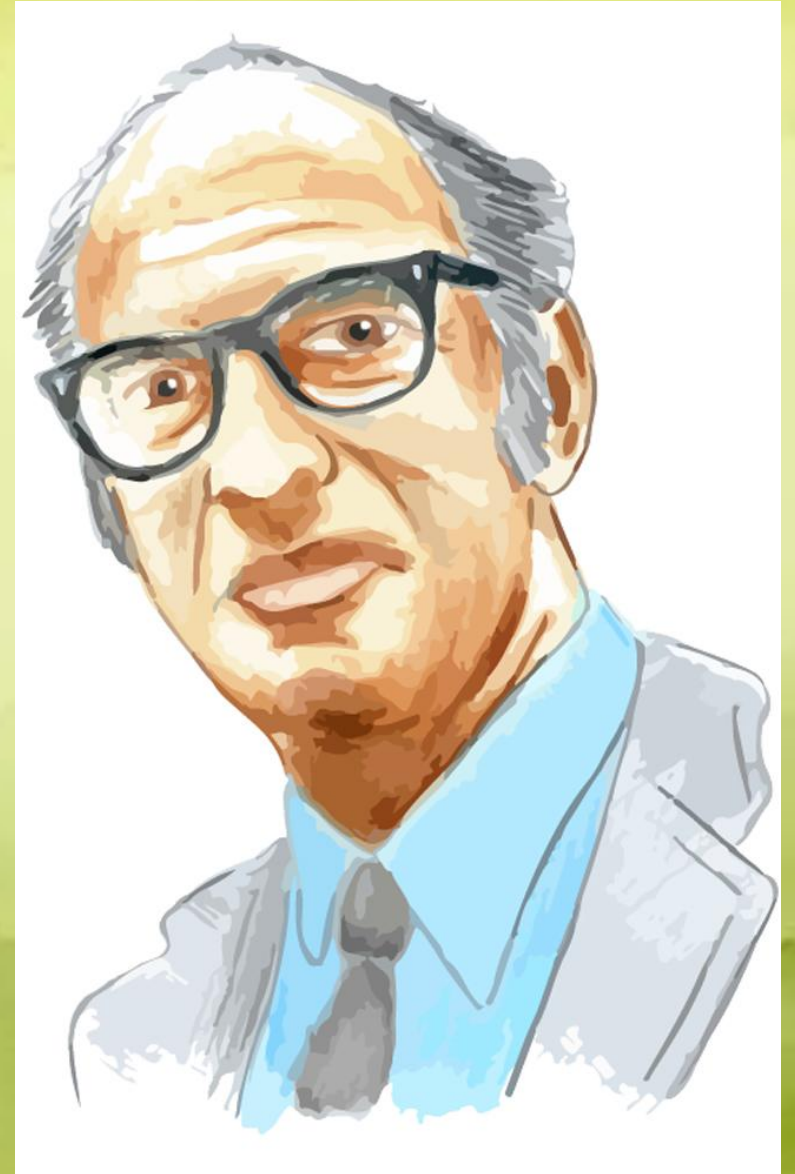


Emotional Intelligence in General Insurance Sales Leadership

From Thomas Kuhn's
Perspective

Pricilla Moses - 1818519



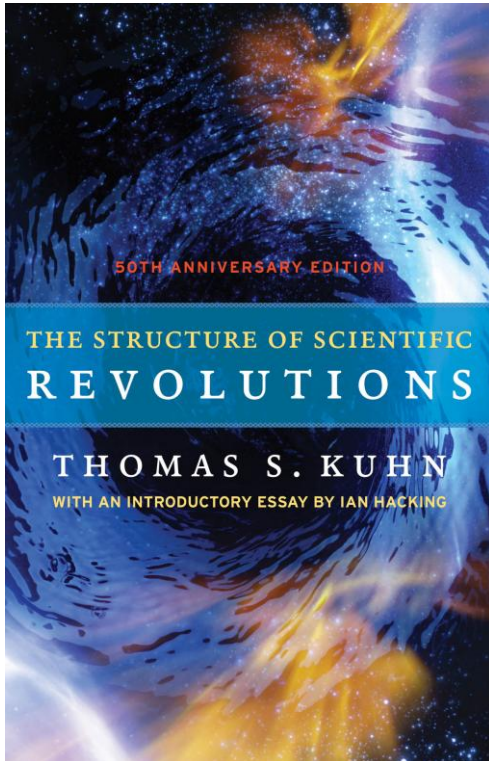
Research Topic

Exploring the Lived Experience of Emotional Intelligence on Recurrent Sales-Target Pressure that Shapes the Identity of Sales Leaders in the Sri Lankan General Insurance Sector



What is a Paradigm?

