



Research Article

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## ***Perceived Emotional Intelligence, Work Life Balance and Job Satisfaction among Healthcare Professionals in Pakistan***

**Madeeha Malik<sup>1\*</sup>, Zeeshan Haider<sup>2</sup>, Azhar Hussain<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Vice President, Pakistan Society of Pharmacy Practice/Professor, Hamdard Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Hamdard University, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan

<sup>2</sup>Hamdard Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Hamdard University, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>President, Pakistan Society of Pharmacy Practice/Professor/Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy, Hamdard University, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan.

\*Email: [madeehamalik15@gmail.com](mailto:madeehamalik15@gmail.com)

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### **ABSTRACT**

Emotional intelligence exerts a noteworthy impact on both turnover intentions and job satisfaction. The objective of this research was to evaluate the perceived emotional intelligence and its relationship with work life balance and job satisfaction among the healthcare professionals in twin cities of Pakistan. A descriptive cross sectional study design was used. Two different pre validated tools, the impact of work life balance factors on job satisfaction questionnaire, and the NHS emotional intelligence questionnaire were distributed to conveniently selected sample of 283 prescribers, 214 nurses, and 215 pharmacists. After the data collection, the data was cleaned, coded and entered in SPSS version 21, and was statistically analyzed. Job satisfaction had a statistically significant linear weak negative correlation ( $p < .001$ ) with self awareness, emotion management, empathy, social skills and motivation. On the other hand, work life balance had a statistically significant "very weak negative correlation" ( $p < .001$ ) with emotion management, empathy and motivation. However, a "moderate positive correlation" ( $p < .001$ ) existed between job satisfaction and work life balance. The results of the present study concluded that a significant relationship existed among the emotional intelligence, work life balance and job satisfaction. The emotionally intelligent healthcare professionals were better in managing their work life balance and were more satisfied with their job. Pharmacists possessed better social skills with higher motivation levels while physicians were better in managing work life balance than all the other healthcare professionals in Pakistan.

**Key words:** Emotional Intelligence, Work Life Balance, Job Satisfaction, Physicians, Pharmacists, Nurses.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the recent few years, the meaning of intelligence not only has been considered as a cognitive strength, but it has also been expanded to other fields such as emotional intelligence and existential intelligence [1]. Emotional intelligence is "something" inside each human being that is somewhat subtle and intangible. Emotional intelligence determines how one should handle his/her behavior, how to cope with social problems, and how to take decisions that lead to positive results [2]. Emotional intelligence exerts a noteworthy impact on both turnover intentions and job satisfaction [3]. Beside this, a relationship also exists between emotional work, emotional well-being and professional practice [4]. Emotional intelligence in healthcare settings is an important element of the competencies of the healthcare professionals and quality of the service provided in the health organization. Besides emotional intelligence, work life balance and job satisfaction also play an important role in enhancing the productivity of health sector and help in reducing errors. In Greece, physicians with higher emotional intelligence had higher levels of job satisfaction [3]. In Australia, the concept of emotional well-being was associated with

nurses' feelings. There was a direct relationship between emotional work, professional practice and emotional well being that was influenced by factors such as institutional and workplace issues, education and professional development communication with healthcare professional boundaries [4]. Emotional intelligence has had a great impact on job satisfaction. A study from Taiwan reported that emotional intelligence was negatively associated with work related stress, and positively related with quality of life, while an inverse relationship was observed between job stress and quality of life [5]. Higher emotional intelligence was significantly related with less burnout and lower stress [6].

Undoubtedly, the success of the organization and workplace depends on the more efficient human resources. Emotional intelligence could lead to the decreased occupational burnout which was reported by a study conducted in Iran [7]. Emotional intelligence had a direct and significant positive relationship with work life balance and job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence was reported as a consistent forecaster of both life satisfaction and psychological distress. Emotional intelligence was strongly related with life satisfaction and psychological distress in Pakistan [8]. Moreover, work stress was also reported to be inversely and significantly related with satisfaction with job and commitment to the organization in Pakistan [9]. Emotional intelligence can play a pivotal role in overcoming the problems associated with healthcare professionals of Pakistan related to work life balance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been defined as happiness derived by employees from meeting their physical and psychological expectations from the organization and analyzing assessments on the job and work-setting [10]. Therefore, the present study was designed to evaluate the perceived emotional intelligence and its relationship with work life balance and job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in twin cities of Pakistan.

