	R Square Change
Control variable			
Extraversion	0.20		
Agreeableness	0.05		
		0.38	
Conscientiousness	0.29		
Neuroticism	-0.09		
Openness	0.14		
Step 2			
Adaptability	0.58		0.08
df (6, 145)	F = 20.19	Sig. F = 0.00	
F Change = 20.24	Sig. F Change = 0.00		

The results from the above analyses indicate that this hypothesis was supported.

5.3.11 Post-hoc analyses

In addition to the analysis of the hypotheses, further investigation was conducted to examine the relationships between the selected demographic information – gender, age, education and tenure - and a few constructs studied in the current project, namely, trait EI, customer orientation, adaptability, and the service performance of casino key account representatives. The investigation utilised the results obtained from the hypotheses testing. The study constructs were found in the results to have had an impact on the dependent variable. The FFM of personality was excluded from this analysis, because researchers (e.g., Costa and McCrea, 1982) found that for the majority of people, personality is stable across lifetime. In the following analyses, the effect size followed Cohen's (1988) eta squared guidelines, that is, 0.01 = small effect; 0.06 = moderate effect; 0.14 = large effect

Gender and customer orientation

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the customer orientation scores for male and female casino key account representatives. There was significant difference at $p < 0.05$ levels in the scores of customer orientation for both male and female respondents. The magnitude of the differences in the means was prone to moderate (eta squared = 0.03). An inspection of the mean scores showed that males reported higher levels of customer orientation (*M*=51.88, *SD*=5.68) than females (*M*=49.69, *SD*=5.81).

Gender and adaptability

The effects of gender on the adaptability scale were also investigated by the same independent-samples t-test analysis. No significant difference was found in scores for male and female casino key account representatives. However, the value of partial eta squared = 0.02 indicated that gender did have some effect on adaptability. An examination of the mean scores demonstrated male respondents showed slightly higher level of adaptability (*M*=36.36, *SD*=5.320) than females (*M*=35.09, *SD*=4.422).

Gender and trait EI

The results from the independent-samples t-test indicate that there was no statistically significant difference in the scores for males and females *t*(150)= 0.69; *p* = 0.49, although the mean scores of emotional intelligence scale for males (*M*=124.14, *SD*=12.54) and females (*M*=122.64, *SD*=13.87) were different, with the males' scores slightly higher. The magnitude of the difference in the means was very small (eta squared = 0.003). When each dimension of trait EI was assessed independently, the results did not reach significant levels.

Gender and service performance

Examination of the results from the independent-samples t-test in Table 32 show that a statistically significant difference was found in performance scores between male casino key account representatives (*M*=21.67, *SD*=3.63) and female ones (*M*=20.08,

SD=2.95), $p < 0.05$. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared = 0.06).

Table 32

Independent-Sample T-test Analyses for the Relationship of Gender with Customer Orientation, Adaptability, Trait EI, and Performance

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	F	t	Sig.
	Male	64	51.88	5.68	0.15	2.30	0.01
CO	Female	88	49.69	5.81			
	Male	64	36.36	5.32	2.31	1.60	0.11
ADAPT	Female	88	35.09	4.42			
	Male	64	124.14	12.54	1.71	0.69	0.49
Trait EI	Female	88	122.64	13.87			
	Male	64	21.67	3.63	9.02	2.98	0.00
Performance	Female	88	20.08	2.95			

One-way between-groups analyses of variance were conducted to explore the impact of age on levels of customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Subjects were divided into three groups according to their age (group 1: 18-25; group 2: 26-35; group 3: 36-55). The results are summarised in Table 33.

Age and customer orientation

There was no statistically significant difference for the three age groups in the scores of customer orientation. The value of partial eta squared was 0.003. An inspection of the mean scores show that group 1 (M = 50.41, MD = 5.97) slightly lower than group 2 (M = 50.74, MD = 5.82), which is lower than group 3 (M = 51.50, MD = 5.26).

Age and adaptability

The results from the one-way between-groups analysis of variance indicate that there was no statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$ level for the three age groups in the scores of adaptability. However, the effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.04, which was a moderate effect. Post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 (M = 37.00, SD = 4.48) was significantly different from Group 1 (M = 34.92, SD = 4.90). Group 2 was not different significantly from Group 3 (M = 35.71, SD = 5.01).

Age and trait EI

The effects of three age groups on trait EI from the one-way between-groups analysis of variance was not statistically significantly different at p < 0.05 level. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.02. However, an inspection of the mean scores for the three groups show that the mean score for Group 2 (M = 126.22, SD = 11.67) was largely different from Group 1 (M = 121.85, SD = 14.18), and Group 3 (M = 122.93, SD = 13.31). The latter two groups did not differ significantly.

Age and service performance

The results from the one-way between-groups analysis of variance indicate that there was no statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$ level for the three age groups in the scores of the service performance of casino key account representatives. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.02. An inspection of the mean scores for the three groups show that the mean score for Group 2 ($M = 21.37$, $SD = 3.59$) was larger than that of Group 1 ($M = 20.57$, $SD = 3.14$), and group 3 ($M = 19.93$, $SD = 3.65$). The latter two groups did not different largely.

Table 33

ANOVA Analyses for the Relationship of Age with Customer Orientation, Adaptability, Trait EI, Performance

	N	Mean	SD	df	F	Sig.
	92	47.58	5.99			
CO	46	47.67	5.47	(2, 149)	0.13	0.88
	14	48.43	5.49			
	92	34.92	4.90			
ADAPT	46	37	4.48	(2, 149)	2.89	0.06
	14	35.71	5.01			
	92	112	13.66			
Trait EI	46	116.28	11.12	(2, 149)	1.74	0.26
	14	113.79	11.12			
	92	20.57	3.12			
Performance	46	21.37	3.59	(2, 149)	1.37	0.18
	14	19.93	3.65			

The relationship between education with customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives

Three education groups were divided among the subjects: Group 1: secondary school; Group 2: diploma; Group 3: bachelors' degree; Group 4: above bachelors' degree. None of the variables, namely, customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives, were found to have statistically significant differences in their mean scores among the four groups. The results are shown in Table 34. The effect size, calculated using eta squared for customer orientation was 0.01, adaptability was 0.02, only 0.001 for trait EI, and 0.02 for the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Table 34

ANOVA Analyses for the Relationship of Education with Customer Orientation, Adaptability, Trait EI, Performance

	N	Mean	SD	df	F	Sig.
CO	37	47.57	6.35			
	37	48.38	5.58	(3, 148)	0.72	0.54
	43	48.12	5.23			
	35	46.54	5.98			
ADAPT	37	35.51	5.69			
	37	35.76	4.41	(3, 148)	1.17	0.32
	43	36.53	4.62			
	35	34.49	4.53			
Trait EI	37	112.22	15.13			
	37	116.14	11.94	(3, 148)	0.75	0.52
	43	112.4	11.78			
	35	113.26	12.3			
Performance	37	21.46	3.51			
	37	20.73	3.5	(3, 148)	0.93	0.43
	43	20.63	3.14			
	35	20.17	3.21			

The relationship between tenure with customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives

One-way between-groups analyses of variance were conducted to explore the impact of tenure on the levels of customer orientation, adaptability and trait EI. Subjects were divided into five groups (Group 1: less than 1 year; Group 2: 1-2 years; Group 3: 3-5 years, Group 4: 6-10 years, and Group 5: 10 years and above). The results in Table 35 show that tenure had a statistically significant effect on all the variables, namely, customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Tenure and customer orientation

There was a statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level in customer orientation scores for the five tenure groups $F_{(4, 147)} = 2.48$, $p = 0.04$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.06, indicating a moderate effect. Post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that mean score for Group 3 (*M*=50.23, *SD*=4.20) was significantly different from Group 1 (*M*=45.93, *SD*=6.03).

Tenure and adaptability

A statistically significant difference was found at the $p < 0.05$ level in adaptability scores for the five tenure groups $F_{(4, 147)} = 4.57$, $p = 0.002$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.11, indicating a moderate to large effect. Post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that mean score for Group 3

(M=37.00, SD=4.71), Group 4 (M=37.56, SD=6.92) and Group 5 (M=37.57, SD=3.78) were significantly different from Group 1 (M=33.35, SD=3.68).

Tenure and trait EI

A statistically significant difference was also found at the $p < 0.05$ level in the scores of trait EI for the five tenure groups F $(4, 147) = 5.75$, $p = 0.000$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.14, indicating a large effect. Post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that mean score for Group 3 (M=117.73, SD=9.79), Group 4 (M=122.17, SD=14.24) were significantly different from Group 1 (M=107.67, SD=11.52) and Group 2 (M=112.67, SD=12.97). Further analyses also revealed that different tenure groups exerted a statistically significant difference on mood regulation and appraisal of emotions, with the effect size of 0.14 and 0.10 respectively. Moderate effects were also found for different tenure groups on social skills (0.05) and utilisation of emotions (0.05).

Tenure and service performance

Tenure also was shown to affect the service performance of casino key account representatives. A statistically significant difference was found at the $p < 0.05$ level in the scores of the criterion variable for the five tenure groups F $(4, 147) = 4.76$, $p = 0.001$. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was 0.11, indicating a moderate to large effect. Post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that mean score for Group 3 (M=22.35, SD=3.51), Group 4 (M=22.33, SD=4.28) were significantly different from Group 1 (M=19.42, SD=2.36).

Table 35

ANOVA Analyses for the Relationship of Tenure with Customer Orientation, Adaptability, Trait EI, Performance

	N	Mean	SD	Df	F	Sig.
	43	45.93	6.03			
	51	47.55	5.88			
CO	26	50.23	4.2	(4, 147)	2.48	0.04
	18	47.78	6.12			
	14	48.71	5.25			
	43	33.35	3.68			
	51	35.63	4.54			
ADAPT	26	37	4.71	(4, 147)	4.57	0.002
	18	37.56	6.92			
	14	37.57	3.78			
	43	107.67	11.52			
	51	112.67	12.97			
Trait EI	26	117.73	9.79	(4, 147)	5.75	0.001
	18	122.17	14.24			
	14	115	10.89			
	43	19.42	2.36			
	51	20.45	3.11			
Performance	26	22.35	3.51	(4, 147)	4.76	0.00
	18	22.33	4.28			
	14	20.93	3.40			

5.4 Summary

This chapter has assessed a series of hypotheses generated from both the literature and our theoretical model. Multiple regression analysis was the main statistical technique employed. The most important results are summarised below.

Hypothesis 1

For the relationship between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives, the results indicated that, among the four dimensions of trait EI, mood regulation and appraisal of emotions were found to make statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. Because only two dimensions of trait EI had significant impacts on the criterion variable, it was concluded that Hypothesis 1 was partially supported.

Hypotheses 2 and 3

The results for testing the Five Factor Model of personality factors and the service performance of casino key account representatives showed that the whole model made a statistically significant contribution to the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, when the five factors were investigated separately, only Extraversion and Conscientiousness made statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. Conscientiousness was also found to be the best predictor of the dependent variable. However,

Agreeableness in this sample explained the least variance in the dependent variable. In general, hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

Furthermore, in assessing the incremental validity of trait EI, it was also found that it did explain additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives over the FFM of personality. Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Hypotheses 4a, 4b and 4c

The results of assessing the relationships between customer orientation, adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives have shown that both customer orientation and adaptability were positively related to the service performance of casino key account representatives. Hypotheses 4a and 4b were supported. Furthermore, adaptability was found to explain more variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives. Thus, hypothesis 4c was confirmed.

Hypotheses 5.1a and 5.1.b

For the relationship between trait EI and customer orientation, the results indicated that, among the four dimensions of trait EI, mood regulation and social skills were found to make statistically significant contributions to customer orientation; while mood regulation and appraisal of emotions made statistically significant contributions to adaptability. Hence, hypotheses 5.1.a and 5.1.b were partially confirmed. Furthermore, post-hoc analyses indicated that trait EI explained additional variance in

both customer orientation and adaptability over the Five Factor Model of personality factors.