Through Kuhn's Lens



A paradigm
is a shared
framework

(Kuhn, 1962, pp. 10-11)

- Paradigms as the **accepted ideas, methods, standards, and assumptions** that guide scientific work within a discipline.
- This **shared framework** defines what scientists consider legitimate questions and valid answers.
- A paradigm represents the **shared assumptions** and world-view that guide how researchers understand the reality, knowledge and investigate research problem. (Kuhn, 1962, pp. 10-11)

What questions that a paradigm answers?

Fundamental philosophical
assumptions :

- **Ontology** (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 192)
- **Epistemology** (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 192)
- **Axiology** (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 195–196)
- **Methodology** (Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p. 192)



In a research it functions like;

“What choreography is to a dance ?”

Resembling a paradigm in a professional dance metaphor...

Artistic view



Techniques



Choreography



Performance Value



Professionalism

Worldview



Epistemology



Methodology



Axiology



Coherence

(Guba & Lincoln, 2005, pp. 191-215)



Emotional Intelligence

Sales Leadership

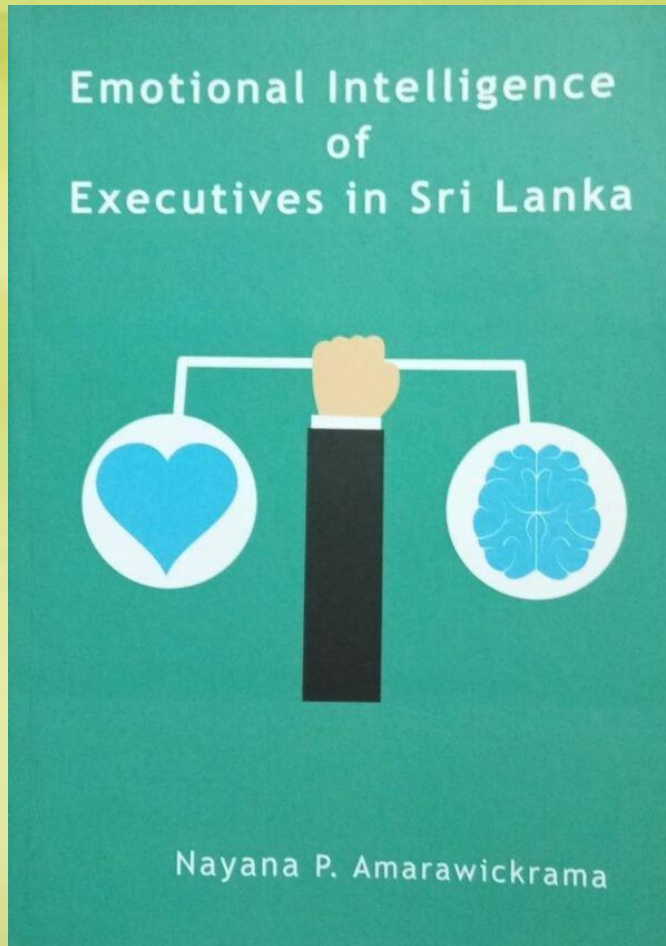


Recurrent Sales Target
Pressure

Philosophical Assumptions
of my Research Topic



Overall landscape of EI in Sri Lanka



This book elaborates levels of EI among Sri Lankan executives, EI and leadership effectiveness, Sri Lankan cultural factors effect on EI, sectoral comparison of EI. (Amarawickrama, 2016)

- *Integrating EI into leadership training and employee development as a strategic lever for performance.* (Jayasekara, 2025).
- *Emotional Intelligence & Job Performance in Sri Lanka* (Herath & Fernando, 2019).
- *EI & Leadership Effectiveness in Sri Lankan Organisations* (Wijesinghe, 2017)
- *EI & Teacher Performance in Education Sector* (Ranasinghe & Amarasinghe, 2019)
- *EI & Employee Commitment in Corporate Sector* (Gunawardena & Samarakoon, 2018)
- *EI & Job Satisfaction in Banking Sector* (Perera & Pushpakumari, 2016)
- *****Sri Lankan EI research is **overwhelmingly quantitative**.*****
- *Qualitative Review of EI & Leadership Identity* (Rathnayake, 2023)

Within the Sri Lankan general insurance sector, the EI stance of sales leadership remains **unexplored**, particularly through qualitative approaches.