## METHODOLOGY

A descriptive cross sectional study design was used to evaluate the perceived emotional intelligence and its relationship with work life balance and job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in Pakistan. The study approval was obtained from ethical committee of Hamdard University. The approval was also taken from the respective authorities of different healthcare facilities from where the data was collected. Besides this, the informed and verbal approval for participation was also taken from the respondents. The respondents were ensured of the confidentiality of the information verbally as well, the confidentiality under taking was signed by the principal researcher. The study site for this research included pharmaceutical institutions, health care facilities, retail pharmacy outlets, sale and marketing offices and hospitals located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Physicians, nurses and pharmacists working in regulatory, academia, industry, hospitals, retail pharmacies, public and private health care facilities located in twin cities were included as the study respondents.

Rao Soft sample size calculator was used to determine the sample size. The calculated sample size was 382 for each group of respondents to achieve 95% confidence interval with 5% margin of error. The total sample came to be 1146. But, due to the unavailability of respondents at community pharmacies and their unwillingness to participate, the total sample achieved for each group of healthcare professionals was: prescribers (n= 283), nurses (n=241) and pharmacists (n=215). The response rate among the healthcare professionals was: prescribers (74.0%), nurses (63.0%) and pharmacists (56.2%). A convenient sampling technique was used to select the respondents available at the time of data collection. Two different pre validated tools, the impact of work life balance factors on job satisfaction questionnaire, and NHS emotional intelligence questionnaire, were used for collecting the data regarding work life balance, job satisfaction and emotional intelligence among healthcare professionals. For pre validated tools, a written permission was obtained from the respective organization. After data collection, the data was cleaned, coded and entered in SPSS version 21, and was statistically analyzed.

## RESULTS

Out of 739 respondents, 40.9% (n= 302) were males while 59.1% (n= 437) were females. Of the total respondents, the physicians were 38.3% (n= 283), 32.6% (n= 241) were nurses, and 29.1% (n= 215) were pharmacists. Out of the total respondents, 45.5% (n= 336) were working in public sectors, while 54.5% (n= 403) were working in private sectors. Regarding the experience of respondents, 23.7% (n= 175) had working

experience of less than one year, 36.0% (n= 266) had working experience of 1-5 years, 23.3% (n= 172) had an experience of 6-10 years while 17.1% (n= 126) had working experience of greater than 10 years (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristics

Indicators		Total n (%)
Age	20-30 Y	378(51.2)
	31-40 Y	155(21.0)
	41-50Y	152(20.6)
	>50 Y	54(7.3)
Gender	Male	302(40.9)
	Female	437(59.1)
Marital Status	Married	424(57.4)
	Unmarried	315(42.6)
Profession	Physicians	283(38.3)
	Nurses	241(32.6)
	Pharmacists	215(29.1)
Sector of Practice	Public	335(45.3)
	Private	404(54.7)
Level of Experience	<1 Year	175(23.7)
	1-5 Years	266(36.0)
	6-10 Years	172(23.3)
	>10 Years	126(17.1)
Current Salary	Rs 10,000-20,000	113(15.3)
	Rs 21,000-30,000	122(16.5)
	Rs 31,000-50,000	175(23.7)
	Rs>50,0000	329(44.5)

Job satisfaction has a statistically significant linear relationship ( $p < .001$ ) with self awareness, emotion management, empathy, social skills and motivation. The relationship between the mentioned variables was “weak negative correlation” which meant that emotional intelligence had an inverse relationship with job satisfaction. On the other hand, work life balance had a statistically significant linear relationship ( $p < .001$ ) with the emotion management, empathy and motivation. The relationship between the aforementioned variables was a “very weak negative correlation” which meant that emotional intelligence had an inverse relationship with work life balance. However, a “moderate positive correlation” existed between job satisfaction and work life balance which meant that as work life balance increased, in turn, job satisfaction also increased (Table 2).

