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X International Scientific Siberian Transport Forum

Emotional Intelligence after Corporate Downsizing during Covid-19 Era: a Case Study of Thai Airways' Flight Attendants

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Abstract

Firstly, this study aims to study the impact to air transport employee's quality of life from corporate downsizing during covid -19 era according to the corporate rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. Secondly, to study the approach to adjust an emotional intelligence of air transport employee after the corporate downsizing according to the rehabilitation plans of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. Thirdly, to study the development of new professional life quality of the air transport employee after corporate downsizing according to the rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. The results obtained from the study are detailed as follows.

The results showed that the guidelines for adjusting the emotional intelligence of flight attendants consist of 6 aspects as follows: the first aspect is understanding accepting and adapting to changes that occur due to conditions beyond the control of both the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak 19 and corporate downsizing according to the corporate rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. The second aspect is a positive thinking in order to allow oneself to be successful in learning new experiences from the crisis that happened and stepped away from the traditional form of work (comfort zone) to new challenges. The third aspect is learning to deal with stress by doing various activities that interest oneself to relieve stress. The fourth aspect is self-empowering to realize self-worth, to build strength, to turn challenges into opportunities to continue in living. The fifth aspect is the use of dharma principles to stabilize one's mood in order to find a solution for one's life. The sixth aspect is to manage change in consistent with the uncontrollable changes by modifying behavior and developing oneself to survive well through this crisis.

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Peer-review under responsibility of the scientific committee of the X International Scientific Siberian Transport Forum

Keywords: Air transport employee; Emotional Intelligence; Corporate downsizing; Corona Virus 19 (Covid-19).

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1. Introduction

The first outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID19) in Hubei Province, People's Republic of China since December in 2019, since then, it has spread to many countries in different regions all over the world. As a result, the World Health Organization has announced the spread of COVID-19 as a Public Health Emergency to International Concern on 30th January 2020 and later declared COVID-19 a pandemic.

Many countries had to close the country to prohibit entry and exit which affect society, economy and trade both domestically and internationally, especially in international transport, whether by land, sea and air, people have to stop travelling and conduct self-isolate in their homes. Subsequently, the Prime Minister declared a state of emergency in accordance with the Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situations B.E.

In Section 9 of the Emergency Decree, B.E. 2548 (2005) issued 14 copies and issued an announcement concerning the extension of the period for declaring a state of emergency in all local areas throughout the Kingdom. by stipulating various measures to control the spread of COVID-19, such as prohibiting entry to risk areas, closing the risk of contracting the disease, closing access to the Kingdom in the use of vehicles, whether aircraft, ships, cars or any other international vehicles, etc. From such situation, causing businesses to come to a halt, citizens must stop travelling especially internationally.

Air transport, is considered the fastest means of transportation in modern times and the most popular people around the world and has been greatly affected whether the flight is suspended, flight path restriction, cancelling flight from airlines. Air transport all over the world have to stop operating international flights during COVID-19 epidemic, as experiencing loss during COVID-19 era, lack of liquidity and low cash flow. As a result, airlines need to reorganize their company structure, and downsizing in order to survive during the suspension period, such as cost reductions, price reductions, adjusting service plans to fight competitors but the key is to reduce the number of employees and to ask them to leave the airline.

Thai Airways International Public Company Limited is a state air transport enterprise and a public company engaged in international commercial aviation business as a national airline with stability and employees have relatively high incomes and welfare. Therefore, it is desirable of Thai people who want to work in this state-owned enterprise especially, flight attendant is one of the careers that the new generation dreams of in any era, because of its elegant appearance, gorgeous income in addition to the salary, also a high per diem, along with the freedom to travel around the world. Overall, the company has as 6,081 flight attendants, 1,371 pilots out of a total of 22,370 employees, and flight attendants staff earning an average of 1.35 million baht per person (Thai Airways, 2019). After the epidemic of COVID-19 affecting the global air transport industry since March 2020, Thailand's tourism sector continues to be affected by international travel restrictions both in Thailand and other countries.

As a consequence, there are no foreign tourists coming to travel in Thailand continuously. Thai Airways International Public Company Limited has taken measures to reduce expenses to alleviate the impact of the Covid-19 situation. However, still provides freight services on some routes including arranging special flights to bring Thai people back home. In addition, aims to generate additional income from businesses that are not related to passenger transportation. by penetrating the market for more ground customers.

