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The Relationship Between Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal Accomplishment, and Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

The main aim of this investigation is to explore the relationships between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction among employees working in the banking sector. A total of 214 respondents were surveyed for the purpose of this investigation and selected randomly from different banks located in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (K.S.A.). Job Burnout Inventory developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) was taken into consideration to assess emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and sense of personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction scale was used to measure the degree of satisfaction level of the employees. The collected data were analyzed by means of descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The most eye-catching findings of the investigation revealed that emotional exhaustion had the greater mean as compared to depersonalization and personal accomplishment. The inverse significant correlation has been observed between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and job satisfaction while positive and significant relationship was observed between personal accomplishment and job satisfaction. Further, the result of the investigation from regression test indicates that the relationship existed between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction among employees working in the banking sector in the Kingdom.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Depersonalization, Emotional Exhaustion, Personal Accomplishment

JEL Classification Code: J28, M1, M10, M12

1. Introduction

Working in the banking sector is very chaotic and hectic and assumes varied and complex roles in the bank especially when dealing with the customers with various responsibilities

(Allam, 2007; AlKahtani & Allam, 2013; Asad, 2020). The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the emerging markets with human resources of the Kingdom playing a pivotal role in the progress of the country to achieve the Vision 2030 (AlKahtani, Khan, & Allam, 2016). Henceforth, socially, economically, and technologically ever-increasing scope in Saudi Arabia offers an ideal situation to carry out research on emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DEP) personal accomplishment (PA) and job satisfaction (JS). To accomplish the organizational goals successfully and professionally, human resources play a key role to enhance the performance by increasing the facilities to maintain the degree of job satisfaction and eliminating the different level of stresses (AlKahtani & Allam, 2013).

In today's dynamic environment, the success of any business sector depends mostly on the individual's knowledge, creativity, aptitude, skills, and talent including best management practices (Bergheim, Nielsen, Mearns, & Eid, 2015). However, if these characteristics are missing or not in place, it will surely lead to stress, worries, anxiety,

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tension, emotional breakdown, depersonalization, reduced sense of personal accomplishment, disturbance in work life, inability to manage time, burnout, disengagement, and dissatisfaction (Allam, 2007; Saleem, 2015; Ali & Allam, 2016; Allam, 2017; Mustafa & Ismail, 2020). Maslach (1976) defines burnout in terms of “loss of concern for the people with whom one is working”. Whereas, the pioneer of the burnout concept, Freudenberger (1974), defines burnout as “a state of physical and emotional depletion resulting from the condition of work”. However, the burnout has three important dimensions, which has great impact on the lives of the people forcing them to engage in negative behavior. Indeed, Maslach and Jackson (1986) conceptualized job burnout as “a multidimensional concept with three components i.e., emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment: EE is the feeling of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one’s work. DEP is the unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one’s service, care, treatment, or instruction and PA is the feeling of competence and successful achievement in one’s work with people”.

The first dimension, emotional exhaustion (EE), is linked to the weakening of the emotional resources and enhancing the feeling of the fatigue of individuals. The individual exposed to EE feel unable to act as constructive and responsible workers toward their peers and performed effectively in before (Allam, 2017) A second dimension of burnout is depersonalization. Bakker and Schaufeli (2000) conceptualized the term depersonalization as “the development of negative, cynical attitudes towards the recipients of one’s services or towards work in general”. Inspired from the explanation it is noticed that the individual begin to show such unusual behaviour when he/she is unable to manage the other problem in an amicable manner. Eventually, depersonalized people keep a distance with them and considered them as an object and finally developed rigid characteristics. The individual who suffers from depersonalization negligence displays apathetic attitude, unwillingness to help, lack of interest, unfriendliness, and drudgery feeling about others. Out of the three dimensions of burnout depersonalization is considered most problematic (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Allam, 2007; Kim, Shin, & Umbreit, 2007; Demirer, Bozoglan, & Sahin, 2013).

A third dimension of burnout is reduced sense of personal accomplishment (PA), which is considered a vital gauge of burnout. The individual who experiences PA develops a negative feeling about himself or herself and considered that professionally he/she is not capable of performing the assigned task as his/her colleagues can. Such negative feeling might force them to detach with their actual work and unable to perform expected work (Allam, 2002). Kitaoka and Masuda (2013) clearly explained that the misfit between expected and actual achievement might lead to develop a reduce sense of personal accomplishment.

