

The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Job Burnout Through the Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction of Nurses in Private Hospitals in Gaza Strip

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Abstract

Nurses need to be professional in dealing with patients and maintaining their emotions. Furthermore, they should have a sufficient level of knowledge and experience in emotional intelligence to enhance the healthcare service without any damage on their level of job satisfaction. This study aims to examine the impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout with job satisfaction as a mediator. This study applied a self-administrated questionnaire. 450 questionnaires were distributed to the nurses of private hospitals in Gaza strip. The findings of this study showed that there is a positive impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction. However, there is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout. Moreover, the findings proved that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. This study will provide invaluable input to all healthcare providers in understanding the importance role of emotional intelligence in enhancing the level of job satisfaction and minimizing the turnover rate between the nurses.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction, Job Burnout

Introduction

According to Choi et al. (2015), The emotions of employees during their work and how they express them when they are dealing with clients considered one of the most important topics in the last years. Bartram, et al. (2012) claimed that the importance of emotions in service area cannot be denied especially in health sector when doctors and nurses express their emotions with patients. Healthcare workers, especially nurses are more likely to experience higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression comparing to other work fields (Nabirye et al., 2011).

Emotional intelligence is core and important factor for life success and employee's well-being. Furthermore, emotional intelligence plays an important role in the relationship between managers and their employees in service organizations (Yacco et al., 2012). In the same context, Psilopanagiotti et al. (2012) stated that emotional intelligence is very important for the organizations in service sector.

Recently, researchers concentrated more on studying the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction as it is reported that emotional intelligence has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction among employees (Mousavi et al., 2012).

This main purpose of this study is to explore the mediator role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout in private hospitals in Gaza Strip.

Literature Review

This section is divided into two sections: emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and job burnout as follows:

Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence was first mentioned nearly a century ago in Thorndike (1920) study on social intelligence was the earliest work on emotional intelligence (Bar-On, 2006; Gardner, 1983).

Emotional Intelligence is defined as a set of interconnected skills related to the ability to perceive and express emotion accurately, to assess emotion accurately, to understand emotion, and to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer et al., 2016).

Employees who possess high emotional intelligence are considered one of the main factors of company's success (Brackett et al., 2004). According to Bar-On (2006), emotional intelligence is composed of several intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, skills and facilitators that jointly determine effective human behavior. On the other hand, Wong et al. (2002) stated that emotional intelligence can be divided into four basic aspects: self-assessment, assessment of others' feelings, regulation of emotions, and use of emotions.

Job Satisfaction and Job Burnout

According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is defined as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job exercises. Sowmya et al. (2011) studied job satisfaction of employees in private sector and public sector banks. He suggested that job satisfaction comprises five factors: pay and promotion, organization aspects, supervisor behavior, job and working condition, co-worker's behavior. It was found that these factors affect job satisfaction and if less job satisfaction is not cared for, then it would automatically lead to job dissatisfaction, and therefore it would lead to negligent behavior and turnover of employees.

On the other hand, burnout is defined as the condition, which is experienced individually and resulting from working in atmospheres with intense emotional anticipations for a long term, and is accompanied by symptoms such as desperation, disappointment, physical exhaustion, hopelessness, increase of negative behavior toward work, workplace, colleagues and life (Cokluk, 2000). Burnout is associated with several negative effects on workers' physical and mental health. According to Maslach et al. (2008) study, the exhaustion component of burnout was found to be one of most predictive of stress-related mental health effects. The common physical health conditions include headaches, fatigue, diabetes type 2 and heart problems.