Overall, company's passenger capacity (ASK) decreased 95.0%, passenger transport volume (RPK) decreased 97.8%, cabin factor 34.9% which is in average lower than 2020 at 80.0% and total passenger transport was 0.49 million, a decrease of 91.9% from the previous year. For freight forwarding, parcel production (ADTK) was 96.2% lower than the previous year. Freight Load Factor (RFTK) was 93.6% lower than last year, average freight load factor was 91.2%, higher than last year's average of 52.2% (Thai Airways, 2020).

When considering the past performance of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited as a state enterprise, therefore, politics, has always been involved, especially in the matter of appointing the Board of Directors, Chairman and the President which can lead to an administration that is not in accordance with good corporate governance. Some executives are unqualified and many of them lack experience in the aviation industry. Subsequently, there are ineffective leaders which is the reason why the company is in the state of loss for many terms (Chudam, 2016; Waramontri, 2021; Ushakov, 2016).

All of these are the causes of the loss of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited, which accumulated and continued for a long time.

In addition, the company was unable to operate normally due to the spread of COVID-19. Coupled with huge debts, the company had to enter the business rehabilitation process according to the resolution of the Cabinet on May 19, 2020, and manage the business in accordance to the debt & financial condition as well as to the current

economic situation. The Cabinet agreed that Thai Airways International Public Company Limited must enter the business rehabilitation process under the Central Bankruptcy Court's order. When the company enters the rehabilitation process, it is necessary to manage the organization in every aspect such as labour, investment, or business strategy in order to reduce costs in all aspects and increase the competitiveness in the aviation business market. As a result, Thai Airways International Public Company Limited can continue the business and have enough cash flow to pay debts to the creditors as stipulated in the rehabilitation plan.

As for the cost efficiency strategy, from the rehabilitation plan consists of an organizational restructuring that will halve the company's pre-COVID workforce and cut executive positions by 30%.the company had to restructure the organization by planning to reduce the number of employees from around 29,000 employees to 13,000 - 15,000employees, under the cost efficiency strategy, a reduction of about 52% with a new employment conditions and salary schemes in organizational restructuring projects such as “Volunteer resignation”, “Leave without Pay” and “Mutual Separation Plan” most of employees are willingly accepted new employment conditions, salary schemes and cooperatively participated in organizational restructuring projects. The number of captains and pilots from 1,417 people reduced to 905 pilots and will be reduced to about 400 pilots accordingly. The number of flight attendants is 5,733 people, which is 26.85% of the total workforce, which is considered the largest group of employees and will be reduced to approximately 3,000 employees. Normally, Thai Airways Company Limited has monthly personnel cost of 2,600 million baht, but with cost efficiency strategy, monthly personnel cost will be reduced to 600 million baht.

The new employment conditions and salary schemes in organizational restructuring projects can be described as follows:

1. Mutual Separation Plan A project (Mutual Separation Plan A). This project resulted in the resignation of employees, resulting in approximately 14,900 employees remaining.

2. Together We Can project. This project reducing salary and compensation or pays a salary of 20% together with the long-term leave program (LW20), causing the salary cost to be reduced by 18% to approximately 11.3 billion baht.

3. Mutual Separation Plan B Project (Mutual Separation Plan B) will help reduce salary expenses in the year 2020 by 33% to approximately 9,300 million baht.

4. The Mutual Separation Plan C project (Mutual Separation Plan C) allows employees to gradually voluntarily resign in both projects. It is expected that in 2021 there will be approximately 6,000 to 7,000 employees participating in the MSP B and MSP C projects, which will lead to approximately 14,000 to 15,000 employees remaining, which is suitable for Thai Airways' future business plans.

5. The MAP C project will be open to employees who do not wish to be recruited to work under the new structure or employees who apply to be recruited into positions according to the new structure but not selected, can submit voluntary resignation in this project.

The rehabilitation plan from the central bankruptcy court led to corporate downsizing. The company has said that it will continue to reduce its workforce by almost half and cut remuneration package expenses to return to competitiveness within three to five years. Therefore, some flight attendants had to be laid-off or voluntary resign according to the project specified by the company. Emotional intelligence must be introduced to adjust one's emotions to have good mental health and continue to live in the situation of the spread of COVID-19.