The worker’s morale is one of the important and significant attributes for the success of the organization (Allam, 2017). In this context, the positive feeling about the work and its surrounding environment is crucial for the individual to act in any situation properly. Henceforth, satisfied workforce always contributing to improve the organization in any harsh circumstances and putting all efforts to aim for success (AlKahtani & Allam, 2013; Azzam & Harsono, 2021)). In the contemporary world, stress, burnout and job satisfaction of their workforce are considered vital issues at the workplace (Arabaci, 2010; Allam, 2017; Asad, 2020; Kara, 2020). Better and fair HR practices such as empowerment, training, rewards, and safety at workplace are most influential factors that have greater impact on the engagement leading to higher degree of satisfaction and performance (Halkos, 2010; Sattar, Khalil, & Hassan, 2015; Ali & Allam, 2016; Allam, 2017; Asad, 2020), whereas unfair HR practices lead toward dissatisfaction (AlKahtani, Khan, & Allam, 2016; Allam, 2019).

The job satisfaction of an individual varied and depends on the nature and its attributes of work including the expectation of the incumbent. As we know, each profession has its own unique fingerprints and characteristics. However, for Maslach (2003), job satisfaction can be defined as “the state of satisfaction about individuals’ feelings toward the job and about how satisfied they are in their job” whereas Locke (1976) posits “job satisfaction as a positive emotional state coming from an individual’s subjective experience with his or her job”. The above definition clearly indicates that job satisfaction arises from the positive feelings about one’s job.

The researchers reviewed the published literature carefully to come up with variables for this investigation. It is noticed that there is only a small number of studies examining the selected theme among bank employees. Therefore this study investigates the relationship between dependent and independent variables among the employees working in the banking sector of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with the following objectives.

- 1) To analyze the level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction among bank employees.
- 2) To find out the correlations between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction among bank employees.
- 3) To identify the predictors of job satisfaction among emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment.

2. Literature Review

Various studies have been conducted on job burnout and its facets with job satisfaction and other variables. Numerous investigations have pointed out that job burnout and job

satisfaction have a significant relationship and job burnout can be considered as a factor of job satisfaction and vice-versa (Koeske, Kirk, & Koeske, 1993; Allam, 2007; Arabaci, 2010; Allam & Tyagi, 2010; Lee & Ok, 2012; AlKahtani & Allam, 2013; Anil et al., 2017; Robinson, Bridges, Rollins, & Schumacker, 2019; Simanjuntak, Sadalia, & Nazaruddin, 2020). However, Arabaci(2010) pointed out based on intensive research that a negative association was observed between job satisfaction and DEP. Further, it revealed that DEP forecasts the meaning of job satisfaction. Other researchers verified that job satisfaction and burnout have negative association on all facets of burnout and emotional exhaustion is low (Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Qureshi & Sajjad, 2015; Anil et al., 2017). A study was conducted among employees working in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with an aim to understand the impact of EE. The results obtained are very impressive and revealed that the impact of EE is low on two aspects, namely, job satisfaction and job performance. Further, they said that EE found to be low amongst employees working in the K.S.A., (Qureshi & Sajjad, 2015).

Talachi and Gorji (2013) conducted an investigation to check the nexus between burnout and job satisfaction among the employees working in mines, industry and trade organizations located in Iran. The study revealed that burnout and job satisfaction has very deeper nexus and PA including EE are having negative association with job satisfaction.

Khamisa, Oldenburg, Peltzer, and Ilic (2015) investigated the association between job burnout, work-related stress, the general health of nurses and job satisfaction among 1,200 nurses in South Africa with samples taken from four different hospitals. They found that job burnout has a negative influence on job satisfaction.

Kara (2020) revealed that job satisfaction and burnout have negative relationship and such study have been conducted in Turkey among teachers. The study pointed out that EE is a component of burnout found to be negative and with direct effect on the job satisfaction (Prajogo, 2019; Simanjuntak, Sadalia, & Nazaruddin, 2020).