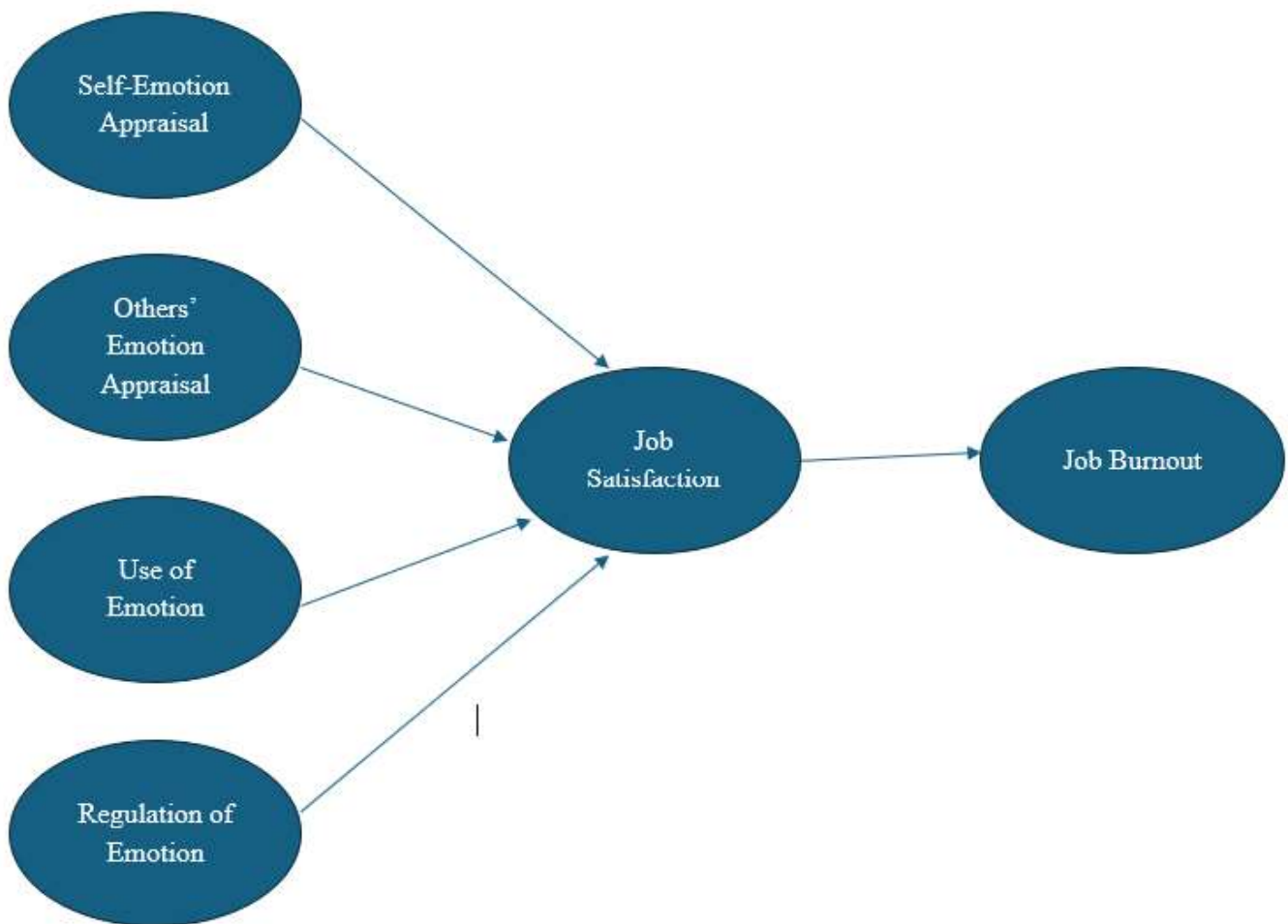
Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

The main goal of the theoretical framework of this study is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through the mediating effect of job satisfaction of nurses in private hospitals in Gaza strip. This study is mostly based on reputable models and theories including the ability model (Salovey et al.,

1990) and affective theory to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction (Sy et al., 2006). Moreover, job demand-control (JDC) theory was used to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout.

Figure 1 demonstrates the study framework, where the independent variables are self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion. Further, job satisfaction as a mediator variable and job burnout as the dependent variable as shown below:

Figure 1: Research Framework



Hypotheses Development

The influence of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction has been the subject of researchers over the years. Multiple studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction (Asvio et al., 2019). According to Tagoe et al. (2016), there is a positive impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction. Hence, this study suggests the hypothesis below:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction.

