

Research Paper

Examining the Predictive Role of Emotional Intelligence on Job Satisfaction among Dentists

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence has stood and proved to be a master determinant of job satisfaction, more pronouncedly among those who have work engagements associated with high demands such as in the case of dentistry. This study purports to produce evidence on the predictive significance of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction among dentists and how it translates into workplace satisfaction, interpersonal relationships, and professional performance of an individual practitioner. Dentistry is a practice that interacts with patients throughout the day, and at times, it experiences very high-pressure scenarios; therefore, emotional regulation and interpersonal competence are necessary for achieving job satisfaction. The literature demonstrates that some specific dimensions of emotional intelligence such as self-emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and emotional regulation hold positive correlation with job satisfaction, while burnout and workplace culture moderate this relationship. Evidence also abounds on the enhancement by emotionally intelligent training in attaining peace in the workplace, reducing stress, and maximally allowing an employee's growth in his profession. This study emphasizes the need to ensure that emotional intelligence is integrated into practice in dental institutions for the well-being of every employee and the organization. This research assess the predictive role of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction among dentists by using the Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire and Wong and Law Emotional intelligence questionnaire. The findings thus far show a strong relation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in many of the healthcare professions today. Utilizing descriptive statistics, the Shapiro-Wilk Test, Spearman's rank-order correlation, and simple linear regression, this study showed a moderate positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction for dentists. Work setting and gender were not meaningfully related to job satisfaction, and this suggests workplace factors may be more important. These findings show the value of emotional intelligence in professional mental health and indicate possible areas for organizational change in dentistry.

Keywords: *Dentists, Emotional Intelligence, Gender, Job Satisfaction, Work Setting*

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Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has become a central concept in psychology, organizational behavior, and human resource management, affecting personal success, job performance, and well-being. Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to manage both your own emotions and understand the emotions of people around you (Mental Health America 2025).

This study examines the predictive function of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction in dentists and how people's capacity to know and manage their emotions affects their work life, attitudes, and general job satisfaction. Using empirical research, the study aims at closing the theoretical-practical divide in emotional intelligence theory and its implications for use in the workplace.

Emotional Intelligence

The theory of emotional intelligence was originally proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as the capacity to track one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate between them, and to use this information in guiding thinking and behavior. This initial definition paved the way for future research into the function of emotions in human thinking and conduct. Since its beginning, the theory has developed a great deal, with various models and frameworks being suggested to describe how emotional intelligence functions in different situations, especially within the workplace.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched topics in workplace psychology and organizational behavior, influencing multiple outcomes such as employee productivity, organizational commitment, intentions to leave, and overall well-being. This study provides review literature on the premise that emotional intelligence impacts job satisfaction among dentists. Dentistry being a practice requiring intense patient contact and stressful situations imposes the necessity to bring emotional intelligence to professional descriptors among dentists because of work satisfaction.

METHOD

Research objectives

The research concerns to understand three primary objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among dentists?
2. Does gender affect job satisfaction in Dental professionals?
3. Does the work setting affect job satisfaction in Dental professionals

Hypotheses

- **H1**-There is a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among dentists.
- **H2**- Emotional intelligence predicts job satisfaction among dentists
- **H3**- There is a relationship between gender and job satisfaction among dentists
- **H4**- There is a relationship between the work setting and job satisfaction among dentists

Significance and scope of the study

This research holds substantial significance for the field of dentistry by exploring the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on job satisfaction (JS) among dentists. Dentistry is a

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demanding profession that requires not only technical proficiency but also emotional resilience and strong interpersonal skills. Understanding how EI influences job satisfaction provides valuable insights into enhancing professional well-being, improving workplace dynamics, and fostering long-term career fulfillment.

One of the key contributions of this study is its emphasis on job satisfaction. Dentists often face high levels of stress, which can lead to emotional exhaustion and burnout. By investigating how EI mitigates these challenges, this research can inform strategies to improve dentists' mental health, stress management, and overall job satisfaction. Enhancing emotional intelligence among dental professionals may lead to better coping mechanisms, helping them maintain enthusiasm and engagement in their work.