Paradigmatic Landscape

This philosophical position aligns with the purpose of my study, to explore how **EI** shapes the identity of **sales leaders** in the Sri Lankan GI sector by understanding the **lived experiences of recurrent sales target pressure** and the meaning they **interpret** with those experience.

*"...multiple, intangible mental constructions...
socially and experientially based..."*
(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109)

*"...the culturally derived and historically situated
interpretations of the social world..."*
(Crotty, 1998, p. 67)



INTERPRETIVISM

My Worldview

How I understand the Reality of Recurrent Sales Target Pressure?

19 years of my professional experience in the Sri Lankan General Insurance sector shapes my understanding of my worldview.



- target pressure as an emotional cycle.
- target pressure is shaping identity, feeling competent, confident and valued.
- target pressure as emotional labour by managing emotions.
- target pressure as culturally mediated.
- target pressure as a meaning-making structure.

Ontological Stance

What is the reality of sales target pressure in Sri Lankan General Insurance Sales Leadership?

“Ontology defined as the nature of reality”

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108)



- It is a monthly emotional cycle, not a single event.
- It is intensified by the highly competitive market structure of the Sri Lankan GI market.
- It creates emotional labour for sales leaders.
- It shapes leadership identity.
- It is culturally mediated.
- It is academically under-researched.

Reality is **SUBJECTIVE**, and **MULTIPLE**, through **LIVED - EXPERIENCE**.

Epistemological Stance

How do we know about what we know?

“the nature of the relationship between the knower and the known.”

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108)

“the knower and the known are inseparable, and findings are created through interaction.”

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110)



Digging into the **lived experience** of sales leaders to know, how did they feel about **recurrent sales target pressure** by listening to their own **narratives, reflections.**

Axiological Stance

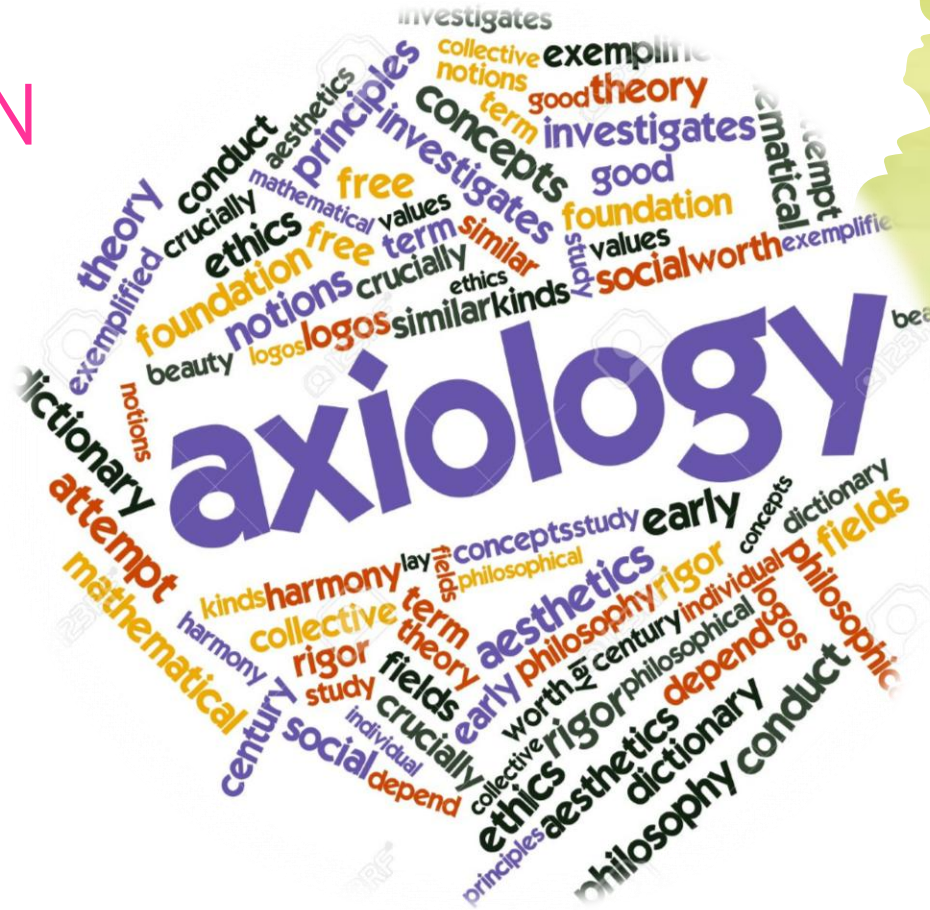
VALUE-LADEN REFLEXIVITY

"Inquiry is a value-laden activity."