Hypotheses 5.2.a and 5.2.b

For the relationship between the FFM of personality and customer orientation, the results showed that, among the five factors of personality, only Openness was significantly related to customer orientation, hence, hypothesis 5.2.a was partially supported. Both Extraversion and Openness were found to significantly relate to adaptability. This finding indicated that Hypothesis 5.2.b was partially confirmed.

Hypotheses 5.3.a

The hierarchy models of customer orientation and adaptability as the mediators respectively between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives were confirmed. However, the effects between the independent variables and dependent variable did not equal zero, so the mediation relationships were only partially supported.

The hierarchy models of customer orientation and adaptability as the mediators respectively between Five Factor Model of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives were also confirmed. Because non-zero effects were found between the independent variables and dependent variable, partial mediation can be deduced.

Hypothesis 5.3.b

Testing this hypothesis showed that customer orientation and adaptability in the mediation models explained significant additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives after the effects of trait EI and the FFM of personality were controlled for. This finding indicates that the model with customer orientation and adaptability as mediators accounted for a greater portion of variance in the performance ratings than the one without mediation.

Results from additional analyses showed that gender exerted effect on the level of customer orientation and the service performance of casino key account representatives. It generally showed that males had higher level of customer orientation and performed better. Neither education nor age was found to have any significant effects on the criterion variables: customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, tenure was found to have significant influences on all variables. The results indicated that the longer a casino key account representatives worked in the industry, the higher the levels of his or her customer orientation, adaptability, emotional intelligence and service performance were.

6.1 Overview

The concluding chapter provides an overview and discussion of the main findings of this study. The first section offers a summary of the hypotheses testing. Next, the theoretical and practical implications of the results are presented. This is followed by consideration of the limitations of the study. Finally, the chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

6.2 Summary of the findings

Using a sample of casino frontline employees in the high-end market, this study has developed and empirically tested a hierarchical model of basic traits-surface traits-performance evaluation relationships within the casino context. The model analysed a number of relationships: 1) the relationships of trait EI and the FFM of personality with the service performance of casino key account representatives; 2) the relationships of customer orientation and adaptability with the service performance of casino key account representatives; 3) the mediating roles of customer orientation and adaptability as the surface traits in the relationship between trait EI as the basic trait and the service performance of casino key account representatives as the outcome variable. In the mediation analysis, customer orientation and adaptability were treated as two separate mediators, as the research interest in this regard was to explore whether the two constructs could mediate between the basic traits and performance evaluation.

In the first group of relationships, variances in the service performance of casino key account representatives were explained by trait EI and the FFM of personality respectively. Additional variances in the criterion variable explained by trait EI over personality factors were also explored. In the second group of relationships, variances in the criterion variables were explained by customer orientation and adaptability. The third group of relationships involved the analyses of trait EI and the FFM of personality as predictors of customer orientation and adaptability, the mediation, and the proportion of variance in performance ratings accounted for by the two mediation variables – customer orientation and adaptability.

The study focused particularly on the role of emotional intelligence in interactions between casino key account representatives and casino key accounts, revealing both direct and indirect effects of emotional intelligence on the service performance of casino key account representatives, as well as its incremental validity over personality factors. This focus was selected to cover the following areas.

First, from the perspective of research into emotional intelligence, the current study broadens the concept's scope by incorporating it into the high-end market of casino industry. It achieved this by analysing emotional intelligence's effect on the service performance of casino key account representatives. This application of the concept to the gaming industry constitutes an original contribution to emotional intelligence research.

Second, as it has been claimed that emotional intelligence in certain contexts can be a potential predictor of job performance. This study provides insight by testing this proposition in the casino high-end market, where encounters between casino key account representatives and players occur in a highly emotionally characterised context. In such settings, emotional intelligence can serve as a vehicle to handle the emotional encounter and its effects on the service performance of casino key account representatives.

Third, the findings of the current study support the trait EI theory proposed by Petrides and Furnham (2001), namely that trait EI is embedded within the personality framework and should be classified as a personality trait, due to its relationship with personality factors and its role in the hierarchical model.

Finally, this study confirms the scientific and practical value of this newly developed psychological construct by showing how it can account for some of the variances in the criterion variable that the FFM of personality have failed to explain.

By empirically testing emotional intelligence's relationship with the service performance of the frontline employees of a casino, the current study has introduced a new psychological construct into the analysis of that industry's personnel and customer relationship management. In addition to the focus on emotional intelligence, the current study also adapted two of the most commonly recognised relationship selling behaviours to the casino context by analysing the influence of their non-selling components on the service performance of casino key account representatives. This in itself represents an original contribution to the literature. Furthermore, the findings of

this thesis provide insight on the process of selecting more effective training programs for casino frontline employees. Put simply, representative relationship-oriented service behaviours influence the customers' behavioural intentions. By enhancing the emotional intelligence of one's employees, thus, can only improve their performance and, ultimately, the casino's rate of customer retention.

The main finding of this research is that both emotional intelligence (trait EI) and the FFM of personality have been shown to significantly predict the service performance of casino key account representatives, with trait EI providing additional variance in the criterion variable; and customer orientation and adaptability helping in the prediction of service performances of casino key account representatives, with the latter being the better predictor. The study has also determined the differing effects of each dimension of the two constructs, as well as which dimension is most important for the dependent variable. Finally, the study confirmed a partial mediation of customer orientation and adaptability, respectively, between trait emotional intelligence and the service performance of casino key account representatives, as well as between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Greater proportions of variances in the dependent variable accounted for by the mediators in the hierarchical models were also found in the mediation analysis. The significance of these findings are explored more fully in the following discussion.

6.3 Discussion

This section of the chapter is organised around the research questions first posed in Chapter One. In particular, it relates the results and implications of all of the hypotheses testing back to these questions.

Research question 1

Is trait emotional intelligence (trait EI) related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

The answer to this question was found in the results of hypothesis testing for H1, through analysing whether a positive relationship exists between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives. Trait EI was factor-analysed into four dimensions: mood regulation, appraisal of emotions, social skills and utilisation of emotions. The results partly confirmed the hypothesis and supported the claim (e.g., Daus and Ashkanasy, 2005) that emotional intelligence is positively related to performance for jobs logically requiring a high level of emotional intelligence, those jobs that normally demand high emotional labour, such as that of customer service representatives. As indicated in previous chapters, casino key account representatives are the frontline service employees for casino key accounts. Positioned in the boundary-spanning interface between casinos and customers, their job contains high emotional labour demand, and their emotional skills affect their ability to deal with the emotions of both casino players and themselves. Approaches suggested in "Angry Upset Players: What do you do?" by Steven Karoul (2004) imply

the need for emotional abilities to cope with angry players. Customers can be unreasonably demanding, especially those who lose money (Karoul, 2004). Demonstration of emotional skills not only settles down emotional customers, but also regulates the employees' emotions so that they can reasonably deal with the unreasonable. The results are reflected in player retention (Kale, 2005; Karoul, 2004), which is related to the employee service performance evaluation.

Review of the coefficients generated by statistical analysis shows that, among the four identified dimensions of trait EI, mood regulation (managing emotions) and appraisal of emotions clearly made statistically significant contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. This is plausible. Being in an organisational boundary spanning position, a frontline employee has to deal with customers' emotions. "Customers are not always right … But customers are always emotional, they always have feelings, sometimes intense, other times barely perceptible, when they make purchases or engage in transactions" wrote Barlow and Maul in their book, *Emotional Value: Creating Strong Bonds with Your Customers*. According to Hartel, Barker and Barker (1999), emotional management skills can affect a customer's emotion formation and appraisal process and, in turn, his or her attitude and behaviour. To a large extent, a positive attitude and behavioural intention reflects the quality of the firm's customer-contact employees.

If one is capable of managing emotions well, he or she can avoid the detrimental effects of emotional dissonance, such as burnout. This is directly associated with job satisfaction and job performance. According to MacDonald (2001), dealing with high rollers means that you are often negotiating with very influential businessmen or entrepreneurs. Although the job of a casino service provider is to ensure that casino

guests' needs are met, their demands are often beyond the limited and authorised empowerment of casino key account representatives. Being the first contact point for high rollers, casino key account representatives often face a conflict between their authorities' policies and the customers' requests and demands. "This has to be referred to senior management" has been a regular tag of casino key account representatives to resolve awkward encounters with high rollers. However, when these words are uttered, casino key account representatives often get abused, especially when the player has experienced a huge loss in his or her betting. The inability to deal with customers' abuse eventually leads to emotional dissonance. If emotional dissonance is not properly managed, emotional burnout incurs. Unhappy employees who are out of touch with their own feelings cannot provide appropriate services to the customer. In this way, their performance is affected. In other words, the ability to manage emotions is positively related to employee performance. To be able to manage emotions, one has to understand or appraise emotions well. These two concepts are logically linked, and can also be equated with Daus's (2002) finding that people who can better appraise emotions feel less of an emotional load from the job. Less emotional load means less emotional dissonance, which implies less likeliness of burnout.

The findings of the current study with respect to emotional intelligence are also consistent with the results obtained by Cage, Daus and Saul (2004). However, the other two dimensions, social skills and utilisation of emotions, were not found to be significantly related to the service performance of casino key account representatives. This is in contrast to the previous finding of Daus (2002) that utilising the emotions branch of emotional intelligence measured by MEIS was significantly associated with customer service performance. This is not surprising, as the factor analysis of the self-

report emotional intelligence scale developed by Schutte et al. (1998) and used in this study indicated that only two factors were stable. This conforms to the factor analysis results obtained by Petrides and Furnham (2000) who reported that while the scree test indicated a two-factor model, a four-factor varimax-rotated solution was needed in order to have a interpretable factor structure. The two factors are mood regulation and appraisal of emotions, a finding consistent with the results obtained from principal component analysis carried out in Chapter 5. These results not only indicated the necessity of factor-analysing the scale, but also confirmed the scale's multidimensionality, as has been previously noted by Petrides and Furnham.

Research question 2:

Is the FFM of personality related to the service performance of casino key account representatives?

The answer to this question was found in the results to the hypotheses testing of H2. Here, the relationship between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives was analysed. Results of H2 indicated that of the five personality factors Conscientiousness and Extraversion made statistically significant relationships with the dependent variable – with the former demonstrating a stronger predictive value. This finding is consistent with that of Mount, Barrick and Stewart (1998). As has been indicated in Parasuman, Zeithaml and Berry's (1986) service quality research, more conscientious employees provide better and higher quality service. Service providers who are accurate, dependable, responsive, and timely tend to be more successful in their job. As for Extraversion, personality researchers (e.g., Barrick, Stewart & Piotrowski, 2002) agree that extraverted people

are better at jobs involving social interactions such as customer-contact. Being a frontline employee requires a large amount of social interaction, and an introverted person would be less effective than an extravert. An extraverted person also often experiences higher levels of arousal in a social workplace, thus performing better in such situations.

In the casino context, it is the intention of casino visitors to seek entertainment experiences. Since the casino business is an entertainment business, casino frontline employees who have the most frequent contact with casino players need to be entertainers as well as service providers. An article in the Urbino website entitled "The Dealer as Entertainer" indicated that casino frontline employees should offer an entertainment package. Indeed, entertaining casino players has become a key mission statement for casinos. The traits of Extraversion include sociability, activity, and the tendency to experience positive emotions. In other words, an extraverted person is sociable, active and more positive, characteristics also required by effective entertainers. To be able to entertain a guest, casino customer-contact employees need to have a precise understanding of the needs of the players, which is an aspect of Conscientiousness.