As for the fleet efficiency strategy, in 2019, Thai Airways has flown to 83 cities, with the total of 102 aircrafts, but was reduced to 15- 25 cities only, because Thai Airways could not operate as usual during COVID-19 era. The airline has also been selling off aircraft, facilities and stockholdings as part of a review of its asset portfolio, and to raise working capital.Thai Airways has adjusted the number of its fleet, as for the fleet efficiency plan and there will be no more than 75 aircraft remaining at the end of 2025. Three models are Airbus A 350-900, Boeing 777-300ER and Boeing 787 only.

In respect to the corporate downsizing according to the rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited, all of the company's employees have all been affected. The flight attendants who have to gradually retire from their jobs according to the corporate downsizing projects has faced lots of effects on their quality of life unexpectedly because they believe that the company was a state enterprise and own by government under the Ministry of Finance at 47.86 percent. However, when the covid-19 epidemic occurs and the corporate has fallen into the restructuring plan, the flight attendant is like an angel who has fallen from heaven as their career was considered stable and can work until their retirement. At the early stage, flight attendants do not know how to find a solution of unemployment and how to live their life after corporate downsizing. It was a sudden change in one's own

life that had not been set before.

The researcher therefore raised research questions of how flight attendants manage their emotional intelligence for a better quality of life from the corporate downsizing according to the rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. The research objectives are as follows.

Research Objectives

To study how air transport employee especially flight attendants manage their emotional intelligence after corporate downsizing according to the rehabilitation plan of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Corporate Downsizing:

Downsizing means restructuring the organization in terms of reducing the size of the workforce to reduce costs and increase efficiency, effectiveness including competitiveness by reducing employee salaries or benefits (Ushakov & Shieh, 2013). However, downsizing scheme is intended to improve efficiency, productivity or competitiveness of the organization. It affects the change in the size of the workforce of the organization by reducing workers, reducing jobs and cutting some operational duties, which are to reduce expenses to increase revenue for the organization and work processes for business. This is a modern management concept known as downsizing, beginning in the 1980s in the United States and the executives will have to take care of the morale of the employees who have to leave and those who are still working with the organization (Freeman & Cameron, 1991). The steps of downsizing that the business should be carried out are as follows:

First, make decision to downsizing. What should be done in the short term before the actual downsizing is stop recruiting, no salary increases, strict on working overtime, salary reduction, no bonus payment, etc. Some use the early retirement and compensation scheme.

Second, issuing business downsizing plan that the impact and the need of shareholder must also be taken into account and must be proficient enough to operate as well as conduct training, provide knowledge and understanding to employees in the organization.

Third, the official announcement. This step must be open and honest about the reasons and procedures for downsizing, and employees who are downsized must receive benefits & compensation reasonably. Then, the date, time, process, and labor law requirements must be announced. The last thing to keep an eye on is: avoiding misunderstanding that will occur from both outside and within the organization. As part of the organization's downsizing preparation, corporate executives are responsible for ensuring that subordinate employees are safe from any risk in their life and have reasonable job security (Sherman et al., 1996). Management must prepare employees to adjust themselves to solve problem against unemployment. The corporate leaders must have business ethics as the organization is established and operates to generate profits; therefore, they have a duty and responsibility to treat its employees with regard to the interests of the employee and the company in a balanced manner (Kankaew, 2020).

Preparation of corporate downsizing in advance is a process that organizations should use when reducing the size of the organization. It usually takes at least 6 months to help employees leave the organization in preparation for a job elsewhere without causing much trouble to them.

For factors and principles that corporate executives use to select employees to continue working and employees to be laid off, they should use the criteria for length of work in the organization, employee expertise related to the organization performance (Sherman et al., 1996). Employees who voluntarily resign may intimidate the image of the organization because employees are not selected to be laid off by the management.

However, the reduction of the organization has both positive and negative impacts. The positive effect of downsizing causes the organization to be more flexible and efficient. The negative effect is employees have an impact on income and having to find a new job that can be difficult or a new job that is less rewarding and has the mental health impact of leaving the job.

When the organization is downsized, there is a huge impact on employees' emotion. Employees must adopt the concept of emotional intelligence to be able to maintain their own lives as well. Emotional intelligence or Emotional Quotient, abbreviated as EQ (Dechkong, 2005) for this research, the term emotional intelligence refers to the ability

of a person to be aware of the perception thoughts, feelings, and conditions that occur within oneself, the ability to control one's own which affects their own thoughts and actions in a reasonable manner in consistent with work, life and with good relationships with other people (Salover & Mayer, 1990).