Furthermore, this study underscores the role of EI in patient interactions and healthcare outcomes. A dentist's ability to perceive, regulate, and respond to patient emotions significantly impacts patient trust and satisfaction. Beyond individual benefits, the findings of this study have implications for dental organizations and healthcare policymakers. Clinics and hospitals can implement EI-based hiring, training, and well-being programs to create a more supportive work environment, leading to improved teamwork, reduced workplace conflicts, and higher retention rates among dental professionals. The scope of this study is narrowly focused on dentists and their job satisfaction in relation to emotional intelligence. While emotional intelligence has been studied in various

Rationale of the study

Job satisfaction is a key determinant of the professional well-being, productivity, and retention of employees in jobs that demand emotional labor, such as that in dentistry. Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, regulate, and manage emotional conditions and is well documented as a variable predicting job satisfaction in many other health occupations. However, very few studies specifically address the immediate relevance of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in dentists, where emotional competence is crucial to the entire practice.

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative correlational design to understand the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Satisfaction (JS) among Dental Providers. The researcher used standardized questionnaires to collect data on EI and JS, along with demographic details of the research participants (i.e., gender and work setting). Descriptive statistics summarized the data. Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to determine relationships between the variables because of non-normal distribution. A simple linear regression was used to determine if EI was a statistically significant predictor of Job Satisfaction.

Population and Sampling

The study surveyed dentists, who have professional work experience and are currently practicing dentistry. A total of 278 responses were collected from dentists. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling from family dentists and other friends. The decision to employ convenience sampling was practical, allowing for easy access to participants within the specified inclusion criterion.

A G power analysis was conducted to ascertain an appropriate sample size. The study aimed to determine the minimum number of participants required to achieve adequate statistical

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power for detecting meaningful effects. The results of the G power analysis revealed that a minimum sample size of 140 participants was necessary to achieve the desired level of statistical power.

After removing outliers, the final sample size of 278 participants exceeded the minimum requirement determined by the G power analysis. This ensured that the study had sufficient statistical power to detect meaningful effects and draw reliable conclusions from the data collected. Overall, using convenience sampling and including 278 participants enhanced the generalizability and robustness of the study findings.

Variable

Independent Variable (IV): Emotional intelligence

Role: This variable serves as the primary focus of the research, examining how emotional intelligence affects job satisfaction.

Dependent Variable (DV): Job Satisfaction

Role: This variable represents the outcome of emotional intelligence, examining how emotional intelligence affects job satisfaction.

Tools used

The Emotional Intelligence Scale (Wong & Law, 2002):

The Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) is a self-report instrument developed by Wong and Law (2002) to measure emotional intelligence (EI) in workplace settings.

The Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire:

The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is a widely used self-report instrument designed to measure job satisfaction across various professions.

Procedure

Participants were recruited through the use of unofficial groups among dentists. Additionally, recruitment was extended to social media platforms and online groups dedicated to facilitating research data collection. Prior to data collection, all participants provided informed consent, affirming their willingness to participate. Surveys were administered electronically via secure online platforms to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Participants completed the surveys independently, ensuring the integrity of responses. The data collection process spanned a duration of one month to accommodate the recruitment of a diverse and representative sample.

Data Analysis

The data analysis process in this study involved a series of structured steps aimed at ensuring the accuracy and validity of the results. The study utilized structured questionnaires administered through Google Forms to collect responses from dentists who are currently working. A total of 278 responses were received, after which data cleaning was performed to eliminate responses that did not meet the inclusion criteria. The cleaned dataset was then coded and exported to Jamovi, a statistical software known for its user-friendly interface and ability to perform advanced statistical procedures. The analysis included descriptive statistics, normality testing, correlation analysis, and regression modeling to assess the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Satisfaction (JS), as well as other variables such as work setting and gender.