**Table 2.** The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Work life Balance and Job Satisfaction

		Correlations						
		self_awareness	emotional_management	motivation	empathy	social_skills	Jobsatisfaction	worklife_balance
self_awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.546**	.666**	.726**	.656**	-.302**	-.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.133
	N	738	738	738	738	737	738	738
emotional_management	Pearson Correlation	.546**	1	.603**	.539**	.574**	-.317**	-.165**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	738	739	739	739	738	739	739
motivation	Pearson Correlation	.666**	.603**	1	.672**	.679**	-.383**	-.127**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.001
	N	738	739	739	739	738	739	739

empathy	Pearson Correlation	.726**	.539**	.672**	1	.605**	-.390**	-.135**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	738	739	739	739	738	739	739
social_skills	Pearson Correlation	.656**	.574**	.679**	.605**	1	-.311**	-.057
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.121
	N	737	738	738	738	738	738	738
jobsatisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.302**	-.317**	-.383**	-.390**	-.311**	1	.468**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	738	739	739	739	738	739	739
worklife_balance	Pearson Correlation	-.055	-.165**	-.127**	-.135**	-.057	.468**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.133	.000	.001	.000	.121	.000	
	N	738	739	739	739	738	739	739
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								

A significant difference ( $p \geq 0.05$ ) in emotional intelligence and work-life balance was observed among different genders, age groups, profession, salary, experience, sector of practice and marital status. Females were relatively more emotionally intelligent, while males were better in managing work life balance. Married and professionals with better salary status were relatively more emotionally intelligent and managed work life better. Pharmacists had better social skills, while physicians had better work life balance (Table3).

**Table 3.** The Relationship between Emotional intelligence, Work-life balance, and Job satisfaction according to different demographics

Professi	Marital Status		Gender		Demographics			Work-life Balance	Job Satisfaction			
	U.M	M	F	M	Self Awareness	Managing Emotions	Motivating Oneself					
Phy.	n	Mean rank	Test Stats.	P value	n	Mean rank	Test Stats.	P value	n	Mean rank	Test Stats.	P value
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
372.76	393.92	349.79	400.27	324.83	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
1.229	58212.0			52323.5								
0.539		0.006		.001								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
365.37	349.31	383.53	375.25	324.83	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
4.801	60194.5			52323.5								
0.089		0.029		.001								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
339.17	358.83	376.50	385.58	324.83	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
9.615	63174.0			52323.5								
0.009		0.263		.001								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
375.15	373.50	365.68	384.19	349.47	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
0.369	64947.0			59785.0								
0.832		0.617		0.029								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
334.80	362.01	373.28	379.36	355.26	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
12.464	64118.0			61535.5								
0.002		0.473		0.133								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
342.08	391.91	352.09	391.85	338.38	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
7.871	59184.5			56439.0								
0.018		0.012		0.001								
283	313	424	437	302	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
385.11	384.64	357.45	366.48	375.10	302	362.40	63691.0	0.425	302	347.45	59176.5	0.016
2.373	61460.0			64447.0								
0.3		.08		0.586								