2.2. Emotional Intelligence:

On the point of Emotional intelligence, it is useful and important to a person's success in achieving success in various fields, things such as school, work, occupation and social life, and it also helps individuals learn firsthand about emotions. Being able to understand and manage your own emotions that will benefit yourself and others will affect a person's social life, people can communicate with compassion as well as being motivated to do things creatively and most importantly, people who learn about emotions will know how to maintain a balance between rationality and emotion and can bring knowledge of emotional intelligence to be applied in daily life.

As for the emotional intelligence component Goleman (1998) said, it is related to life success, life satisfaction and well-being, physical and mental health, interpersonal relationships, academic achievement, and he also divided the components of emotional intelligence (The Emotional Competence Framework) into two parts: the first part is personal ability in managing emotions, the second part is social ability in building relationships with others.

The first part: Personal ability consisting three components as following:

First component: self-awareness, knowing strengths and weaknesses, in one's self.

Second component: self-discipline consists of self-control, trustworthiness, honesty and emotional integrity, consciousness.

Third component: self-motivation consists of having a motivation to achieve (Achievement Drive). commitment, adherence to the goals of the group and the organization. Initiative, ready to take on the right opportunity and optimism.

The second part: Social ability consisting two components as following:

First component:

(Empathy) understanding the feelings and needs of others.

(Understanding Others) knowing the feelings, perceptions, concerns of others.

(Recognition) developing others recognize the need to develop and promote others.

(Service Orientation) the service mindset, expectation, perception, response to service recipients.

(Leveraging Diversity) considering the various options saw potential opportunities.

The second component:

(Influence) is social skills include having the power to influence others by using effective strategies to influence others.

(Communication) listening and communicating openly.

(Conflict management) resolve disagreements.

(Leadership) ability to motivate and guide individuals and groups.

(Change Management) encourage change, initiate change management.

(Collaboration and Cooperation) create and maintain what is beneficial to the relationship and create cooperation towards the goal.

(Team Capabilities) working as a team to create group power to reach the goals of the group.

While Bar-On (1997) proposed the concept of components of emotional intelligence which can be divided into four areas.

The first area is, intrinsic ability, which is the ability to understand one's own emotional state. The courage to express their opinions and feelings. Awareness. Acknowledging the reality and the situation as it actually is.

The second area is, adaptability, consists of the ability to examine one's feelings. Understanding of situations and being able to interpret them correctly.

The third area is stress management, the ability to solve problems as well as having good control over your

emotions, expressing them properly.

The fourth area is, optimism, self-motivation including the ability to create fun for oneself and others.

Salovey & Mayer (1997) described emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive emotion, ability to integrate emotion to facilitate thought, ability to understand emotions, and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth, moreover, defined the key elements that lead to success in life which connected to emotional intelligence into 3 components:

The first component deals with self-awareness, is to understand the feelings that arise and be able to express emotions appropriately in different situations;

The second component deals with emotions. It is the mind's ability to control anxiety, anger, and melancholy and understand the consequences of failure resulting in a lack of emotional skills. A person with high emotional intelligence is able to overcome problems and resolve the underlying causes of emotional insufficiency.

The third component deals with self-motivation. It is the ability to use emotions as a motivation to do things to achieve goals and is important for people to be interested in things, motivation and creativity.

As a consequence of emotional intelligence, there are paths of practicing the Dhamma by Buddhist as they aware of the important of emotional intelligence. They said, walking the path of the real intelligent, is "all" about developing "emotional intelligence" as it creates wisdom and enlightenment which leads to the cognitive intelligence. Therdsak Dechkong (2005), also has divided the components of emotional intelligence based on the Dharma into 3 parts as following:

The first part is empathy, based on the Dhamma from the concept of the four Brahma Viharas, representing compassion, The four Brahma Viharas are considered by Buddhism to be the four highest emotions: Metta (Loving-kindness), Karuna (Compassion), Mudita (Joy with others), Upekkha (Equanimity).

The word Brahma literally means 'highest' or 'superior.' These four Brahma Viharas can be understood from several different perspectives. They are emotional states to be strived for by practicing and developing the divine emotions, therefore, ones will have a peaceful and a patient daily life practice.