A finding of the current study, contrasting with previous research, is that Agreeableness demonstrated the lowest association with the service performance of casino key account representatives. One prominent trait generally seen as encompassed by Agreeableness is cooperation. Hogan, Hogan and Busch (1984) showed that being cooperative facilitates service performance. However, Mount et al. (1998) indicated that too much cooperation might be dysfunctional. For instance, a casino key account representative has the authority to issue comps to players. These

comps can range from free meals and show tickets to full room and beverage. Where guests expect something beyond this range, a cooperative or agreeable offer makes the casino employee unable to conduct his or her job, thus affecting their job performance. Our finding may be viewed from this perspective.

Research question 3

Does trait EI explain additional variance of the service performance of casino key account representatives over and above the effects of the FFM of personality?

The answer to this question was found in the results to the hypotheses testing of H3. What was analysed was the additional variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives explained by trait EI beyond the FFM of personality. The results of H3 indicated that trait EI indeed provided an additional four percent in the service performance of casino key account representatives over personality factors. This finding has three significant implications:

1) It confirms Petrides and Furnham's (2001) distinction between trait EI and ability EI, where the former is embedded in the personality framework. This is further clarified by Petrides, Furnham and Frederickson (2004) who remark "we labelled 'trait emotional intelligence' in a clear effort to emphasise that our approach aligns the construct with personality traits rather than with cognitive abilities" (p 575). Therefore, our research confirms the investigation of trait EI should be conducted primarily within the personality domain (Petrides and Furnham, 2001).

2) It provides empirical evidence into organizational settings in terms of the incremental validity of trait EI. Existing studies (Petrides, Pérez-González &

Furnham, 2007; Day, Delinda, Therrien & Carroll, 2004) have primarily
focused on its incremental validity in life settings.

3) It supports the worthiness of welcoming emotional intelligence into the
personality psychology field, based on the statement made by Brackett and
Mayer (2003), "Most personality psychologists would agree that for a new
construct to be welcomed into the field, it must explain variance that is not
accounted for by well-established constructs" (p 9).

Research question 4

Are customer orientation and adaptability related to the service performance of casino
key account representatives?

The answer to this question was found in the results to the testing of H4a, H4b, and
H4c. What was analysed was whether customer orientation and adaptability could
predict the service performance of casino key account representatives, and whether
adaptability was a better predictor. A post-hoc analysis was also undertaken to
investigate the unique variances of the criterion variable explained by identified sub-
dimensions of the two constructs.

The results from the multiple regression analysis indicated a statistically significant
relationship between customer orientation and the service performance of casino key
account representatives. This finding was consistent with the results obtained by
Brown et al. (2002). The two sub-dimensions, information exchange and professional
relationship in the post-hoc analysis, were found to make statistically significant

contributions to the service performance of casino key account representatives. This finding is plausible, as the intention of casino players to visit a casino is not only to play in the gaming room around the clock, but also enjoy other non-gaming entertainment within the casino. Macomber (1999) stated that a trip to a casino is "an experiential accumulation of contacts with the bricks and mortar, design, environment, employees, products and services offered by the casino". Such an experience needs information supplied in the form of suggestions from the customer-contact employees, especially those who are in contact with international high rollers who visit the casino for the first time, and often need language interpretation assistance. Being professional means that the employees provide customers with the most appropriate services in a timely manner. Macomber indicated that this is one of the most fundamental services offered by casinos, particularly for high rollers, who are more demanding with respect to professionalism. When the two conditions are achieved, customers are less likely to complain. This, in turn, has an indirect effect on the employee's performance evaluation.

Adaptability was found to significantly relate to the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, the results of analysing the relationship between two sub-dimensions of the adaptability scale and the service performance of casino key account representatives, indicated that only adaptability behaviour made a significant contribution. This finding is consistent with that of Marks, Vorhies, and Badovick (1996) and Park and Holloway (2003), and confirms Marks et al's finding that the original adaptability scale is not unidimensional – but that the adaptability behaviour dimension predicts the performance evaluation. The inconsistency of in the findings regarding the adaptability-performance relationship identified in the literature

review possibly lies in the utilisation of ADAPTS scale without analysing the underlying factor structure.

In this study, the analysis of differences of variance in the service performance of casino key account representatives explained by customer orientation and adaptability indicated that the latter was a better predictor in the casino context. No previous research has provided such evidence. However, Szymanski (1988) did indicate that customer orientation is not sufficient to make a sale by focusing on helping customers make purchase decisions that will satisfy customer needs. This author proposed that an efficient selling process increases the probability of a successful sale, and adaptability is a key characteristic of a selling process. This confirms the hypothesis that being adaptable in dealing with casino high rollers is preferable to conforming to their various needs. Every player negotiates for the greatest and best possible services. This mean that all customers are not treated the same. Zeithaml et al. (2001) proposed a customer tier system to segment key accounts from ordinary customers, and suggested that service provision should be differentiated accordingly. Kale (2003) indicates that the customer tier systems can also be applied to casino settings. However, this requires customer-contact employees to be capable of identifying the different status of each casino player. According to Forrester's Kinkin, one of the key challenges in dealing with high rollers is identifying them from a range of characteristics, such as their financial background and personal attributes. However, being adaptable also implies that the customer-contact employee must be able to perceive customers' reactions during the interaction, and to make rapid adjustments to strategy, so that the specific needs of each customer are dealt with (Spiro & Weitiz,

1990). The ability to be adaptive in this way usually leads to customer satisfaction, a positive indicator of a service employee's performance.

Research question 5

Research question 5: Do customer orientation and adaptability respectively mediate the relationships between basic personality traits composed of trait EI and the FFM, and the service performance of casino key account representatives? Does the model with customer orientation and adaptability as the mediation variables account for greater proportion of variance in performance rating than does a direct model without mediation?

The answer to this question is given by the results of hypotheses testing for 5.1.a., 5.1.b, 5.2.a., 5.2.b, 5.3.a and 5.3.b. The following four groups of relationships were analysed:

1) The mediation of customer orientation between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives, involving H 1 (the relationship between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives), H 4a (the relationship between customer orientation and the service performance of casino key account representatives), H 5.1.a (the relationship between trait EI and customer orientation), and analysis of indirect effect between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives with customer orientation as a control.

2) The mediation of adaptability between emotional intelligence and the service performance of casino key account representatives, which involves H 1 (as above), H 4b (the relationship between adaptability and the service performance of casino key account representatives), H 5.1.b (the relationship between trait EI and adaptability), and the indirect effect relationship testing between trait EI and the service performance of casino key account representatives with the adaptability scale as the control variable.

3) The mediation of customer orientation between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives, which involves H 2 (the relationship between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives), H 4a (as above), H 5. 2.a (the relationship between the FFM of personality and customer orientation), and the indirect effect between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives with customer orientation as the control variable.

4) The mediation of adaptability between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives, which involves H 2, H 4a (as above), H 5. 2.b (the relationship between the FFM of personality and adaptability), and the indirect relationship between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives with adaptability as the control variable.

Both customer orientation and adaptability were found partially to mediate between the basic personality traits – trait EI and the FFM of personality - and the service performance evaluation. This finding confirmed the significance of the hierarchical model theory initiated by Brown et al. (2002). The hierarchical relationships were based on the theories about basic traits and surface traits proposed by Brown et al., with emotional intelligence being classified as a basic trait, and customer orientation and adaptability as surface traits. This again supported the distinction of trait EI from ability EI made by Petrides and Furnham (2000), with the former being embedded in the personality framework. The confirmation of partial mediation reveals that directly measuring the surface traits accounts for more variance than only employing the basic personality traits.

Furthermore, the mediation analysis indicated that the hierarchical model with two mediators accounted for a greater proportion of variance in the dependent variable than the one without mediators. This finding is consistent with the results obtained by Brown et al. (2002). Furthermore, it confirmed that customer orientation and adaptability in the personality trait hierarchy could be considered as surface traits which are closer to the service performance evaluation. Being the surface traits in the hierarchical model of the current study, customer orientation and adaptability have also been identified as two relationship-oriented characteristics, and evidenced as having positive effects on employee performance (e.g., Keilor, Parker & Pettijohn, 2000). On the other hand, the greater proportion of variance in the performance ratings explained by the combination of basic personality traits and mediators indicates that management needs to identify both factors in the personnel selection

and training process. This finding provides a means of identifying the underlying dispositions related to higher levels of performance.

The results of testing the mediation of customer orientation and adaptability between trait EI and the performance evaluation also contains the following finding: trait EI was statistically significantly related to both customer orientation and adaptability. The fundamental goal of the two marketing concepts is to achieve customer satisfaction, while emotions that customers are associated with play an important role in forming customer satisfaction. A study done by Liljander and Strandvik (1997) showed that negative emotions have a stronger effect than positive emotions on satisfaction. A strong positive emotional feeling does not explain satisfaction, however, a strong negative feeling does. This is supported by Westbrook's (1987) study that negative emotions significantly influence customer satisfaction. Emotion intelligence has connotations for managing emotions, especially negative ones. Once the negative emotions are under control, customer satisfaction may be gained. This is achieved through the more direct effect of emotional intelligence as a basic trait on the surface traits: customer orientation and adaptability identified in the literature review.

The results of testing the mediation of customer orientation and adaptability between the FFM of personality and the service performance of casino key account representatives encompass a few significant findings. First, Openness to Experience among the personality factors was the only one having a strong relationship with customer orientation and adaptability. The traits associated with Openness to Experience include imagination, being cultured, curiosity, originality, broad-

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mindedness, intelligence, artistic sensitivity, and the need for variety. The practice of customer orientation and adaptability entails the customer-contact employees be able to identify customers' needs, and assess interactions based on the perceived information in order that they find the most appropriate strategy to satisfy customers. These requirements imply that employees should be intelligent, imaginative, and broad-minded. Furthermore, in Barrick and Mount's (1991) meta-analysis, Openness to Experience was found to be a valid predictor of training proficiency. Marketing researchers (e.g., Brown et al., 2002; Park & Holloway, 2003) have strongly suggested that training is necessary for practising customer orientation and adaptiveness. From this perspective, it is plausible that Openness to Experience is strongly related to the two research constructs of this thesis. Second, Extraversion was also found to have a statistically significant relationship with adaptability. Being adaptable requires the customer-contact employee to gather information about the customer and thus be able to make rapid strategic adjustments during the interactions. This entails the employees having initiative and ambition in order to manage the variety of different interactions: these are two of the traits Extraversion possesses (MacCrae & Costa, 1985).

In addition, this study reveals that when customer orientation and adaptability are criterion variables, emotional intelligence was found to explain additional variance over the FFM of personality. This finding supports the claim made by Van Der Zee and Wabeke (2004) that emotional intelligence is more than just a trait, suggesting the worthiness of future research on this subject.

6.4 Post-hoc analyses

Among the four personal variables examined, (gender, education, age, and tenure), in relation to customer orientation, adaptability, trait EI, and the service performance of casino key account representatives served as criterion variables respectively, neither education nor age were found to have associations with the criterion variables. Gender was found to influence customer orientation and the service performance of casino key account representatives. However, in sharp contrast to the findings of previous researchers (e.g., O'Hara, Boles & Johnston, 1991; Pettijohn, Pettijohn & Parker, 1997; Siguaw & Honeycutt, 1995), who found that females were more customer-oriented than males, the present study showed that male casino key account representatives were more customer-oriented than the female. Furthermore, the male casino key account representatives reported higher levels of performance evaluation than the female.

There is no relevant literature indicating that males in the casino industry perform better than females. Nevertheless, the true story revealed below illustrated the need for studies such as the present one. A Senior Vice President (SVP) of casino marketing in a casino located in Australasia went to China with the senior manager of the Human Resource Department (HRD) to interview candidates for positions as Player Development Executives. The aim was to expand the high-end market in China. Having started as a card dealer, this SVP had been working in the casino industry for nearly 35 years. During the process of selecting new recruits, he strongly objected to the idea of female candidates. He even refused to interview them. The female employees working for this man were restricted from entertaining the VIP

players. This was his rule, and the reason that he provided to management was the need to protect female employees. This rule has never subsequently been amended.