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Descriptive statistics were calculated for the primary study variables, Emotional Intelligence (EI TOTAL) and Job Satisfaction (JS TOTAL), to summarize their distribution, central tendency, and variability. These results highlight that most dentists reported relatively high Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction, suggesting that these factors may play a role in their professional experiences.

To determine whether Emotional Intelligence scores were normally distributed, a Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted. The test results showed that, EI data was not normally distributed, violating the assumption of normality required for parametric tests. Given this violation, non-parametric statistical methods such as Spearman's rank-order correlation were used in subsequent analyses. A Spearman's rank-order correlation was performed to examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI TOTAL) and Job Satisfaction (JS TOTAL). This method was chosen because the EI data was not normally distributed.

RESULTS

The results of this study provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Satisfaction (JS) among dentists, while also examining the impact of work setting and gender on job satisfaction. A total of 278 responses were collected, and the data underwent thorough cleaning and coding before being analyzed using Jamovi, a statistical software designed for advanced statistical procedures.

To understand the characteristics of the dataset, descriptive statistics were calculated for key variables, including Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction. Additionally, normality testing using the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to assess whether the data met the assumptions required for parametric tests. Given that EI scores deviated significantly from normality, Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to examine relationships between variables.

The analysis explored three key research questions:

1. What is the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction among dentists?
2. Does work setting influence Job Satisfaction among dentists?
3. Is there a relationship between gender and Job Satisfaction among dentists?

Furthermore, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine whether Emotional Intelligence significantly predicts Job Satisfaction, providing insights into the extent to which EI contributes to workplace fulfillment.

The results highlight that Emotional Intelligence is moderately and positively correlated with Job Satisfaction, indicating that dentists with higher EI levels tend to experience greater job fulfillment. However, work setting and gender were not significantly associated with Job Satisfaction, suggesting that other workplace factors play a more influential role. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on the importance of Emotional Intelligence in professional well-being and suggest potential areas for organizational improvement within the dental profession.

The following sections present the detailed results of the study, including descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, and regression findings.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for Emotional Intelligence (EI TOTAL) and Job Satisfaction (JSTOTAL) among dentists are presented in Table 1. The dataset consisted of 278 participants, with no missing values. Mean scores for individual Emotional Intelligence items ranged from 4.75 (EI15) to 5.87 (EI7), with standard deviations between 1.05 (EI8) and 1.73 (EI15). Most items had a median of 6.00, indicating a tendency for higher EI ratings. The Job Satisfaction scores also showed moderate variability between groups.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for EI TOTAL and JSTOTAL

Variable	Group	N	Mean	Median
EI TOTAL	1	111	72.2	75.0
	2	166	71.9	73.0
JSTOTAL	1	111	78.0	78.0
	2	166	75.6	77.0

Normality Testing

To evaluate whether the Emotional Intelligence (EI) and job satisfaction scores followed a normal distribution, the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted for each individual EI and JS item. The Shapiro-Wilk test is a widely used statistical test for assessing normality, particularly in small to medium-sized samples, as it determines whether the sample data significantly deviates from a normal distribution.

Table 2 shows the results of the test, it showed a W-value of 0.972 for Job Satisfaction and 0.920 for Emotional Intelligence, both accompanied by p-values less than 0.001. Since the p-values are highly significant ($p < 0.001$), this indicates that the data deviates significantly from a normal distribution. The W-values, which measure the degree of similarity between the observed data and a perfectly normal distribution, suggest moderate deviation for Job Satisfaction and a stronger deviation for Emotional Intelligence.

These findings imply that the dataset exhibits some degree of skewness or kurtosis, meaning that assumptions of normality required for parametric statistical tests may not be met. As a result, non-parametric statistical methods, such as Spearman’s rank-order correlation, were considered more appropriate for further analyses to ensure the validity and reliability of the results.

Table 2: normality testing using shapiro wilk test

	JS TOTAL	EI TOTAL
N	278	278
Shapiro-Wilk W	0.972	0.920
Shapiro-Wilk p	<.001	<.001

Correlation Analysis

The results of the Spearman’s correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction, with a correlation coefficient of Spearman’s $\rho = 0.407$ and a statistically significant p-value ($p < .001$). The positive nature of the correlation suggests that as Emotional Intelligence levels increase, Job Satisfaction also tends to be higher. This indicates that dentists who perceive themselves as having stronger Emotional Intelligence skills are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction.