Arslan, Pan, li, Wang, and Ghaffari (2019) conducted a study among bank employees and revealed that rewards, which seemed to be a facet of job satisfaction, is negative association with EE and DEP, but positively related to PA, given some measures to manage the job burnout in the banking sector.

Based on the reviewed literature, the researchers formulate the following null hypotheses:

H1: *There is a significant relationship between work experience, number of dependents, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment among bank employees.*

H2: *Job satisfaction would not be a predictor of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment among bank employees.*

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

The current study sample is comprised of 214 bank employees working in various banks located at Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The random sampling technique was used in this investigation to collect the data. The participants included in the current investigation were male and female with varying age, social status, and number of dependents, qualification, total work experiences, and income. The demographic profiles of the participants are shown in Table 1.

It is observed from Table 1 that out of the total sample, 67.8% ($N = 145$) were males and 32.2% ($N = 69$) were females. 64.5% ($N = 138$) respondents were 30 years old or less; 28% ($N = 60$) were between 31 and 40 years old; 5.6% ($N = 12$) were between 41 and 50 years old; and 1.9% ($N = 4$) were 51 years old and above. 49.1% ($N = 105$) of the respondents were married; 45.8% ($N = 98$) were unmarried; and 5.1% ($N = 11$) were divorced. Further, 67.3% ($N = 144$) of respondents had between 0 and 3 dependents; 26.2% ($N = 56$) had between 4 to 6 dependents; and 6.5% ($N = 147$) had 7 and more dependents. As far as experience is concerned

Table 1: Demographic Profiles

| Particulars | | Number | Percent |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------|---------|
| Age | 30 years and less | 138 | 64.5 |
| | from 31–40 years | 60 | 28 |
| | from 41–50 years | 12 | 5.6 |
| | from 51 and above | 4 | 1.9 |
| Marital Status | Married | 105 | 49.1 |
| | Unmarried | 98 | 45.8 |
| | Divorced | 11 | 5.1 |
| Gender | Male | 145 | 67.8 |
| | Female | 69 | 32.2 |
| Number of Dependents | 0–3 members | 144 | 67.3 |
| | 4–6 members | 56 | 26.2 |
| | 7 and above | 14 | 6.5 |
| Total Work Experience | Less than 5 years | 115 | 53.7 |
| | Between 5 to 11 years | 77 | 36 |
| | Between 12 to 18 years | 22 | 10.3 |
| Income | Less than SAR 8000 | 56 | 26.17 |
| | 8000–11000 SAR | 109 | 50.93 |
| | 11000 SAR and above | 49 | 22.90 |

53.7% of respondents have 5 years of experience or less and 10.3% reported between 12 to 18 years of experience. 50.93% of respondents reported an income between SAR8,000 and SAR11,000 and 22.90% were earning more than SAR11000.

3.2. Tools Used

The following tools were applied to collect the participant’s responses to achieve the set goals:

- (I) **Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and sense of personal accomplishment** were measured with the help of Job Burnout Inventory, which was developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981). Emotional exhaustion has 9 items, 5 items measure the deperso-nalization, and 8 items measures the personal accom-plishment on 7-point scale, from 1-very mild to 7-very strong. The scale reliability and validity were established as per the statistical measures.
- (II) **Job satisfaction scale developed** by Singh (1987) was used to assess the level of satisfaction of the employees. The scale consists of 20 items and each item rated on the 5-point Likert scale, from 1-highly dissatisfied to 5-highly satisfied. Hence, the total range of points ranges from 20 to 100. The reliability of validity of this scale was established based on statistical procedures.
- (III) **Biographical Information** such as salary, experience, gender, age, and marital status of the respondents were also collected.

3.3. Design of the Research

In the present investigation, correlational study has been carried out to determine the relationships between job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Also, we ascertain predictor variables that justified the changes in the form of dependent variable.

3.4. Statistics Used

Various methods were available to analyze the data, but stepwise multiple regression was found more suitable to investigate the objectives and confirm the formulated hypotheses of the current investigation. The entire data were analyzed with the help of SPSS.