Not surprisingly, tenure was found to have strong associations with all of the criterion variables. The results generally showed that the longer the casino key account representatives work in a casino, the better he or she performs. In one of his Bright Ideas, Steve Karoul (1999) indicated that the longer a marketing executive works in this industry, the more clients he or she has, and their greater competitive advantage. Casino players, particularly high rollers, like to be recognised in all ways once they enter the casino. Ulfelder (2003) in the article "Catering to the Wealthy" stated, "When a high roller steps into a casino, the host is likely to ask about his wife by name, tell him his suite has been stocked with his favourite brand of cigars and slip him tickets to that week's PGA golf tournament". However, a new employee does not normally know the information about a player's wife and his personal preference. This kind of information is not normally recorded in the customer profile but obtained from previous interactions between the employee and client. This suggests the importance of employee retention. The longer he or she stays in the same position, the more they know about the client.

The idiosyncrasies and superstitions of high rollers also need to be known in order to accommodate them appropriately. For example, some Chinese gamblers may prefer the hotel room on the 8th floor and a number 8 in the room number, or as mentioned previously, want a limousine with the number 8 on the licence plate. When they are playing, these gamblers refuse all approaches by female casino key account representatives – which has personally been experienced by the researcher in her job

as a marketing manager dealing specifically with high rollers. The researcher also experienced a few cases in which her clients left the gaming room in anger because a female casino key account representative had attempted to provide them with a drink. Westerners have little appreciation of this kind of behaviour which is associated with the personal superstition of some Asian players. Casino service providers do not learn this from a textbook, but from personal experience. In other words, the longer an employee works in a casino, the better he or she knows customers' preference.

Another phenomenon is that high rollers prefer to be served by the same casino key account representatives on each occasion they visit the casino. They like to see familiar faces, which is a reason for their repeat patronage. Again, the researcher's experience provides an example. Looking after a number of international junket operators and players when she was employed as a marketing manager, the researcher noted that whenever these customers revisited the casino, they wanted her to be available. When she was off duty, or on annual leave, phone calls would be received constantly for requests and advice. Furthermore, following her resignation, these clients continued to contact her to organise visas, provide air ticketing, and hotel accommodations when visiting the casino. She assisted on a number of occasions but was ultimately obliged to decline. Since then these players ceased patronising the casino. This story demonstrates the positive relationships between tenure and employee behaviours and performances. This has far-reaching significance and implications for casino marketing management.

6.5 Implications of the research findings of this study

This study has focused on the relationships between traits and the behaviours of casino key account representatives working in the VIP gaming area of casinos. Therefore, the implications discussed in this section are mainly applicable to the management of frontline employees at the high-end market of the casino industry. They may however also be extended to all casino customer contact employees, as well as frontline employee management in non-gaming industries. The most critical implications of the research findings are those that relate to the selection of an appropriate marketing strategy for the high-end casino market, as well as the personnel selection and employee training undertaken in the casino industry.

The results of this study make a few points clear. First, the strong associations identified between emotional intelligence and the level of customer orientation and adaptability, as well as service performance outcome, supports the proposition of incorporating emotional intelligence into encounters between casino frontline employees and high-end customers. The relationships may be extended to any interpersonal encounters between casino visitors and employees, so long as the encounters are characterised as emotional events. As service encounter is a major component of customer service quality perception, emotional intelligence can be an important factor influencing the level of service quality. Therefore, from a service marketing and management point of view, emotional intelligence may be a significant variable in improving a firm's service quality through its effects on frontline employees encounter behaviour and service performance.

Furthermore, the significant relationships between emotional intelligence and customer orientation and adaptability indicate that emotional intelligence can be incorporated within the relationship marketing approach, and is a part of relationship marketing, since the two constructs are identified as relationship selling behaviours implemented by salespeople. It also has implications for customer satisfaction and loyalty, as the two relationship-oriented characteristics aim at increasing long-term customer satisfaction and avoiding behaviours that may lead to customer dissatisfaction. When customers are satisfied, they tend to return for more transactions and have the intention of remaining loyal. Customer loyalty ultimately contributes to company profitability. On the other hand, evidence of emotional intelligence as a strong predictor of the service performance evaluation reinforces its role in relationship marketing, based on the logic that service performance is an antecedent of customer retention, and the central aim of relationship marketing is customer retention.

The link between emotional intelligence, service quality management and the relationship marketing approach can be facilitated by the measurability of this psychological construct. As indicated in previous chapters, a person's emotional intelligence can be measured, in spite of self-report questionnaires or maximum performance tests. Therefore, it is recommended that emotional intelligence tests should be incorporated within casino recruitment and selection processes. The role of emotional intelligence is supported by the evidence of development programs in the literature. The longitudinal studies conducted by Boyatzis, Cowan and Kolb (1995) provide the most persuasive evidence that emotional intelligence can also be

developed and improved. Results of another study by Slaski and Cartwright (2002), which involved the conduct of 6-weeks of emotional intelligence training for 60 managers from a large retail chain, showed that participants in the programme increased their level of emotional intelligence after the training. In addition, the findings of LeDoux's (1996) effective neuroscience also provide evidence for the potential to extend the application of emotional intelligence. Therefore, emotional intelligence training would be a worthwhile initiative for existing employees to adopt.

Second, and consistent with the work by Mount, Barrick and Stewart (1998), the finding that the FFM of personality significantly predicted the service performance of casino key account representatives shows that personality measures do predict performance in jobs involving interactions with others. Specifically, Conscientiousness and Extraversion are important predictors of performance in such jobs in the casino key account context. This finding highlights the critical role of personality in the interpersonal encounters between casino frontline employees and customers, and has important implications both for developing theories of work performance and for personnel selection. Another implication of this finding is that casino practitioners should use inventories based on the FFM among various personality measures in order to make personnel selection decisions.

Third, the significant positive relationships between customer orientation and adaptability with the service performance of casino key account representatives indicate that the two relationship-oriented selling constructs can be incorporated into casino marketing as two relationship approaches for casino key account representatives when dealing with casino high rollers, particularly in the case of

adaptability. This finding also provides empirical evidence for the claim that the preferred mode of marketing for high rollers is relationship marketing (Kale, 2005). The training agenda should incorporate relevant programs to enhance awareness of the adaptability concept amongst frontline employees.

Fourth, confirmation of the hierarchical models about the effects of personality traits (personality and trait EI) on performance evaluation (including customer orientation and adaptability as surface traits) reveals that measurement of the surface trait accounts for more variance than relying on the more basic personality traits. Combining surface and basic traits increases the capacity to explain performance ratings. During staff selection and training processes, management needs to identify relevant surface traits as well as deeper psychological traits. The hierarchical model provides an approach capable of identifying the underlying dispositions relating to higher performance levels.

Fifth, the associations identified between organisational tenure and employee behaviours during interpersonal interactions with casino players as well as the evaluation of performance are important in staff retention. Frontline employees' organisational commitment is critical if the marketing mission is to retain customers. This strongly suggests that casino management should improve employee job satisfaction, in order to avoid absenteeism and turnover.

6.7 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study relate to: 1) the boundaries established for the analysis of the theoretical model; 2) the sample population; and 3) the research instrument. The limitations associated with these constraints are discussed in the following section.

Firstly, the boundaries of sample frame constitute one of the limitations of the thesis. The study focused on the perception of casino employees. If the survey had been expanded to include casino customers at high-end segment, some differences might have been associated with the "success" variables in the relationship. For example, as suggested by Daniel and Darby (1996), customers might be found to have different perceptions of employee customer orientation.

Another limitation of the study was that the performance evaluation was confined to self-ratings. The inclusion of supervisor ratings might have increased accuracy. The performance evaluation of the casino surveyed used supervisor' ratings, but involves employees to ensure that the review was effective.

Secondly, the sample was limited to a single casino. If the sample frame was extended to a variety of casinos from different regions, e.g., Europe, USA, Macau and Australia, the findings might have had greater generalisability. However, because this study was limited to focusing on the casino high-end market, with Asians being well-known high rollers, the sample chosen does capture the essence of the present research objectives.

Thirdly, limitations related to the scales used in this study were due to the two constructs, emotional intelligence and personality, failing to be measured by the two most highly recommended instruments: the 141-item Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT, Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2002) for emotional intelligence; and the 240-item NEO Personality Inventory, Revised (NEO PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992). It is worth noting here that the two instruments had been used for the pilot study in the surveyed casino. An almost zero response rate and very negative feedback about the two instruments, (e.g., too lengthy,) prompted the researcher to change the instruments. Nevertheless, this shortcoming was compensated for by the Petrides and Furnham's (2000) distinction between trait EI and ability EI, the former becoming the focus of the study. The instrument used to measure emotional intelligence in this study, SREIS (developed by Schutte et al., 1998), has been classified as trait EI, evidenced as the most popular one in relevant research areas. However, the Big Five Inventory (BFI) used for measuring personality in the current study catches the core features of the FFM of the personality test, suiting the study purpose.

Another limitation regarding the measures in this study is the low inter-consistency reliabilities for one of the emotional intelligence dimensions – utilisation of emotions, and Neuroticism of the FFM of personality, which are below the acceptable level, 0.70, set forth by Nunnally (1970). However, reliability problems have not necessarily impacted on the results derived from this investigation.

6.8 Implications for future research

A number of issues require attention from future researchers. These are discussed in this section. One issue was that the study focused on casino employees and their perceptions of service behaviours. Therefore, an exclusive follow-up incorporating casino player perceptions of employee service encounter behaviours may ~~would~~ add to the credibility of the findings. Secondly, extending the sample frame to casinos from different regions would increase the general applicability of the findings. Once a reasonably large sample size is achieved, a more advanced structural equation modelling method could be used to investigate the underlying structures and relationships among the variables more thoroughly. Furthermore, it may be advisable to include other frontline employees, such as croupiers and casino hotel receptionists or other casino service representatives in the general gaming area, in the pursuit of a more comprehensive investigation.

Thirdly, the incorporation of an ability EI measure to assess employee emotional intelligence levels would enhance the contribution of the investigation into emotional intelligence research. A more thorough personality measure including assessing the facets of each domain of the five personality factors may assist more precise personnel selection.

Fourthly, a comparative study is recommended to compare the different levels of emotional intelligence for frontline employees in different industries, as well as to compare the different impacts of emotional intelligence on the performance

evaluation of frontline employees in different industries. This would potentially provide evidence about the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence into studies of this kind.

It would also be advisable to investigate the factors that affect casino employee organizational tenure or future organisational commitment, since tenure has an influential effect on employee behaviours and performances. Casino marketing consultants constantly emphasise the negative consequences of employee turnover in order to promote their training programs. More focussed empirical studies may facilitate the efficiency of different types of training.

6.9 Conclusions

This thesis investigated a group of hierarchical relationships between basic personality traits (trait EI, the FFM of personality), surface traits (customer orientation and adaptability) and service performance evaluation by using a sample of casino frontline employees in the high roller context. The relationships were assessed through hypotheses testing by employing multiple regression analysis. The results of the study showed that emotional intelligence explains a significant portion of the variance among the service performances of casino key account representatives. It can also account for additional variance in the dependent variable beyond the personality measure. In comparing the predictability of the two relationship-oriented characteristics, adaptability is proved to be more effective than customer orientation in predicting service performance of casino key account representatives. The hierarchical models with mediators in this study here increase the explanatory power

of the basic personality traits – the FFM of personality and trait EI – in the variance of service performance of casino key account representatives.

In conclusion, this study has provided insights into, and suggested some potential modifications to, personnel selection and training programs for casino frontline employees. It is now up to casino management to apply these findings and adjust their training of frontline employees.