Various research conducted to examine the importance relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout (Hunsaker et. al., 2015). Moreover, Sangganjanavanich et al. (2013) study examined the correlation between job satisfaction and job burnout, and they found that job satisfaction affects job burnout negatively. Hence, this study suggests the hypothesis below:

Hypothesis 2: There is a negative relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout.

As mentioned before, if the employees have high level of emotional intelligence, they would be more capable to regulate their emotions, which in return would have a positive impact on their well-being and job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2018). Liu (2016) stated that there is a positive impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction. On the other hand, job satisfaction affects job burnout negatively (Peng et al., 2016). No study has examined the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. Therefore, it would be insightful to examine the impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through the mediating effect of job Satisfaction. Thus, this study proposes the hypothesis below:

Hypothesis 3: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout.

Methodology

This section is divided into three distinct sections: research design, measures and sample as follows:

Research Design

Creating a research design consist of three approaches. According to Creswell et al. (2017), there are three different approaches to create a research design. Those approaches include quantitative method, qualitative method and mixed method. This study used a quantitative method to get the appropriate data and answer the research questions. Most of management studies use PLS-SEM for Data analysis. (Salem et al., 2020). Therefore, this study depends on PLS-SEM to analyze the data. This study takes in consideration the following criteria in data collection process:

1. All the individuals are above 21 years old from both genders.
2. The individuals belong to various age categories.
3. The individuals have different levels of education.
4. The individuals are from different socio-economic status.
5. All the individuals work in private hospitals.

This study used a self-administrated survey as the method for data collection. There are two main advantages for using self-administrated questionnaire to collect the data from respondents. 1) It enables the researcher to gather the required data from many respondents within a specific time. 2) It reduces the errors that might occur due to unsuitable research design (Weinberger et al., 1996).

Measures

The questionnaire of this study consists of four sections. The first section measures the emotional intelligence of the nurses, which includes 16 items adapted from Wong et al., (2002) scale. The second section measures the level of job satisfaction of the nurses, which includes 12 items adapted from Weiss et al., (1967) scale. Regarding the third section, it measures the level of job burnout of the nurses. It includes 9 items adapted from Maslach et al., (2008). The last part of the questionnaire includes questions related to the demography of respondents including age, gender and monthly income. Four-point Likert scale was used to measure the items ranging from “1” as “highly disagree” to “4” as “highly agree”.

Sample

This study applied snowball sampling technique because it is impossible to obtain a list of all nurses' contacts at same time due to data accessibility and time consuming. Furthermore, it is affordable, easy and the subjects are readily available (Etikan et al., 2016). According to Krejcie et al. (1970) table, 384 respondents is enough when the population is large. A number of 450 surveys have been distributed to the nurses in private hospitals in Gaza Strip to minimize the errors in the population sample to less than 5% at the 95% confidence degree.

Findings

This section is divided into four distinct sections: respondent profiles, assessment of internal consistency reliability, assessment of convergent validity and hypotheses testing as follows:

Respondent Profiles

Out of 450 questionnaires, only 372 were considered as usable questionnaires. The majority of participants were males (52%), nurses who are between the age 23 to 30 years old represents (61%), while those who have bachelor's degree represent (66%) and those with a monthly salary is below than \$ 600 (71.2%).

Assessment of Internal Consistency Reliability

This study applied Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability test (CR) to examine the internal consistency. According to Hair et al. (2016), Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability value for each construct is considered acceptable only if it is equal to or more than 0.7. The outcomes showed that Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values are ranged from 0.770 to 0.942, which is considered more than the acceptable level of internal consistency reliability.

Assessment of Convergent Validity

This study applied the average variance extracted (AVE) method to examine the convergent validity. Hair et al. (2016) stated that the sufficient value of AVE should be equal to or more than 0.5 for every construct. The values of AVE in this study are varied from 0.585 to 0.776, which is considered more than the minimum acceptable value. Table 1 demonstrates the values of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and AVE for each construct as follows:

Table 1: Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Other's emotion appraisal	0.770	0.852	0.593
Regulation of emotion	0.811	0.873	0.637
Self-emotion appraisal	0.801	0.869	0.627
Use of emotion	0.855	0.901	0.698
Job satisfaction	0.933	0.942	0.585
Job Burnout	0.846	0.907	0.776

Hypotheses Testing

This study applied Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between independent variable and dependent variable.