The second part is awareness (consciousness), based on Dharma from the four foundations of mindfulness that will help to calm the mind from distraction and understand the meaning of life. The mindfulness meditation techniques are essentially derived from the Buddhist sati (usually translated as 'mindfulness') Sati is that one's knows where their mind is, so that they do not get caught up in worldly worries. When ones have a lot of sati they can get high concentration, and wisdom can arise.

The third part, conflict solving/stress management, based on Dharma from four truths, the first identifies the innate physical and psychological pain or the innate misery, pain and suffering intertwined in the essence of life; the second identifies the origin and cause of the pain; the third recognizes the state in which the pain and its cause cease and are thus absent; and the fourth formulates a course of practice towards this state of pause. The four noble truths categorize the emotional conflict as the conflict within oneself and the conflict between people. The conflict and stress need to be solved by using emotional intelligence in order to live a happy life.

For Limsuwan (2004) said that emotional skills have 2 components.

The first component is the ability to know one's emotions, meaning the ability to know what emotions one's have and to be able to monitor own feelings by always observing yourself. Knowing how you're feeling can help the person control their emotions better. In addition to being able to control emotions better, it also allows you to get out of that mood faster, because we know how to find a way to properly manage that emotion properly.

The second component is the ability to manage one's own emotions. When a certain emotion arises, you need to know how to properly deal with the emotions that arise, such as anger, emotional dissatisfaction, depressing, the accumulation of these emotions may end up at an unbearable point that one could explode violently by hurting others or hurting oneself, such as suicide for example.

For emotional management or how to deal with emotions instability is to speak and be heard. People who listen can help comfort more or less to other people, he may show compassion to understand the other person by contemplating how or what reason did he/she has or what problems he/shat has, etc. If we are able to understand them, we may develop sympathy for them or forgive them, which will reduce our anger. Other ways to manage emotional instability is to find the way to relax you, such as going to sports, singing, listening to music, or playing music to relieve stress. The ability to empower yourself is to be someone who can inspire you or motivation to do things in life.

The quality of life (Quality of Life) that UNECO (1981) has given the meaning is the feeling of being satisfied. Satisfaction with the various elements of life is important to the person. Factors associated with quality of life

including food, health, nutrition, education, income, and environment.

Quality of life is a complex concept that is both satisfying resulting from being able to meet psychological and social needs both at the micro and macro level. There are two types of components, the first component deals with physical composition by considering both quantity and quality in food, water, housing, clothing, etc. The second component deals with social and cultural elements both in quantity and quality which has factors in education, income, having good neighbours, having a job, etc.

2.3. Related Research:

By Yvonne & Daniel (2020) Flight Crew Mental Health Study: Depression, Anxiety and stress before and during the COVID-19 outbreak, the objectives were to study the impact on mental health of cabin crew during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research methodology is an online survey (survey research) from a sample of 1,224 flight attendants around the world. In April 2020, research found that flight attendants depressed, anxious, and stressed was significantly related to working conditions and fear of unemployment and was significantly positively correlated with the crew who were quarantined. There were significantly higher symptoms of depression and stress while compare with the flight attendants who were not quarantined. The researcher found that symptoms of depression anxiety and stress increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. This can be concluded that the mental health of flight attendants is significantly related to the restrictions on working on planes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

J. Promduang (2013) study on the relationship between the emotional intelligence of flight attendants and customer service towards an efficiency in aircraft operations with the purpose of study on relationship between emotional intelligence towards passenger service and operational efficiency. The research conducted by using quantitative research method. The sample was a flight attendant. A total of 357 Middle East airlines were used by descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient for data analysis.

The emotional intelligence primary variable, consisting of sub-variables including positive thinking, the ability to control one's own emotions adaptation to the situation and good social interaction. The dependent variable contains good service and performance. The researcher found that the emotional intelligence of the flight attendants towards passenger service is moderately high and also found that affects performance in aircraft safety.

In addition, it was also found that higher emotional intelligence among flight attendants leads to a better service performance in terms of enthusiasm and teamwork performance.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

This research is explanatory research to find and explain empirical data. The researcher uses the qualitative research and supplemented quantitative research using simple statistics regarding to the objectives of this study. The researcher using in-depth interviews as the main method and conduct a questionnaire to flight attendants according to the research objective and analyzed with descriptive statistics percentage and mean to obtain the credibility result.