(Heron & Reason,
1997, p. 284)

“values are embedded in the inquiry process and cannot be eliminated; they shape both the researcher’s stance and the outcomes of the research.”

(Guba & Lincoln, 2005, p.196)



- 19 years of my professional experience in the Sri Lankan General Insurance sector shapes my understanding of the research context.
- Providing sales leaders a safe platform to speak openly.
- Reflexivity because my own experience influences interpretation.

Methodological Stance

6 - STEPS OF IPA PROCESS

1. Read and re-read transcripts
2. Note and interesting features
(emotions, metaphor, contradictions)
3. Identifying emergent themes
4. Searching for connections across emergent themes
5. Moving to the next case
6. Looking for patterns across cases

(Smith, et al., 2009, pp. 82-103)

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is “concerned with the detailed examination of human lived experience and how individuals make sense of that experience.” (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2022, p.3)

- “IPA is phenomenological in its focus on *lived experience*”

(Smith, et al., 2009, p. 3)

- “hermeneutic in its *interpretative* commitment and double hermeneutic” (Smith, et al., 2009, p. 21)

- “*idiographic* in its detailed, case-by-case analytic approach”

(Smith, et al., 2009, pp. 29-30)

Why IPA?

“IPA is a qualitative, phenomenological, hermeneutic, and idiographic approach concerned with how people make sense of major life experiences.”

(Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 1)



DOUBLE
HERMENEUTICS

“The concepts and theories of social science are involved in a double hermeneutic.”

(Giddens, 1987, pp. 20-21)

The participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world, and the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their world.

Why Double Hermeneutics for my study?

It is about how leaders
make sense of what happened.



Sales leaders
interpret their
own world and
experience.



I am interpreting
their
interpretation.



My insider
positionality make
it more important
and worthier.



My topic involve
emotional
meaning-making.



TRUSTWORTHINESS

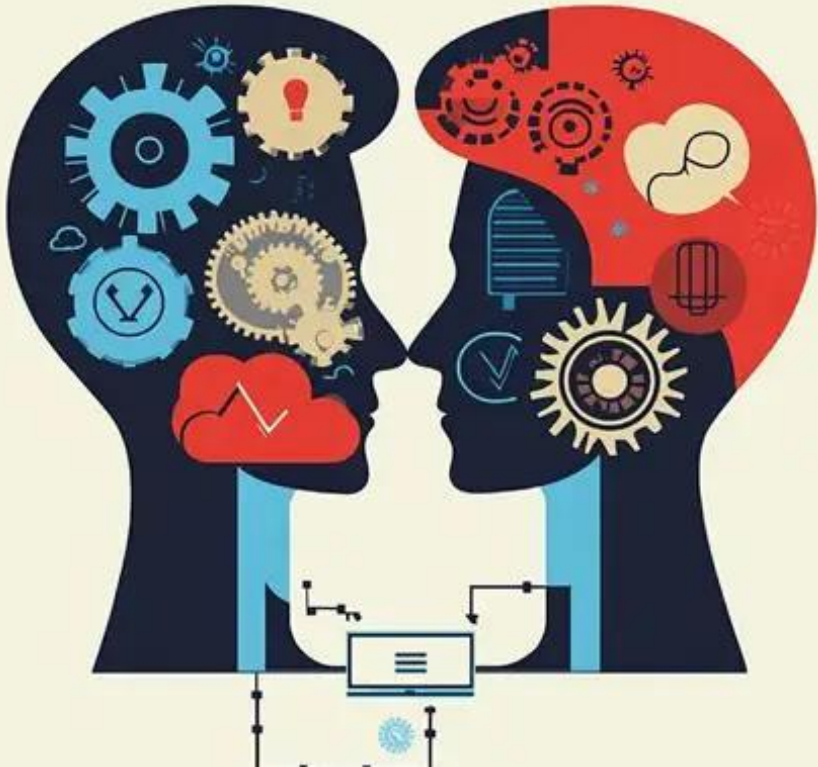
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Paradigm Shift

Most leadership and EI research in the Sri Lankan insurance industry is **positivist**: My study **shifts the paradigm** by moving away from measurement and towards **meaning-making**.

My study adopts an **interpretivist / phenomenological paradigm**, this is a **major shift** because I am not testing a model but exploring **human experience**.