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Factor Analysis for Emotional Intelligence

Factor Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N	Missing N
EI1	3.99	.880	152	0
EI2	3.86	.755	152	0
EI3	4.15	.669	152	0
EI4	3.47	.813	152	0
EI5	3.48	.853	152	0
EI6	4.00	.822	152	0
EI7	3.41	.872	152	0
EI8	3.19	1.015	152	0
EI9	3.84	.732	152	0
EI10	3.99	.806	152	0
EI11	3.14	1.004	152	0
EI12	3.84	.756	152	0
EI13	3.61	.846	152	0
EI14	4.10	.761	152	0
EI15	3.72	.847	152	0
EI16	4.03	.723	152	0
EI17	4.02	.793	152	0
EI18	3.78	.699	152	0
EI19	3.93	.786	152	0
EI20	3.69	.757	152	0
EI21	3.67	.804	152	0
EI22	3.78	.721	152	0
EI23	3.82	.801	152	0
EI24	4.00	.789	152	0
EI25	3.68	.733	152	0
EI26	3.44	.752	152	0
EI27	3.28	.732	152	0
EI28	4.26	.857	152	0
EI29	3.34	.829	152	0
EI30	3.88	.757	152	0
EI31	3.86	.749	152	0
EI32	3.64	.768	152	0
EI33	3.39	.862	152	0

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.862
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1957.387
	df	528
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
EI1	1.000	.606
EI2	1.000	.623
EI3	1.000	.543
EI4	1.000	.645
EI5	1.000	.736
EI6	1.000	.680
EI7	1.000	.636
EI8	1.000	.709
EI9	1.000	.691
EI10	1.000	.646
EI11	1.000	.567
EI12	1.000	.594
EI13	1.000	.620
EI14	1.000	.518
EI15	1.000	.651
EI16	1.000	.623
EI17	1.000	.597
EI18	1.000	.632
EI19	1.000	.671
EI20	1.000	.659
EI21	1.000	.621
EI22	1.000	.598
EI23	1.000	.697
EI24	1.000	.514
EI25	1.000	.687
EI26	1.000	.748
EI27	1.000	.595
EI28	1.000	.562
EI29	1.000	.660
EI30	1.000	.624
EI31	1.000	.667
EI32	1.000	.681
EI33	1.000	.524

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	9.481	28.730	28.730	9.481	28.730	28.730
2	2.102	6.369	35.099	2.102	6.369	35.099
3	1.761	5.337	40.436	1.761	5.337	40.436
4	1.602	4.854	45.290	1.602	4.854	45.290
5	1.393	4.220	49.511	1.393	4.220	49.511
6	1.223	3.707	53.217	1.223	3.707	53.217
7	1.140	3.454	56.671	1.140	3.454	56.671
8	1.116	3.383	60.054	1.116	3.383	60.054
9	1.009	3.057	63.111	1.009	3.057	63.111
10	.960	2.910	66.021			
11	.887	2.687	68.707			
12	.849	2.571	71.278			
13	.778	2.358	73.636			
14	.756	2.292	75.929			
15	.715	2.168	78.097			
16	.690	2.091	80.188			
17	.643	1.949	82.137			
18	.627	1.900	84.038			
19	.523	1.584	85.622			
20	.484	1.466	87.088			
21	.463	1.402	88.490			
22	.452	1.371	89.861			
23	.427	1.293	91.155			
24	.386	1.171	92.326			
25	.377	1.142	93.468			
26	.345	1.045	94.512			
27	.330	1.001	95.514			
28	.309	.935	96.449			
29	.292	.883	97.332			
30	.273	.828	98.160			
31	.224	.680	98.840			
32	.213	.644	99.484			
33	.170	.516	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot
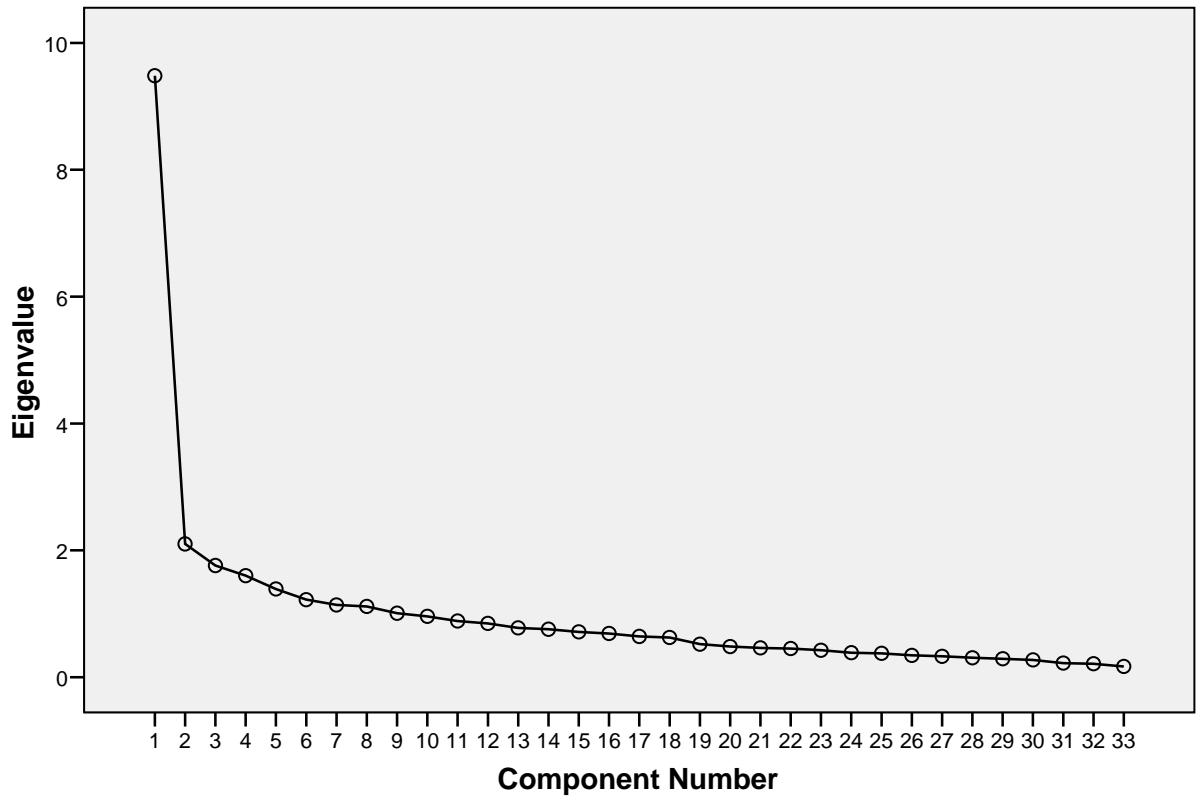
Component Matrix^a

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
EI22	.730							
EI30	.701							
EI31	.681							
EI12	.666							
EI18	.651	-.313						
EI3	.648							
EI15	.645							
EI19	.642			-.341				
EI16	.636						-.450	
EI24	.631							
EI21	.622						-.377	
EI23	.610				-.358			
EI32	.597	-.343			.352			
EI25	.582	-.329						
EI14	.582							
EI9	.571		-.463					.363
EI1	.567					-.333	.323	
EI2	.557						.313	
EI13	.527			.463				
EI17	.477				.390			
EI4	.477				.389			
EI10	.453		.312	.414				
EI29	.449	-.428			.438			
EI33	.363	-.340				.301		
EI8		.585	-.323			.368		
EI7	.313	.566						
EI27	.402		.594					
EI20	.448	.340	.531					
EI11				.558				
EI28	.390			-.430				
EI5		-.456				.640		
EI6	.430			-.357				-.437
EI26	.359							.323

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 9 components extracted.

Component Score Coefficient Matrix

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
EI1	.060	-.005	-.111	-.068	-.061	-.272	.283	-.018	
EI2	.059	.044	-.034	-.090	-.200	-.111	.275	-.024	
EI3	.068	.040	-.018	-.023	-.068	.040	.076	.091	
EI4	.050	-.131	.053	.051	.280	-.135	.247	-.215	
EI5	.020	-.217	.018	.013	-.081	.523	.033	-.233	
EI6	.045	.104	-.150	-.223	-.007	.028	.152	-.392	
EI7	.033	.269	-.034	-.020	.214	.224	.132	-.101	
EI8	-.001	.278	-.183	.064	.159	.301	.012	.232	
EI9	.060	-.007	-.263	-.017	-.060	.041	.055	.325	
EI10	.048	.104	.177	.258	.027	.159	.124	.099	
EI11	.032	.097	-.130	.348	-.040	-.055	.220	.015	
EI12	.070	.073	-.076	.049	-.046	-.039	-.216	-.171	
EI13	.056	-.002	.113	.289	-.125	-.121	-.030	-.151	
EI14	.061	.081	.023	.111	-.201	-.075	-.059	-.138	
EI15	.068	-.041	-.152	.157	-.048	.137	-.120	-.180	
EI16	.067	-.004	-.022	.026	.019	-.071	-.395	-.019	
EI17	.050	.133	.147	-.084	.280	.186	-.019	.028	
EI18	.069	-.149	.005	-.006	.088	.088	.081	.159	
EI19	.068	.058	-.084	-.213	-.020	.011	-.236	.073	
EI20	.047	.162	.301	-.102	.063	-.061	-.018	-.102	
EI21	.066	.005	-.073	-.083	.072	-.129	-.331	-.058	
EI22	.077	.001	-.058	-.110	.038	-.050	-.063	-.089	
EI23	.064	.034	.135	-.047	-.257	.095	.227	.136	
EI24	.067	.080	-.073	.027	-.074	-.040	.066	-.061	
EI25	.061	-.157	-.152	.167	.097	.170	-.087	-.138	
EI26	.038	.013	.114	.163	-.162	.001	-.129	.289	
EI27	.042	.059	.337	-.006	.080	-.005	-.018	-.116	
EI28	.041	-.066	.007	-.268	-.175	.148	.135	.119	
EI29	.047	-.204	.019	.024	.314	-.009	.033	.234	
EI30	.074	-.084	.078	.066	.000	-.080	-.046	.162	
EI31	.072	.051	.060	-.119	.031	-.078	-.095	.248	
EI32	.063	-.163	-.022	-.026	.253	-.145	.187	.025	
EI33	.038	-.162	.147	-.106	-.206	.246	-.041	-.022	

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Factor Analysis

Component Matrix[a]

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
EI19	.720			
EI22	.673			
EI9	.656			
EI6	.638			
EI21	.587			
EI1	.564			
EI31	.562		.412	
EI12	.552	.386		
EI24	.541	.341		
EI3	.530			
EI2	.524			
EI16	.475	.315		
EI28	.453			
EI11		.670		
EI13		.618	.311	
EI10		.552	.463	
EI15	.487	.523		
EI25	.394	.487		.418
EI14	.367	.422		
EI26		.369		
EI20			.760	
EI27			.700	
EI17	.340		.517	
EI23	.391		.468	
EI8				-.617
EI29				.544
EI18	.439			.500
EI32	.431			.499
EI33				.495
EI5				.485
EI7	.367			-.430
EI4				.425
EI30	.388	.365	.307	.417

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

330

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.087	18.444	18.444
2	3.079	9.331	27.775
3	2.928	8.872	36.647
4	2.852	8.643	45.290

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2	3	4
1	.750	.432	.382	.323
2	.158	.095	.357	-.916
3	-.470	-.107	.844	.237
4	-.437	.890	-.122	-.031

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Component Score Coefficient Matrix