3.2. Data Collections

The researcher starts collecting the data by searching the information from various sources to define a conceptual framework as a qualitative study from secondary sources from books, documents, academic journals

Related research internet media and define it as an initial conceptual framework.

As for the primary data collection, data were collected from in-depth interviews to obtain in-depth information. Both formal in-depth interviews and informal in-depth interviews were conducted from the participants, depending on the situation, suitability or convenience of the interviewees. In this regard, the research used method of asking question and having the interviewees responds without any judgement or additional opinion from researcher but the researcher will be controlled to the subject related to the objectives of this research. When the answer is not clear or not enough information, the research will elaborate immediately or call for further interviews later. If some of interviewees are not comfortable doing face-to-face interviews, due to the period of the COVID-19 outbreak. The

researcher will use the telephone interview method. In this regard, interviews with the interviewees were conducted until the answers were obtained according to the research objectives.

3.3. Research Populations and unit of analysis

The target population of this research is flight attendants of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited. There was a sample group of 2,733 people who was effects from corporate downsizing project and have to participated in the organization downsizing project according to the rehabilitation plan. Non-Probability sampling (purposive sampling) is the company's flight attendants.

The interview questions designed for a group of employees at four levels: first level, flight attendants at economy class, level two, flight attendants at business class, level three, flight attendants at first class first, level four, air purser level five, in-flight manager. The researcher uses snowball sampling method to collect the data in quantitative research method. A random sampling of 2,733 flight attendants was calculated in the Yamané (1973) principled with the following formula:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

where n = number of sample sizes

N = the total number of the population used in the research.

e = acceptable error (defined as = 5%)

For the sample number of flight attendants

$$\begin{aligned} N &= 2,733 \\ n &= 2,733 \\ 1 + 2,733(0.05)^2 \\ &= 349 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the size of the sample of the flight attendants was 349 samples. As the calculation formula is a sample group based on a quantitative research model but the main approach of this research is qualitative research, so this questionnaire was meant to test the analysis of the data obtained from the interview only. Therefore, only half of the samples will be 174 samples.

However, this questionnaire is limited because they are employees who have resigned from Thai Airways International Public Company Limited, so the researcher set the minimum to only 100 samples.

The researcher has studied and reviewed the literature as well as related research results to create a conceptual framework and creating conceptual questions with open-ended questionnaire to obtain information from interviewed respondents. For that data analysis, the researcher divided the data analysis into 2 parts as follows:

1. The data were analyzed by descriptive method by synthesizing the data from the subsections (inductive approach) from the interview with causality method and analyze the relationship between groups from the in-depth interviews then categorized the information according to research objectives.

2. The data were analyzed by using statistical values, percentage, mean and standard deviation to test with the data analysis result obtained from qualitative research

4. Research Framework

From a review of the relevant literature, a study on air transport employee; emotional intelligence after corporate downsizing during covid-19 era: a case study of Thai Airways' flight attendants, the researcher has applied the concept of Salovey & Mayer (1990), Goleman (1998), Dechkong (1999) and Limsuwan (2004), the UNECO's concept of Quality of Life (1981) and Thai Airways International Public Company Limited's downsizing strategy from the rehabilitation plan as well as related research to create a conceptual framework for this research as shown in figure 1.