From measuring
performance and
co-relations of EI
between behaviour
& performance |

To understanding
lived-experience of
EI in recurrent
sales target
pressure

El as a set of 4 cognitive abilities *(Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 5)*

Theoretical Foundation for EI

Mayer and Salovey's Mental-ability Model

1. Perceiving Emotions

RQ1 – making sense of their own emotions

RQ2 – noticing emotional signs in team members

2. Using Emotions to Facilitate Thinking

RQ3 – interplay between managing own emotions and responding to team emotions

RQ4 – shaping their understanding of themselves

3. Understanding Emotions

RQ1 – making sense of their own emotions

RQ4 – how experience shapes self-understanding

4. Managing Emotions

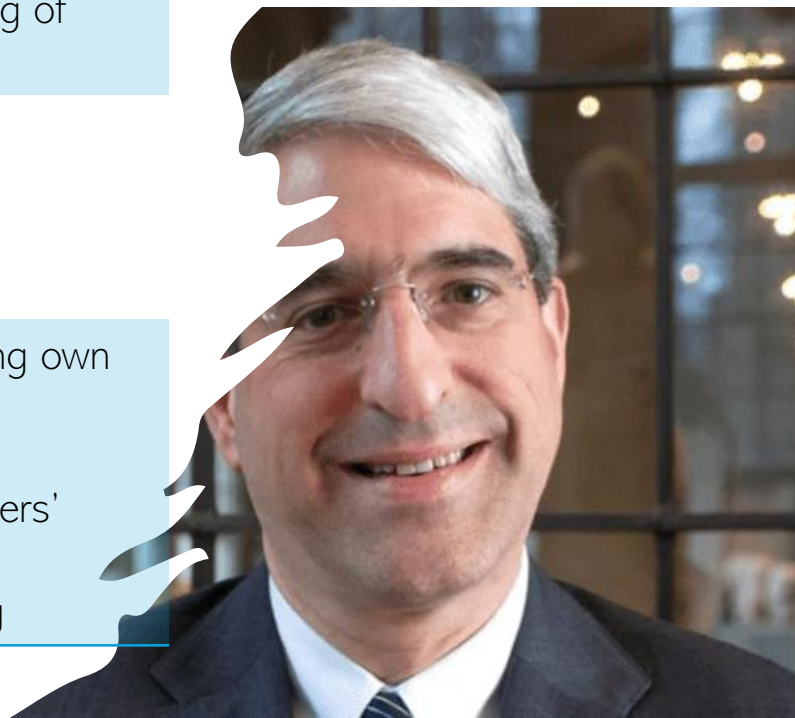
RQ3 – interplay between managing own emotions and responding to team emotions

RQ2 – responding to team members' perceived emotions

RQ4 – shaping self-understanding

"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 action." (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 5)

*It is a **mental ability model** how people think with emotions.*



Positionality, Power and Research Relationships

"An emic unit is a structural unit in the behaviour of the people themselves." (Pike, 1967, p. 37)

Researcher Positionality: Insider and Outsider



- Insider Positionality (Rose, 1997, pp. 305-320)

My 19 years of senior sales leadership

- Emic Perspective (Pike, 1967, p. 37)

I have lived in the same recurrent target pressure and cultural expectations

- Power Dynamics (Schön, 1983)

Authority-based power dynamics of my leadership.

- Reflexivity (Finlay, 2002)

Prevent my own emotional history and assumptions from shaping or distorting participants' lived experiences.

- Double Hermeneutic (Giddens, 1976, pp.79–81).

Increases the risk of over-identification

- 6. IPA Rigour (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, pp.79-108)

To uphold IPA rigour

Boundaries in IPA

WHAT IPA CANNOT CLAIM?

Generalizability Objectivity
Causality Statistical Significance
Universal Truths **Predictive Power**
Replicability

• LIMITATIONS OF IPA • | THEORETICAL BOUNDS • | EPISTEMIC CAUTION •

*“IPA cannot claim
generalisability, objectivity,
causal explanation, or
neutrality because of its
philosophical foundations”
(Smith, et al., 2009, pp. 29-
30)*

My Journey of DBA – Part 1



Presumptions and understanding
of knowledge of my career
experience

Learning outcome of Research
Philosophies and Principles

Practical learning outcome of
Pilot Study

**Exploring the Lived Experience
of Emotional Intelligence on
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that Shapes the Identity of
Sales Leaders in the Sri Lankan
General Insurance Sector: An
IPA Approach**

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Q&A