4. Results and Discussion

Findings shown in Table 2 that the mean for emotional exhaustion is ($M = 38.39$, $SD = 12.192$), depersonalization ($M = 34.67$, $SD = 9.071$), personal accomplishment ($M = 15.10$, $SD = 6.530$), whereas job satisfaction is ($M = 56.05$, $SD = 14.791$). This implied that emotional exhaustion (facet of burnout) had the greater mean as compared to depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Pearson product moment correlation technique was applied to verify the null hypothesis (H_0) whether there would not be a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables as mentioned in hypothesis. Mean and SD were also computed. It is observed in the table that correlation between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and job satisfaction obtained inverse significant relationships ($r = -0.360$, $p < 0.01$ & $r = -0.313$, $p < 0.01$) where, there is a positive significant relationship between personal accomplishment and job satisfaction ($r = 0.251$, $p < 0.01$). Henceforth, the formulated hypothesis (H_0) has been rejected. The finding of this investigation is aligned with earlier investigations (Ogresta, Silvia, & Skokandic, 2008; Arabaci, 2010; Anil et al., 2017; Kara, 2020; Mustafa & Ismail, 2020).

Table 3 shows the regression analysis of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment on job satisfaction. The first model coefficient of correlation between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction obtained $R = 0.360$, regressing the job satisfaction and the coefficient of determination observed $R^2 = 0.130$, which indicates that 13% variation in the job satisfaction. A significant direct influence has been established between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction (Simanjuntak, Sadalia, &

Table 2: Mean, SD and Correlations ($N = 147$)

| Variables | Mean | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|---|---------|-------|----------|
| 1. Emotional exhaustion | 38.39 | 12.192 | – | 0.343** | 0.004 | –0.360** |
| 2. Depersonalization | 34.67 | 9.071 | | – | 0.070 | –0.313** |
| 3. Personal accomplishment | 15.10 | 6.530 | | | – | 0.252** |
| 4. Job satisfaction | 56.05 | 14.791 | | | | – |

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results ($N = 214$)

| Model | <i>R</i> | <i>R</i> Square | Adjusted <i>R</i> Square | Change Statistics | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | | | | <i>R</i> Square Change | <i>F</i> Change | Significant <i>F</i> Change |
| 1. Emotional exhaustion | 0.360 ^a | 0.130 | 0.125 | 0.130 | 31.559 | 0.000 |
| 2. Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization | 0.440 ^b | 0.194 | 0.186 | 0.064 | 16.836 | 0.000 |
| 3. Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal accomplishment | 0.493 ^c | 0.243 | 0.232 | 0.049 | 13.571 | 0.000 |

^aPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion.

^bPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization.

^cPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal accomplishment.

Table 4: ANOVA Results

| Model | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | <i>F</i> |
|------------------------|----------------|-----|-------------|----------|
| 1. Regression Residual | 6038.080 | 1 | 6038.080 | 31.559** |
| | 40561.453 | 212 | 191.328 | |
| | 46599.533 | 213 | | |
| 2. Regression Residual | 9035.337 | 2 | 4517.668 | 25.376** |
| | 37564.196 | 211 | 178.029 | |
| | 46599.533 | 213 | | |
| 3. Regression Residual | 11315.451 | 3 | 3771.817 | 22.449** |
| | 35284.082 | 210 | 168.019 | |
| | 46599.533 | 213 | | |

**Significant at 0.01 level.

^aPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion.

^bPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization.

^cPredictors: (Constant), Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal accomplishment.

^dDependent variable: Job Satisfaction.

Nazaruddin, 2020). The findings pointed that emotional exhaustion influenced job satisfaction. Emotional exhaustion is part of burnout and due to certain negative aspects of behaviour of the individual, which leads into dangerous situation (Simanjuntak, Sadalia, & Nazaruddin, 2020), but emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction have proven significant effects on the performance (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2000; Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Qureshi & Sajjad, 2015; Simanjuntak, Sadalia, & Nazaruddin, 2020)