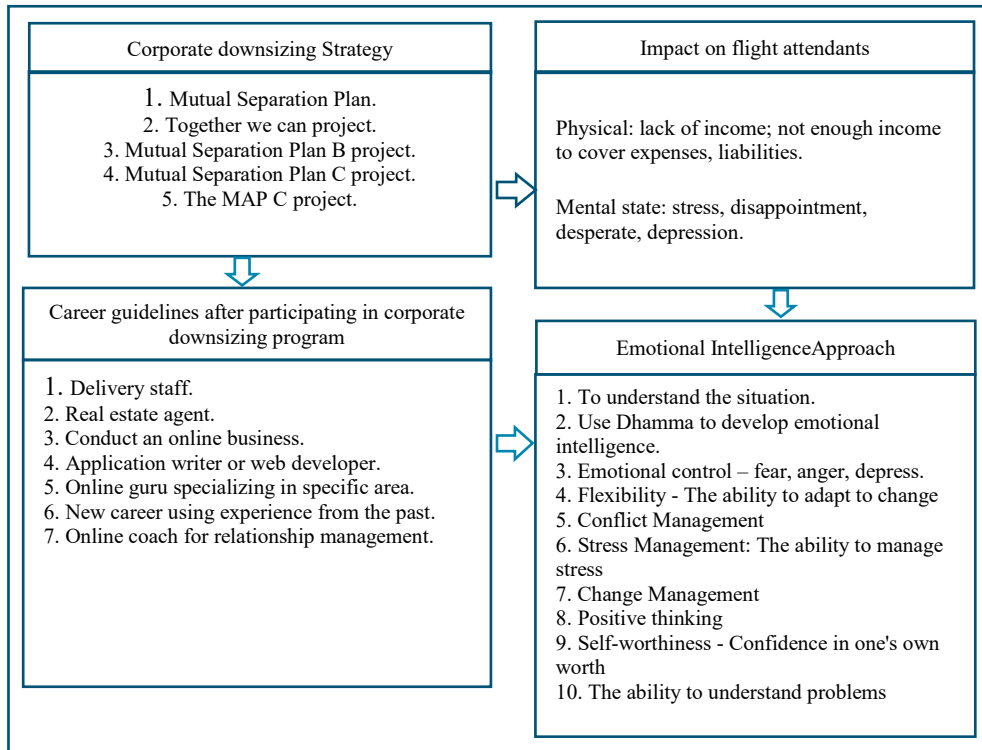


Fig. 1. Research Conception Framework

5. Research Result

The results of the study found that the emotional intelligence approach for flight attendants consist of 6 aspects as follows:

The first aspect is understanding, accepting and adapting to changes that occur due to circumstances beyond the control of both the COVID-19 outbreak and the corporate downsizing following the rehabilitation of Thai Airways International Public Company Limited.

The second aspect is positive thinking, which gives oneself the opportunity to succeed in learning new experiences from the crisis and to step away from the traditional job (comfort zone) to new challenges.

The third aspect is learning to deal with stress. By doing various activities that interest them to relieve stress.

The fourth aspect is empowering self-worthiness and to build strength in oneself, to be able to turn challenges into opportunities to continue living.

The fifth aspect is the use of dharma principles to stabilize one's mood to find a solution for one's life.

The sixth aspect is to self-management in accordance to the uncontrollable situation by adapting behaviour and developing oneself to survive well through this crisis.

6. Result Discussion

From the central bankruptcy court's order asking Thai Airways International Public Company Limited to rehabilitate its business by restructuring the organization to be smaller (downsizing) with various measures, one of the strategies is to reduce the number of employees. The company have to think in what methods and strategies are there to be fair to all employees.

The Company has set guidelines for many projects such as Mutual Separation Plan, Together We Can Project, a long-term leave without pays project (LW20). There are many strategies for employees regarding the downsizing project from time to time before the Covid-19 outbreak. It is also consistent with the ideas of Vernon-Wortzel

(1994) that organizations have the duty and responsibility to treat their employees with regard to employee interests and company ethics through employee preparation and support for unemployment issues.

In addition, when the company considered selecting their flight attendants on their downsizing project, the criteria of working period (seniority), skills, knowledge and expertise, as well as their performance are the main factors that were taken into account for the fairness issue.

This is also in consistent with Sherman et al. (1996) and Pakbongkot C. (2000). And even if there is a way to make justice for all employees, but the flight attendants were affected unexpectedly, because they have to stop flying and the company has to downsizing, they were forced to choose either project to participate eventually.

The problem is, new comer flight attendants are in the first stage of building their career they might not having much savings, when there is a lack of income, they have not enough money to cover the debt burden for their housing installation, even employees who have worked for a long time, some of them have sent their children to international schools or even abroad, therefore when there is a lack of income, it is resulting in financial halt. Their children must drop out from an international school to attend a government school or return to a local university, causing psychological problems for children and families. In regard with corporate downsizing, employees have insufficient funds to cover expenses every month, both regular expenses and other expenses, including the debt which affects the quality of life or mental health.

Considering the approach on how to apply the emotional intelligence of flight attendants:

The first approach is understanding and acceptance of the situation that has occurred all over the world. It is situation that is out of their control, both the epidemic of COVID-19 and corporate rehabilitation plan. If only sitting sad and drowning in the problem the more suffering the more stressful they have, which could lead to further depression. Therefore, they have to understand, accept and adjust themselves. This is in consistent with Goleman (1995) concept of intelligence in managing one's emotions through awareness and self-assessment according to reality (Accurate Self-Assessment) and then accept the change, adapt to change (Adaptability) and flexible (Flexibility) in being ready to accept new things (Innovation) that will happen.