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
EI1	.126	-.024	-.065	.000
EI2	.106	-.047	.021	-.027
EI3	.076	.015	.028	-.018
EI4	-.030	.050	.011	.147
EI5	-.034	-.003	-.056	.209
EI6	.218	-.153	-.045	-.110
EI7	.092	.025	.083	-.243
EI8	.101	.103	-.063	-.300
EI9	.175	.038	-.199	-.036
EI10	-.144	.242	.173	-.046
EI11	-.052	.347	-.106	-.120
EI12	.078	.089	-.017	-.063
EI13	-.138	.269	.081	.038
EI14	.000	.131	.058	-.053
EI15	.048	.181	-.136	.019
EI16	.048	.054	.002	.020
EI17	.027	-.056	.201	-.069
EI18	.028	.009	-.022	.160
EI19	.193	-.146	.001	-.044
EI20	-.036	-.088	.342	-.058
EI21	.121	-.037	-.025	.002
EI22	.133	-.058	-.006	.014
EI23	.011	-.025	.156	.023
EI24	.085	.068	-.011	-.070
EI25	.020	.176	-.181	.122
EI26	-.094	.150	.095	.022
EI27	-.115	-.018	.322	.040
EI28	.134	-.228	.031	.084
EI29	-.016	.021	-.042	.206
EI30	-.023	.074	.056	.117
EI31	.086	-.077	.111	-.006
EI32	.043	-.009	-.050	.165
EI33	-.019	-.109	.094	.198

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Component Score Covariance Matrix

Component	1	2	3	4
1	1.000	.000	.000	.000
2	.000	1.000	.000	.000
3	.000	.000	1.000	.000
4	.000	.000	.000	1.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all
variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.877	13

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EI1	3.99	.880	152
EI2	3.86	.755	152
EI3	4.15	.669	152
EI6	4.00	.822	152
EI9	3.84	.732	152
EI12	3.84	.756	152
EI16	4.03	.723	152
EI19	3.93	.786	152
EI21	3.67	.804	152
EI22	3.78	.721	152
EI24	4.00	.789	152
EI28	4.26	.857	152
EI31	3.86	.749	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EI1	47.22	34.595	.538	.869
EI2	47.35	35.540	.536	.869
EI3	47.06	35.871	.577	.867
EI6	47.21	36.088	.423	.876
EI9	47.38	35.613	.548	.868
EI12	47.37	35.016	.598	.866
EI16	47.18	35.578	.561	.868
EI19	47.28	34.413	.640	.863
EI21	47.54	34.727	.587	.866
EI22	47.43	34.380	.714	.860
EI24	47.21	34.883	.583	.866
EI28	46.95	36.442	.363	.879
EI31	47.36	34.946	.613	.865

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
51.21	40.936	6.398	13

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.713	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EI11	3.14	1.004	152
EI13	3.61	.846	152
EI14	4.10	.761	152
EI15	3.72	.847	152
EI25	3.68	.733	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EI11	15.11	5.597	.353	.726
EI13	14.64	5.663	.472	.664
EI14	14.15	5.878	.494	.658
EI15	14.53	5.271	.589	.615
EI25	14.57	5.995	.487	.661

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
18.25	8.281	2.878	5

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.718	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EI10	3.99	.806	152
EI17	4.02	.793	152
EI20	3.69	.757	152
EI23	3.82	.801	152
EI27	3.28	.732	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EI10	14.81	4.831	.462	.677
EI17	14.78	4.837	.473	.672
EI20	15.11	4.784	.532	.649
EI23	14.98	4.880	.451	.682
EI27	15.51	5.046	.467	.675

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
18.80	7.117	2.668	5

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.629	8

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EI4	3.47	.813	152
EI5	3.48	.853	152
EI8	3.19	1.015	152
EI18	3.78	.699	152
EI29	3.34	.829	152
EI30	3.88	.757	152
EI32	3.64	.768	152
EI33	3.39	.862	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EI4	24.69	9.513	.413	.573
EI5	24.68	10.310	.220	.626
EI8	24.97	12.582	-.190	.752
EI18	24.38	9.218	.598	.532
EI29	24.83	9.123	.486	.551
EI30	24.29	9.373	.496	.553
EI32	24.53	9.059	.561	.534
EI33	24.78	9.791	.317	.599

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
28.16	12.244	3.499	8

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded^a	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.918	30

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
EI33	3.39	.862	152
EI1	3.99	.880	152
EI2	3.86	.755	152
EI3	4.15	.669	152
EI4	3.47	.813	152
EI6	4.00	.822	152
EI7	3.41	.872	152
EI9	3.84	.732	152
EI10	3.99	.806	152
EI12	3.84	.756	152
EI13	3.61	.846	152
EI14	4.10	.761	152
EI15	3.72	.847	152
EI16	4.03	.723	152
EI17	4.02	.793	152
EI18	3.78	.699	152
EI19	3.93	.786	152
EI20	3.69	.757	152
EI21	3.67	.804	152
EI22	3.78	.721	152
EI23	3.82	.801	152
EI24	4.00	.789	152
EI25	3.68	.733	152
EI26	3.44	.752	152
EI27	3.28	.732	152
EI28	4.26	.857	152
EI29	3.34	.829	152
EI30	3.88	.757	152
EI31	3.86	.749	152
EI32	3.64	.768	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
EI33	110.07	155.988	.322	.918
EI1	109.47	151.694	.516	.915
EI2	109.60	153.368	.520	.915
EI3	109.31	153.288	.599	.914
EI4	109.99	154.238	.433	.916
EI6	109.46	154.979	.391	.917
EI7	110.05	156.633	.287	.919
EI9	109.62	153.892	.508	.915
EI10	109.47	154.688	.415	.917
EI12	109.62	151.694	.612	.914
EI13	109.85	152.977	.476	.916
EI14	109.36	152.908	.540	.915
EI15	109.74	150.751	.586	.914
EI16	109.43	152.617	.589	.914
EI17	109.44	154.169	.450	.916
EI18	109.68	152.591	.612	.914
EI19	109.53	151.470	.598	.914
EI20	109.77	155.039	.427	.916
EI21	109.79	151.757	.568	.914
EI22	109.68	150.959	.688	.913
EI23	109.64	151.714	.573	.914
EI24	109.46	151.681	.584	.914
EI25	109.78	153.615	.523	.915
EI26	110.02	157.013	.322	.918
EI27	110.18	156.200	.378	.917
EI28	109.20	155.435	.350	.918
EI29	110.12	154.706	.400	.917
EI30	109.59	150.893	.655	.913
EI31	109.61	151.221	.644	.913
EI32	109.82	152.584	.552	.915

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
113.46	163.654	12.793	30

Appendix B

Factor Analysis of Customer orientation

Factor Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N	Missing N
CO1	3.95	.694	152	0
CO2	3.97	.772	152	0
CO3	4.28	.695	152	0
CO4	4.00	.719	152	0
CO5	4.02	.759	152	0
CO6	4.08	.777	152	0
CO7	4.06	.702	152	0
CO8	4.36	.704	152	0
CO9	3.78	.782	152	0
CO10	3.29	.918	152	0
CO11	3.91	.749	152	0
CO12	3.99	.797	152	0
CO13	2.93	.870	152	0

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.861
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	752.843
	df	78
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
CO1	1.000	.576
CO2	1.000	.585
CO3	1.000	.636
CO4	1.000	.581
CO5	1.000	.450
CO6	1.000	.628
CO7	1.000	.603
CO8	1.000	.607
CO9	1.000	.514
CO10	1.000	.388
CO11	1.000	.724
CO12	1.000	.599
CO13	1.000	.907

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.093	39.178	39.178	5.093	39.178	39.178
2	1.675	12.883	52.061	1.675	12.883	52.061
3	1.029	7.919	59.980	1.029	7.919	59.980
4	.917	7.056	67.035			
5	.733	5.637	72.672			
6	.669	5.147	77.819			
7	.586	4.504	82.323			
8	.514	3.954	86.277			
9	.494	3.796	90.073			
10	.408	3.136	93.209			
11	.376	2.896	96.105			
12	.275	2.115	98.219			
13	.231	1.781	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot
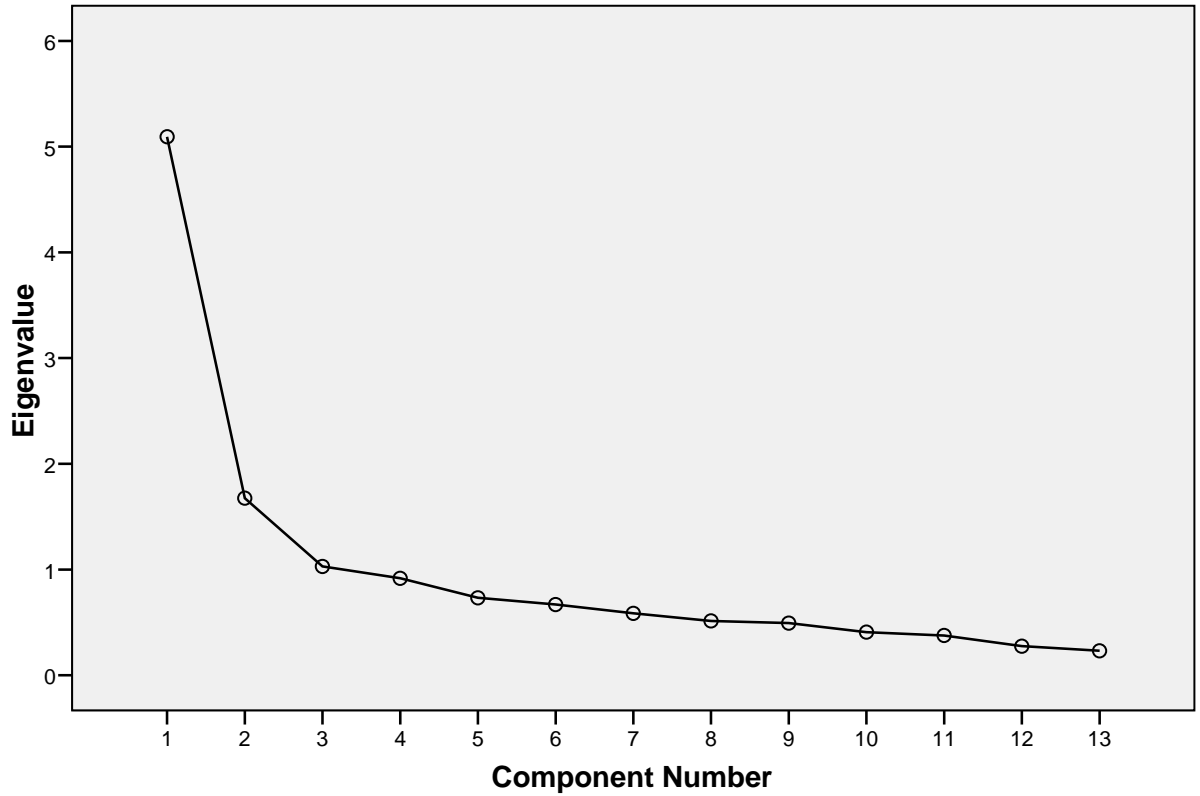
Component Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	2	3
CO6	.790		
CO11	.750	-.399	
CO8	.731		
CO7	.728		
CO4	.711		
CO3	.706	.352	
CO9	.696		
CO12	.675	-.359	
CO5	.565	.319	
CO2	.440	.625	
CO1	.501	.548	
CO10	.364	-.505	
CO13			.950

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 3 components extracted.

Component Score Coefficient Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
CO1	.098	.327	-.151
CO2	.086	.373	.029
CO3	.139	.210	.111
CO4	.140	.150	-.106
CO5	.111	.191	.165
CO6	.155	-.030	-.027
CO7	.143	-.161	-.031
CO8	.144	-.161	.002
CO9	.137	-.001	-.167
CO10	.071	-.302	.027
CO11	.147	-.238	.041
CO12	.133	-.214	.117
CO13	.001	.040	.923

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Score Covariance Matrix

Component	1	2	3
1	1.000	.000	.000
2	.000	1.000	.000
3	.000	.000	1.000

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Factor Analysis

Component Matrix[a]

a. 2 components extracted.