Current Salary				Level of Experience				Age of Respondents					
>50k	31k-50k	21k-30k	10k-20k	>10y	6-10y	1-5y	<1y	>50y	41-50y	31-40y	20-30y	Phar.	Nur.
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
388.43	394.05	320.64	329.34	371.54	325.11	368.85	412.65	305.93	337.39	331.84	407.04	378.68	357.5
15.367				14.682				24.847					
<b>0.001</b>				<b>0.002</b>				<b>0.001</b>					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
398.81	360.99	295.55	380.46	402.85	380.00	351.16	365.16	413.62	394.17	362.71	357.04	350.25	393.06
21.479				5.541				5.796					
<b>0.001</b>				0.137				0.122					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
382.98	402.82	326.63	328.22	449.78	340.33	349.81	372.41	348.87	375.82	376.00	368.22	390.75	387.68
14.760				23.393				0.793					
<b>0.002</b>				<b>0.001</b>				0.853					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
387.88	387.61	313.41	351.78	395.09	339.26	363.40	392.19	322.76	358.30	370.78	381.14	370.17	363.80
12.934				7.476				4.145					
<b>0.005</b>				0.058				0.244					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
381.17	407.14	324.38	326.26	421.08	349.90	352.13	377.36	334.40	384.37	349.67	376.68	385.55	356.04
16.568				11.089				3.983					
<b>0.001</b>				0.12				0.270					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
358.01	346.41	445.05	360.41	346.80	316.38	408.18	381.37	299.22	271.67	402.33	406.39	387.88	386.83
18.536				21.409				52.881					
<b>0.001</b>				<b>0.001</b>				<b>0.001</b>					
329	175	122	113	126	172	266	175	54	152	155	378	215	241
348.24	361.03	426.19	386.57	334.40	383.16	396.49	342.43	344.31	326.39	405.19	376.78	363.43	358.12
12.887				11.198				11.745					
<b>0.005</b>				<b>0.011</b>				<b>0.009</b>					

Sector	
Pri.	Pub.
404	335
344.80	398.04
57606.0	
<b>0.001</b>	
404	335
338.07	407.31
54835.5	
<b>0.001</b>	
404	335
340.86	403.95
55961.0	
<b>0.001</b>	
404	335
349.77	393.24
59551.0	
<b>0.005a</b>	
404	335
350.55	391.14
59919.5	
<b>0.01</b>	
404	335
377.90	359.40
64117.5	
0.24	
404	335
388.75	346.34
59743.0	
<b>0.008</b>	

Mann-Whitney<sup>a</sup>;Kruskal-Wallistest<sup>b</sup>Test (p ≥ 0.05).

**DISCUSSION**

The level of emotional intelligence has been viewed essential in the development of an individual’s work life balance. It would be more suitable to view work as a component of overall life satisfaction. Between the resources of an organization such as capital, equipment, human resources and information gained from researches, the managers consider human resources as the most important source of the organization [11]. Managers should look for strategies to develop emotional intelligence at work sites to improve employees’ aptitude to manage work life balance [12]. Emotional intelligence is obligatory for the improvement of interpersonal and professional skills among healthcare professionals. The results of the present study revealed an inverse relationship between work life balance and emotion management, motivation and empathy. Similarly, a study from Taiwan reported that emotional intelligence was negatively associated with work related stress, and was positively related with quality of life, while an inverse relationship was seen between job stress and quality of life [5]. An additional supported evidence for the effects of emotional intelligence on wellbeing and job strain among community nurses was provided by a study conducted in Australia [13]. Emotional intelligence has had a great impact on job satisfaction. The results of the present study revealed an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence. A study conducted in Norway concluded that nurse supervisors with strong emotional intelligence skills and high levels of self-awareness led to a better work environment and innovation in workplace. Emotional intelligence cannot be considered as a broad spectrum solution, but it may propose new ways of thinking, and helps in improving management and administrative skills [14]. The results of the present study showed that as work life balance among healthcare professionals increases, it in turn increases their job satisfaction. Similar findings were reported by another study which highlighted higher job satisfaction linked to the realization of professionals’ needs and requirements for job security, work life balance, working environment, participation in decision making and friendly interpersonal interaction [15]. The results of the present study highlighted that among all healthcare professionals, the pharmacists were better in social skills with higher motivation levels. The physicians were better than all the other healthcare professionals in maintaining work life balance. The married healthcare professionals had relatively better work life balance, emotional management and job satisfaction. The female healthcare professionals were found more emotionally intelligent while the male professionals were better in managing work life balance. Similar results were found in different studies from different countries [16, 17].

**CONCLUSION**

The results of the present study concluded that a significant relationship existed among emotional intelligence, work life balance and job satisfaction. The emotionally intelligent healthcare professionals were better in managing their work life balance, and were more satisfied with their job. The pharmacists possessed better social skills with higher motivation levels, while the physicians were better in managing work life balance than all the other healthcare professionals in Pakistan. Effective interventions must be designed to improve the emotional intelligence among healthcare professionals in order to improve their productivity and job satisfaction.

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