Outcomes of Testing Hypotheses H1 and H2

Table 2 demonstrates that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is positive and significant at level 1% and 1-tailed level (T-statistics = 3.614). The path coefficient value is significant (Beta = 0.167). Hence, H1 is accepted. On the other hand, the relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout is important and positive at level 1% as well as level of 1-tailed (T- statistics = 4.425). The path coefficient value is significant (Beta = -0.177). Hence, H2 is accepted.

Table 2: The Outcomes of Testing Hypotheses H1 and H2

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Observed T - Statistics	Significance Level
Emotional Intelligence -> Job Satisfaction	0.167	3.614	0.01
Job Satisfaction -> Job Burnout	-0.177	4.425	0.01

Outcomes of Testing Hypothesis H3

This study used Nitzl et al. (2016) method to check the mediation role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. The first step in this technique is checking the importance of the indirect effect (the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable with the mediator variable) with the mediator variable). Nitzl et al. (2016) stated that if the indirect effect is not significant, there be no mediation between the variables. On the other hand, if the indirect effect is significant and the direct relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable is not significant, the relationship between the variables would be considered as fully mediated by the mediator. However, if the indirect effect is significant and the direct relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable is significant, the relationship between the variables would be considered as partially mediated by the mediator (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 3 shows that path coefficient of the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and job satisfaction (JS) is significant with Beta value of 0.167. The path coefficient of the relationship between JS and job burnout (JB) is significant with Beta value of -0.177. The path coefficient of the direct relationship between EI and JB is also significant with Beta value of -0.181. Hence, the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout is partially mediated by job satisfaction and H3 is accepted.

Table 3: The Outcomes of Testing Hypothesis H3

Path	Path Coefficient (β)	Indirect Effect (β)	Indirect Effect Sig.	Direct Effect Sig.	Sig. of Mediation	t-value of Mediation	Status
EI -> JS	0.167						Partial Mediation
JS -> JB	-0.177	-0.035	0.1				
EI -> JB	-0.181			0.1	0.1	2.514	
EI -> JS -> JB	-0.216						

Discussion

This study used Wong and Law (2002) sixteen-item scale to measure emotional intelligence. The findings showed that emotional intelligence has a positive impact on job satisfaction, which match the findings of

previous studies that examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction (Liu 2016; Tagoe et al. (2016). Moreover, the findings illustrated that job satisfaction has a negative effect on job burnout, which align with the previous researches that reviewed the relationship between job satisfaction and job burnout (Hunsaker et. al., 2015; Leung et. al., 2015; Jasperse et. al., 2014). Furthermore, the outcomes from the mediation analysis proved that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout is mediated by job satisfaction.

Contribution and Implications

The current study provides a clearer picture of emotional intelligence concept from nurses point of view and contributes to the emotional intelligence literature by being the first study that examined the impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and job burnout in Gaza Strip. Furthermore, it's considered the first study that examined the mediator role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout.

The findings proved that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Moreover, the findings showed that job satisfaction affects job burnout negatively. In addition, the results demonstrated that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout.

Limitation and Suggestions for Future Research

Although this research expands our understanding of the effect of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and job burnout, worthwhile prospects of future research remain. This section presents the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research as follows:

First, the current study was restricted to health sector. Further, the population of the study is restricted to nurses who work in private hospitals in Gaza Strip. Therefore, future studies are recommended to apply this study to other sectors and industries. Second, this study examined the impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and job burnout only. Future studies are recommended to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on other job outcomes such as employee performance and intention to quit. Third, this study depends on quantitative method for data collection process. Therefore, future studies are advised to apply mixed mode (qualitative and quantitative techniques).

Conclusion

This study backs the literary works of emotional intelligence through reviewing the influence of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction and job burnout. This study provides useful information for service organizations in general, especially health sector. The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through the mediating effect of job satisfaction of nurses in private hospitals in Gaza Strip. The outcomes showed that emotional intelligence has a positive impact on job satisfaction. In addition, the findings validated that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout.

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