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
CO11	.844	
CO12	.759	
CO8	.755	
CO7	.752	
CO6	.680	.407
CO10	.586	
CO9	.574	.393
CO2		.764
CO1		.736
CO3	.382	.691
CO4	.443	.611
CO5		.583
CO13		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.994	30.726	30.726
2	2.774	21.335	52.061

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2
1	.824	.567
2	-.567	.824

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all
   variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.779	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CO1	3.95	.694	152
CO2	3.97	.772	152
CO3	4.28	.695	152
CO4	4.00	.719	152
CO5	4.02	.759	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
CO1	16.28	4.943	.524	.748
CO2	16.26	4.709	.518	.751
CO3	15.95	4.606	.654	.706
CO4	16.23	4.735	.572	.732
CO5	16.21	4.777	.509	.754

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
20.23	7.039	2.653	5

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.847	7

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CO6	4.08	.777	152
CO7	4.06	.702	152
CO8	4.36	.704	152
CO9	3.78	.782	152
CO10	3.29	.918	152
CO11	3.91	.749	152
CO12	3.99	.797	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
CO6	23.38	11.481	.643	.820
CO7	23.39	11.684	.685	.815
CO8	23.10	11.705	.678	.816
CO9	23.68	11.876	.553	.833
CO10	24.16	12.218	.375	.866
CO11	23.55	11.150	.751	.804
CO12	23.47	11.469	.623	.823

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
27.45	15.468	3.933	7

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all
   variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.864	12

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
CO1	3.95	.694	152
CO2	3.97	.772	152
CO3	4.28	.695	152
CO4	4.00	.719	152
CO5	4.02	.759	152
CO6	4.08	.777	152
CO7	4.06	.702	152
CO8	4.36	.704	152
CO9	3.78	.782	152
CO10	3.29	.918	152
CO11	3.91	.749	152
CO12	3.99	.797	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
CO1	43.73	29.523	.424	.861
CO2	43.71	29.585	.360	.866
CO3	43.40	28.136	.622	.849
CO4	43.68	27.900	.630	.849
CO5	43.66	28.728	.479	.858
CO6	43.61	26.929	.703	.843
CO7	43.63	27.931	.643	.848
CO8	43.33	27.891	.647	.848
CO9	43.91	27.515	.618	.849
CO10	44.39	29.565	.279	.875
CO11	43.78	27.380	.671	.846
CO12	43.70	27.789	.568	.852

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
47.68	33.198	5.762	12

Appendix C

Factor Analysis for Adaptability

Factor Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N	Missing N
AT1	3.78	.780	152	0
AT2	3.76	.803	152	0
AT3	3.21	.851	152	0
AT4	3.85	.828	152	0
AT5	3.39	.846	152	0
AT6	3.64	.794	152	0
AT7	3.84	.642	152	0
AT8	3.64	.749	152	0
AT9	3.52	.976	152	0
AT10	2.99	.997	152	0

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.830
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	351.009
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
AT1	1.000	.529
AT2	1.000	.592
AT3	1.000	.254
AT4	1.000	.416
AT5	1.000	.368
AT6	1.000	.560
AT7	1.000	.470
AT8	1.000	.583
AT9	1.000	.520
AT10	1.000	.647

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.605	36.054	36.054	3.605	36.054	36.054
2	1.332	13.322	49.376	1.332	13.322	49.376
3	.912	9.120	58.496			
4	.821	8.205	66.701			
5	.698	6.981	73.681			
6	.674	6.740	80.422			
7	.608	6.082	86.504			
8	.512	5.125	91.629			
9	.457	4.568	96.196			
10	.380	3.804	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot
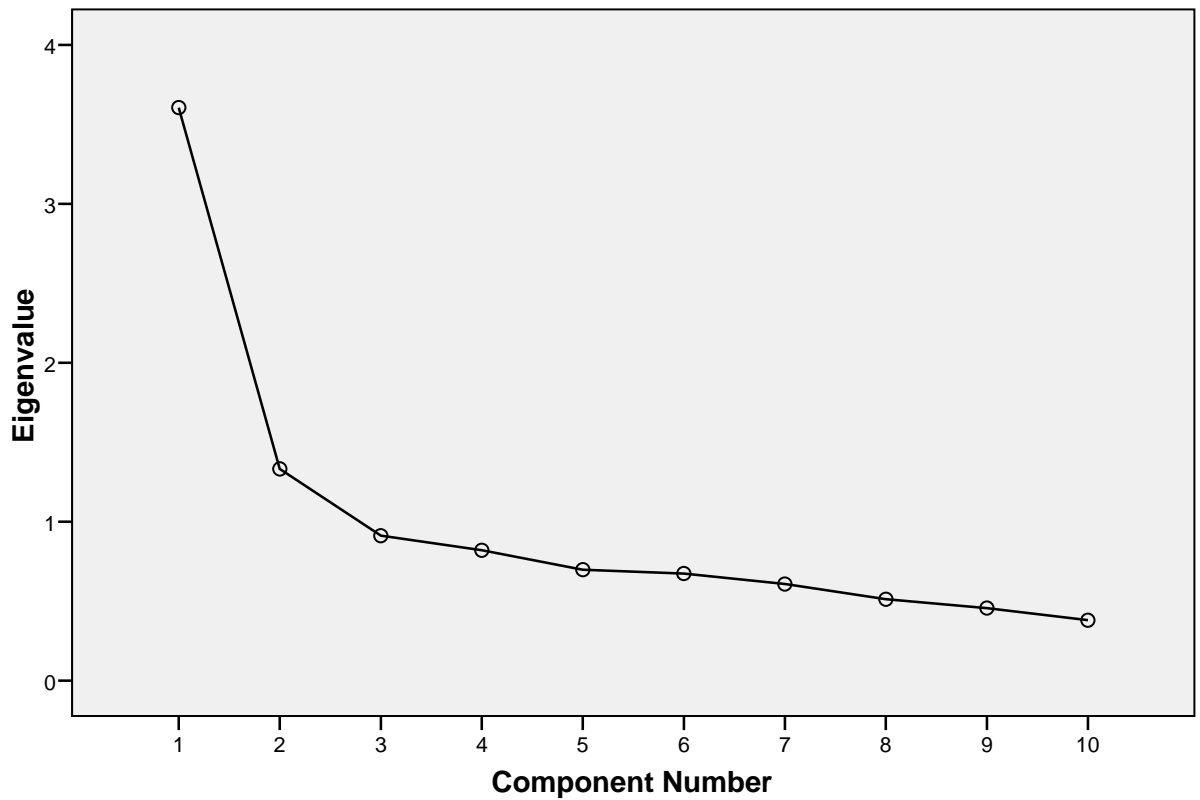
Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
AT2	.754	
AT1	.721	
AT7	.661	
AT9	.644	.324
AT4	.636	
AT5	.604	
AT6	.579	-.474
AT8	.556	-.523
AT10	.361	.719
AT3	.347	.366

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 2 components extracted.

Factor Analysis

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
AT8	.759	
AT6	.747	
AT2	.694	.332
AT1	.634	.357
AT5	.519	.315
AT10		.792
AT9	.321	.646
AT7	.421	.541
AT3		.501
AT4	.445	.467

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.788	27.880	27.880
2	2.150	21.496	49.376

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Component Transformation Matrix

Component	1	2
1	.800	.600
2	-.600	.800

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.747	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
AT1	3.78	.780	152
AT2	3.76	.803	152
AT5	3.39	.846	152
AT6	3.64	.794	152
AT8	3.64	.749	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
AT1	14.43	5.360	.522	.698
AT2	14.45	4.991	.617	.661
AT5	14.83	5.480	.418	.738
AT6	14.58	5.331	.516	.700
AT8	14.57	5.558	.491	.710

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
18.22	7.853	2.802	5

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.642	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
AT3	3.21	.851	152
AT4	3.85	.828	152
AT7	3.84	.642	152
AT9	3.52	.976	152
AT10	2.99	.997	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
AT3	14.20	5.881	.275	.643
AT4	13.56	5.520	.394	.589
AT7	13.57	5.903	.457	.575
AT9	13.89	4.762	.475	.545
AT10	14.42	4.921	.413	.582

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
17.41	7.740	2.782	5

Factor Analysis for the Service Performance of Casino Key Account Representatives

Factor Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N	Missing N
perf1	3.28	.833	152	0
perf2	3.01	.822	152	0
perf3	3.67	.726	152	0
perf4	3.38	.836	152	0
perf5	3.53	.976	152	0
perf6	3.61	.781	152	0
perf7	3.28	.645	152	0
perf8	3.30	.660	152	0

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.770
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	263.473
	df	28
	Sig.	.000

Communalities

|	Initial	Extraction
perf1	1.000	.559
perf2	1.000	.713
perf3	1.000	.648
perf4	1.000	.595
perf5	1.000	.622
perf6	1.000	.686
perf7	1.000	.553
perf8	1.000	.849

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.955	36.934	36.934	2.955	36.934	36.934
2	1.207	15.090	52.025	1.207	15.090	52.025
3	1.062	13.281	65.305	1.062	13.281	65.305
4	.800	10.004	75.310			
5	.575	7.190	82.500			
6	.556	6.951	89.451			
7	.495	6.186	95.637			
8	.349	4.363	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Scree Plot
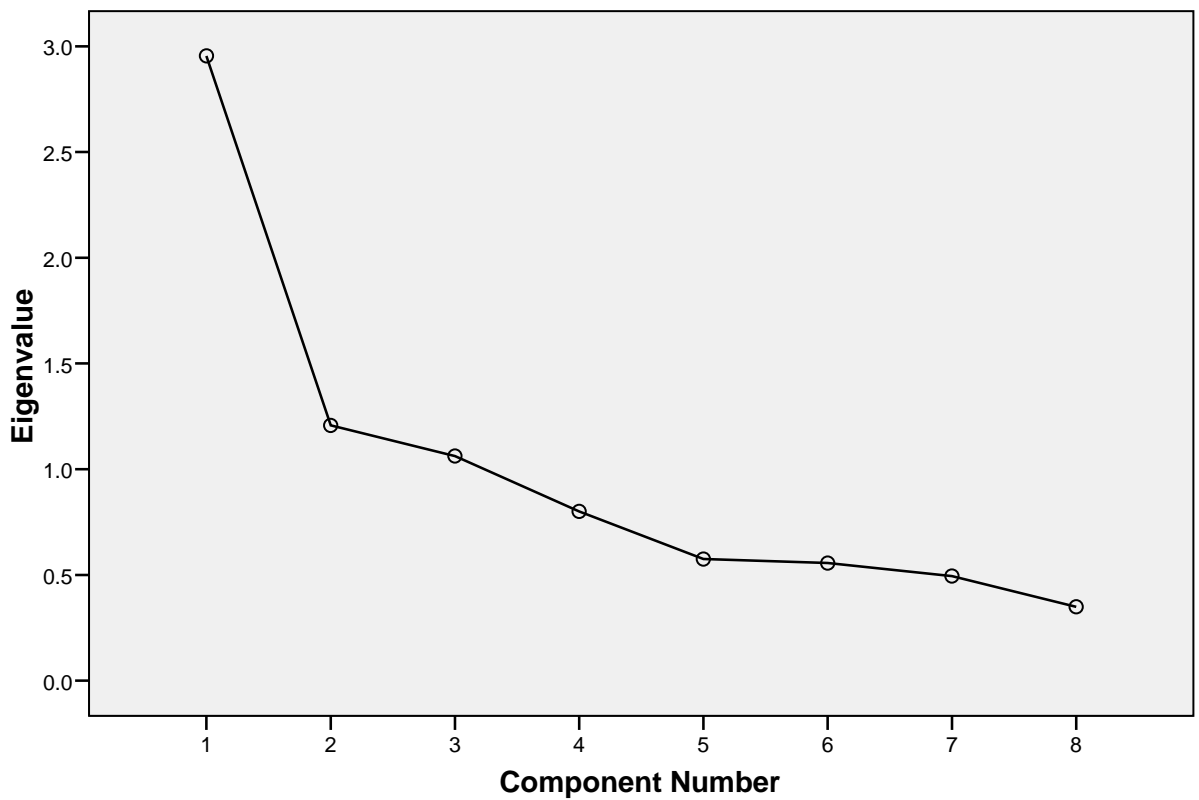
Component Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	2	3
perf6	.767	.306	
perf3	.762		
perf1	.744		
perf5	.728	-.302	
perf7	.615	.395	
perf4	.519	-.518	
perf2		.748	.343
perf8			.905

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

a. 3 components extracted.