The *F* change ($F = 31.559, p < 0.01$) existed in the job satisfaction among bank employees, which indicates the null hypothesis (H_0) has been rejected. It is observed in the second model the *R* value 0.440, coefficient of correlation between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and job satisfaction that regressed the job satisfaction and coefficient

determination obtained $R^2 = 0.194$, which serve the 19.4% variations in the dependent variables. Further, *F* change ($F = 16.836, p < 0.01$) appeared significant on the job satisfaction. However, Mukhtar and Mustafa (2014) and Mustafa and Ismail (2020) have different findings in relation to these two variables. As far as third model is concerned in Table 3 personal accomplishment accompanying emotional exhaustion and depersonalization represented as the predictor of job satisfaction for the entire sample taken into study. The coefficient of correlation between job satisfaction and personal accomplishment along with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization obtained $R = 0.493$ with coefficient determinants $R^2 = 0.243$ that elucidated 4.9% alone in the job satisfaction, which is considered here as dependent variable. The value of *F* change obtained 13.571, which is significant at .01 level and the formulated null hypothesis has been rejected. From Table 3 it is observed that emotional exhaustion had the greatest degree of predictive power on job satisfaction followed by emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. The findings are aligned with earlier studies (Allam, 2007; Swaminathan & Jawahar, 2013; Simanjuntak, Sadalia, & Nazaruddin, 2020).

Table 4 showed that calculated *F*-ratio for emotional exhaustion ($F = 31.559, p < 0.01$), depersonalization ($F = 25.376, p < 0.01$) and personal accomplishment ($F = 22.449, p < 0.01$). Based on the findings it can be said that these factors are significantly contributing towards job satisfaction of the employees. Henceforth, the null hypothesis has been rejected. Karatepe and Tekinkus (2006) highlighted that emotional exhaustion had negative effect on job satisfaction, so the current investigation has contradictory findings.

Table 5 is representing the coefficient of regression for the job satisfaction of employees working in the banking sectors. Results show positive and statistically significant relationship is observed between personal accomplishment with job satisfaction and appearing ($\beta = 0.270, P < 0.01$), while emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -0.360, P < 0.01$) and depersonalization ($\beta = -0.236, P < 0.01$) have negative

Table 5: Coefficients of Regression on Job Satisfaction

| | B | Beta | t | p | Std. Error |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|----------|----------|-------------------|
| Job satisfaction | 72.810 | 0 | 23.260 | 0.000 | 3.130 |
| Emotional exhaustion | -0.437 | -0.360 | -5.618 | 0.000 | 0.078 |
| Personal accomplishment | 0.440 | 0.270 | 4.483 | 0.000 | 0.098 |
| Depersonalization | -0.535 | -0.236 | -3.684 | 0.000 | 0.145 |

Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction.

nonlinear relationship with job satisfaction, but significant. The table showed for job satisfaction the most important predictor is emotional exhaustion followed by personal accomplishment and depersonalization, result supported by Mustafa and Ismail (2020).

5. Conclusion

The objectives and hypotheses set by the researchers have been accomplished and outcomes of the investigation revealed that that emotional exhaustion had the greater mean as compared to depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Positive and statistically significant relationship is observed between personal accomplishment with job satisfaction, while emotional exhaustion and depersonalization have negative relationship with job satisfaction, but significant. Finally, for job satisfaction the most important predictor is emotional exhaustion followed by personal accomplishment and depersonalization.

The current investigation only focused on employees working in the banking sector and does not look at variables about demographic characteristics such as designation, age, gender, etc. Also, the study did not focus on the private and public sector banks and did not take into consideration entire parts of the Kingdom; sample was only taken from Riyadh region. These aspects can be included in future research for a better understanding of the typical relationships between EE, DEP, PA and JS.

The current investigation shows that EE, DEP, PA and job satisfaction have a greater and significant effect on the performance of the employees working in the banking sector. It is essential for management to understand that negative feelings toward the job always hamper the performance of the employees at workplace whereas a satisfied workforce performs well (Allam, 2017; Asad, 2020). Therefore, management must establish good HR practices in their work setting so that employee can contribute more and participate in all the activities with different hierarchical level without any difficulties (Kim, Shin, & Umbreit, 2007; Halkos, 2010; AlKahtani & Allam, 2013; AlKahtani, Khan, & Allam, 2016; Mustafa & Ismail, 2020), including awareness of their own emotional

intelligence and leadership characteristics (Allam, 2011; Daud & Wan Hanafi, 2020; Mangundjaya & Amir, 2021). Such HR practices will increase the mental and health well-being of the employees at the workplace including personal life and will contribute to organizational excellence (Allam & Shaik, 2020).

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