The second approach is positive thinking, which helps people to be optimistic. It is an opportunity for oneself to learn from things, to become a successful experience person, one should be self-motivated and self-stimulating in solving problems and difficulties properly. According to the concept of the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of public health (2019), said positive thinking is the mind's ability to control anxiety, melancholy which led to problems solving skills.

The third approach is stress management. Stress causes anxiety, insomnia, discouragement, and hopelessness. There are many activities to relieve stress, such as watching movies, going to temples, reading books, learning how to use technology from applications on various platforms, these activities might create consciousness to release from anxiety and return to focus on the activities in front of you. According to the concept of Bar-On (1997) in using emotional intelligence to manage stress will make one's having good control over their emotions as well as express emotion properly, they can have a good mental health and be able to overcome various obstacles in life.

On the other hand, the fourth approach is self-worth. When one's aware of abilities that they have, it might create self-confidence which will help to rejuvenate their mind to overcome adversity and try to get through it. See life's challenges as opportunities to grow into a stronger person and move on. This is consistent with the notion of Salover & Mayer (1997) that in applying emotional intelligence to one's self is the ability of a person to be aware of the thoughts, feelings, and conditions that arise within. It is the ability to control one's emotions which affects their own thoughts and actions reasonably.

The next approach of emotional intelligence is the use of Dharma principles. This is how to stabilize the emotion, by praying and meditating to calm the mind. Consciously aware of what happened wisely according to the teachings of the Lord Buddha, seeing the truth of life, having consciousness and wisdom, and be able to overcome various problems. According to the concept of Thersak Dechkong (1999), use Dharma to adjust to one's own emotional state, enable the peace of mind from distraction and to understand the meaning of life.

As for the last approach, is self-management. This is how flight attendants brought emotional intelligence to adjust them to survive the crisis in accordance with the change of corporate downsizing by changing their behaviour to new activities, such as learn to cook, bake, or learn new things online to step into a new career successfully.

However, the emotional intelligence, is the ability to perceive, to manage and express emotions properly, is related to the concept of Pakbongkot (2001). Additionally, the concept of Limsuwan (2004) stated that, emotional intelligence knows how your own emotions are. Once you know that, you can manage or control your emotions.

This includes giving yourself a chance by creating self-worth and will power to be able to solve problems

through various obstacles in life's crises. If anyone can do this, they are classified as having a high emotional intelligence.

7. Recommendation

The researcher has two recommendations. The first one is “savings”. The COVID-19 epidemic has reminded us of the importance of having a budget. The pandemic impacted people very differently, especially in the digital age, the key lesson is circumstances can change very rapidly, the world change dynamically, unpredictable and has high degree of uncertainty in the economy, society and the emergence of unexpected of new diseases, millions of people lost their jobs, small businesses were forced to shutter. Therefore, employees who work, whether in the private sector, state enterprise, and the government sector must have savings in various forms. When you know where your money is going, and is kept, this can make people easier to isolate needs and wants and shift more toward necessities.

Moreover, another recommendation is having “a second job” or having an alternate career. The reason for having a second job or alternate career due to the uncertainty of routine work. Especially from case studies during the COVID-19 epidemic that has caused many employees to be laid-off in many organizations. Including some employees may have economic reasons involved, such as the main income from their full-time job is not enough to support themselves and their families. Having one career is no longer enough to deal with the high uncertainty in the future.

Therefore, looking for another career to do in parallel to cover the expenses might be the good choice. For the new generation, they may want to find a second job to satisfy their feelings and inspiration and being able to do what they love. In some cases, this may help to build a network of acquaintances and create connections with other people in other business sectors. We can consider the goals of the second job as both short-term and long-term. In short term goal, this job can be doing from time to time, or even being temporarily employed in some jobs with no long-term obligation.

But if we look as the long-term goal, this job may have to involve some of investment to own business in the future. When we keep doing the second job for a long time, this may be an alternative job as a full-time job in the future if you decide to quit or retire from the current full-time job. Especially, focusing in online job is very attractive job as it is less of investment and serves all the job criteria during COVID-19 epidemic.

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