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	152	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	152	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.780	6

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
perf1	3.28	.833	152
perf3	3.67	.726	152
perf4	3.38	.836	152
perf5	3.53	.976	152
perf6	3.61	.781	152
perf7	3.28	.645	152

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
perf1	17.47	7.721	.586	.731
perf3	17.08	8.060	.617	.727
perf4	17.38	8.580	.377	.784
perf5	17.22	7.168	.575	.736
perf6	17.14	7.868	.605	.727
perf7	17.47	9.019	.437	.767

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
20.75	11.129	3.336	6

Appendix E

Survey Questionnaires

Dear Potential Participants,

I am currently carrying out research for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. The research title is "The relationships between emotional intelligence, personality and the casino host's service performance at high-end markets in the casino industry". This project is under the supervision of Dr. Keis Ohtsuka and Professor Brian King. We would like to invite you to be a part of a study into the personal characteristics that drive job performance in front line marketing positions in the high roller contexts of Casinos. In this situation, the different aspects being investigated are; emotional intelligence (the ability to think and act strategically in using your and other people's emotions), personality (the general way in which you behave), customer orientation and adaptability. The aspects of job performance relate to the service performance of front line marketing service staff in the high roller contexts in a casino. In particular, in the way they deal with and provide service to casino premium customers.

It is a paper-pencil survey. All up, your involvement will take about half an hour. Please note that your participation is entirely voluntary and that you may withdraw your consent at anytime. The completed questionnaires will be collected by the Vice President of Casino Marketing, and analysed at Victoria University. All your answers will be treated as confidential and results will be grouped together so that no individual's responses can be identified.

Again, you do not wish to participate, that is ok – there is no penalty if you do not participate. Similarly, if you volunteer to participate but then decide to withdraw, then you can withdraw without any penalty.

Thank you in advance for participating in this survey. I know how important your time is, and I greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in furthering this research endeavour.

Of course, if you have any questions, you can always contact Catherine Prentice at:

300 Flinders St. Melbourne, 8001, Vic, Australia
Faculty of Business & Law
Victoria University
Email: catherine.prentice@research.vu.edu.au
Tel: + 61 406 627 622
and Keis Ohtsuka at
Email: keis.ohtsuka@vu.edu.au
Tel: +61 3 99195098

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher Keis Ohtsuka (Keis.Ohtska@vu.edu.au) or +61399195098]. If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001 phone (03) 9919 4710

Questionnaires

Please answer all of these questions

1. Please indicate your gender *(Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **Male**   ❑ **Female**

2. Please indicate your age group *(Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **18-25**   ❑ **46-55**

   ❑ **26-35**   ❑ **56 or more**

   ❑ **36-45**

3. What is the highest educational qualification you hold? *(Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **Secondary school**   ❑ **Graduate Diploma**

   ❑ **Diploma or trade certificate** ❑ **Postgraduate degree**

   ❑ **Bachelor's degree**   ❑ **Other (please state) --------------**

4. How long have you been working in the same line of profession? *(Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **Less than 1 year**   ❑ **11 - 15 years**

   ❑ **1 - 2 years**   ❑ **16 - 20 years**

   ❑ **3 - 5 years**   ❑ **Over 20 years**

   ❑ **6 - 10 years**

5. What is your position*? (Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **Top Management**   ❑ **Middle Management**

   ❑ **Supervisor**   ❑ **Non-supervisory**

   Other (please state your job title) ----------------------

6. What is your job title _____

7. Please indicate your annual income group *(Please tick one box)*

   ❑ **Less than $20,000**   ❑ **$60,000 - $79,999**

   ❑ **$20,000 - $39,999**   ❑ **$80,000 – $99,999**

   ❑ **$40,000 - $59,999**   ❑ **$100,000 and above**

I see myself as someone who

1. Is talkative   *1 2 3 4 5*

2. Tends to find fault with others   *1 2 3 4 5*

3. Does a thorough job   *1 2 3 4 5*

4. Is depressed, blue   *1 2 3 4 5*

5. Is original, comes up with new ideas   *1 2 3 4 5*

6. Is reserved   *1 2 3 4 5*

7. Is helpful and unselfishness with others   *1 2 3 4 5*

8. Can be somewhat careless   *1 2 3 4 5*

9. Is relaxed, handles stress well   *1 2 3 4 5*

10. Is curious about many different things   *1 2 3 4 5*

11. Is full of energy   *1 2 3 4 5*

12. Starts quarrels with others   *1 2 3 4 5*

13. Is a reliable worker   *1 2 3 4 5*

14. Can be tense   *1 2 3 4 5*

15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker   *1 2 3 4 5*

16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm   *1 2 3 4 5*

17. Has a forgiving nature   *1 2 3 4 5*

18. Tends to be disorganized   *1 2 3 4 5*

19. Worries a lot   *1 2 3 4 5*

20. Has an active imagination   *1 2 3 4 5*

21. Tends to be quiet   *1 2 3 4 5*

22. Is generally trusting   *1 2 3 4 5*

23. Tends to be lazy   *1 2 3 4 5*

24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset   *1 2 3 4 5*

25. Is inventive   *1 2 3 4 5*

26. Has an assertive personality   *1 2 3 4 5*

27. Can be cold and aloof   *1 2 3 4 5*

28. Preserves until the task is finished   *1 2 3 4 5*

29. Perseveres until the task is finished   *1 2 3 4 5*

30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences   *1 2 3 4 5*

31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited   *1 2 3 4 5*

32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone   *1 2 3 4 5*

33. Does things efficiently   *1 2 3 4 5*

34. Remains calm in tense situations   *1 2 3 4 5*

35. Prefers work that is routine   *1 2 3 4 5*

36. Is outgoing, sociable   *1 2 3 4 5*

37. Is sometimes rude to others   *1 2 3 4 5*

38. Makes plans and follows through with them   *1 2 3 4 5*

39. Gets nervous easily   *1 2 3 4 5*

40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas   *1 2 3 4 5*

41. Has few artistic interests   *1 2 3 4 5*

42. Like to cooperate with others   *1 2 3 4 5*

43. Is easily distracted   *1 2 3 4 5*

                                                                            1 2 3 4 5
44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

Section 2: Each of the following items asks you about your emotions or reactions associated with emotions. After deciding whether a statement is generally true for you, use the 5-point scale to respond to the statement. *1=disagree strongly; 2= somewhat disagree; 3= neither agree nor disagree; 4=somewhat agree; 5= agree strongly*

1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.   *1 2 3 4 5*

2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar   *1 2 3 4 5*
obstacles and overcome them

3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try   *1 2 3 4 5*

4. Other people find it easy to confide in me   *1 2 3 4 5*

5. I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people   *1 2 3 4 5*

6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is   *1 2 3 4 5*
important and not important

7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities   *1 2 3 4 5*

8. Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living   *1 2 3 4 5*

9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them   *1 2 3 4 5*

10. I expect good things to happen   *1 2 3 4 5*

11. I like to share my emotions with others   *1 2 3 4 5*

12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last   *1 2 3 4 5*

13. I arrange events others enjoy   *1 2 3 4 5*

14. I seek out activities that make me happy   *1 2 3 4 5*

15. I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others   *1 2 3 4 5*

16. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others   *1 2 3 4 5*

17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me   *1 2 3 4 5*

18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing   *1 2 3 4 5*

19. I know why my emotions change   *1 2 3 4 5*

20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come with new ideas   *1 2 3 4 5*

21. I have control over my emotions   *1 2 3 4 5*

22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them   *1 2 3 4 5*

23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on   *1 2 3 4 5*

24. I compliment others when they have done something well   *1 2 3 4 5*

25. I am aware of the non-verbal messages other people send   *1 2 3 4 5*

26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I experienced this event myself   *1 2 3 4 5*

27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas   *1 2 3 4 5*

28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail   *1 2 3 4 5*

29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them   *1 2 3 4 5*

I help other people feel better when they are down   *1 2 3 4 5*

31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles   *1 2 3 4 5*

32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice   *1 2 3 4 5*

33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do   *1 2 3 4 5*

Section 3: the statements below describe various ways you may act with your customer, please indicate the right number that best describes you. *Strongly disagree = 1, somewhat disagree = 2, neither disagree nor agree = 3, somewhat agree = 4, strongly agree = 5*

1. I try to give customers an accurate expectation of what our casino services can do for them   *1 2 3 4 5*

2. I try to get customers to discuss their needs with me   *1 2 3 4 5*

3. I imply to a customer that something is beyond my control when it is not   *1 2 3 4 5*

4. I try to influence a customer by information rather than by pressure   *1 2 3 4 5*

5. I try to help customers achieve their entertainment goals   *1 2 3 4 5*

6. I answer customers questions about our service procedures as accurately as *1 2 3 4 5*
I can

7. I pretend to agree with customers to please them   *1 2 3 4 5*

8. I try to figure out what a customer's needs are   *1 2 3 4 5*

9. Good service representatives have the customer's best interests in mind   *1 2 3 4 5*

10. I offer the service that is best suited to the customer's needs   *1 2 3 4 5*

11. I paint too rosy a picture of our casino services to make them sound as   *1 2 3 4 5*
good as possible

12. I try to achieve my goals by satisfying customers   *1 2 3 4 5*

13. I try to find out which casino services would be most helpful to a   *1 2 3 4 5*
customer

14. Every customer requires a unique approach   *1 2 3 4 5*

15. When I feel that my approach is not working, I can easily change to   *1 2 3 4 5*
another approach

16. I like to experiment with different approaches   *1 2 3 4 5*

17. I don't change my approach from one customer to another   *1 2 3 4 5*

18. I am very sensitive to the needs of my customers   *1 2 3 4 5*

19. I find it difficult to adapt my style to certain customers   *1 2 3 4 5*

20. I vary my approach from situation to situation   *1 2 3 4 5*

21. I try to understand how one customer differs from another   *1 2 3 4 5*

22. I feel confident that I can effectively change my approach when   *1 2 3 4 5*
necessary

23. I treat all customers pretty much the same   *1 2 3 4 5*

Section 4. Please indicate the number that best describes you from the following
descriptions. 1 is referred to as the lowest score, 5 as the highest score

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1. Quantity of work   *1 2 3 4 5*

2. Quality of work   *1 2 3 4 5*

3. Human relations and customer relations   *1 2 3 4 5*

4. Adaptability   *1 2 3 4 5*

5. Interest   *1 2 3 4 5*

6. Initiative   *1 2 3 4 5*

7. Diligence   *1 2 3 4 5*

8. Appearance   *1 2 3 4 5*

3. Human relations and customer relations   *1 2 3 4 5*

Appendix F

Ethics Application

MEMO

To	Dr Keis Ohtsuka School of Psychology Footscray Park Campus	Date	27/06/2007

From	Professor Michael Polonsky A/Chair Faculty of Business and Law Human Research Ethics Committee

Subject	Ethics Application – HRETH 06/250

Dear Dr Ohtsuka,

Thank you for submitting this application for ethical approval of the project:

HRETH06/250 Trait Emotional Intelligence, Personality and the Self-Perceived Performance Ratings of Casino Key Account Representatives (BHREC 2007/44)

The proposed research project has been accepted by the Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Business and Law. Approval for this application has been granted from 26 June 2007 to 26 June 2009.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Business and Law, must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants, and unforeseen events that may effect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes.

Continued approval of this research project by the Human Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Business and Law is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date (by **26 June 2008**) or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the VUHREC web site at: http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 9919 4625.
On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

Professor Michael Polonsky
A/Chair
      Faculty of Business and Law Human Research Ethics Committee