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A correlation coefficient of 0.407 falls within the range of a moderate association (typically between 0.3 and 0.5), suggesting that while Emotional Intelligence is a meaningful predictor of Job Satisfaction, other factors also contribute to overall job fulfillment. The statistically significant p-value ($< .001$) confirms that this relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance, further reinforcing the validity of the findings.

Table 3: spearman's correlation to identify relationship between variables

		Gender	JS TOTAL	EI TOTAL	Work setting
Gender	Spearman's rho	—			
	df	—			
	p-value	—			
JS TOTAL	Spearman's rho	-0.070	—		
	df	275	—		
	p-value	0.246	—		
EI TOTAL	Spearman's rho	-0.041	0.407	—	
	df	275	276	—	
	p-value	0.497	$< .001$	—	
Work setting	Spearman's rho	0.029	-0.116	-0.011	—
	df	275	276	276	—
	p-value	0.636	0.053	0.852	—

Linear Regression Analysis

The results of the regression analysis revealed that Emotional Intelligence significantly predicted Job Satisfaction, with the overall regression model being statistically significant:

- $F(1, 276) = 49.4, p < .001$

The F-statistic (49.4) indicates that the model explains significantly more variability in Job Satisfaction than would be expected by chance alone. The associated p-value ($< .001$) confirms that this effect is statistically significant, meaning that there is strong evidence to suggest that Emotional Intelligence influences Job Satisfaction in this sample of dentists.

Table 4: model fit measures

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.390	0.152	0.149	49.4	1	276	$< .001$

The model explains 15.2% of the variance in Job Satisfaction scores ($R^2 = 0.152$), suggesting that while Emotional Intelligence contributes to Job Satisfaction, other factors also play a role.

Table 5: regression coefficients

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	45.539	4.461	10.21	$< .001$
EI TOTAL	0.431	0.061	7.03	$< .001$

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Results indicate that for each 1-unit increase in Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction increases by 0.431 points ($p < .001$). This finding supports the hypothesis that Emotional Intelligence is a significant predictor of Job Satisfaction among dentists.

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that higher Emotional Intelligence (EI TOTAL) is significantly associated with increased Job Satisfaction (JSTOTAL) among dentists. Emotional Intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, plays a crucial role in workplace dynamics, interpersonal relationships, and professional fulfillment. The results of the simple linear regression analysis demonstrated that Emotional Intelligence serves as a significant predictor of Job Satisfaction. The regression model was found to be statistically significant, as indicated by an F-value of 49.4 ($p < .001$). This means that the variability in Job Satisfaction scores can be, at least in part, explained by differences in Emotional Intelligence scores among dentists. Since the p-value is well below the conventional threshold of 0.05, the results strongly suggest that the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction is not due to random chance but represents a meaningful association.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study provide significant insights into the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Job Satisfaction (JS) among dentists. The results indicate a moderate positive correlation between EI and JS, suggesting that dentists with higher emotional intelligence tend to experience greater job satisfaction. This aligns with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of emotional competencies in enhancing workplace well-being and professional fulfillment. Dentists who possess strong emotional intelligence skills are likely better equipped to handle the emotional demands of their profession, leading to increased job satisfaction. This finding resonates with previous research that has established a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction across various healthcare professions.

The moderate positive correlation observed in this study (Spearman's $\rho = 0.407$) suggests that while emotional intelligence is a meaningful predictor of job satisfaction, it is not the sole factor influencing dentists' overall job fulfillment. Other variables, such as workload, professional autonomy, and organizational culture, may also play significant roles in determining job satisfaction. This aligns with the findings of previous studies that have highlighted the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction and the need to consider various factors when examining its determinants.

The implications of these findings extend to the broader understanding of how emotional intelligence can serve as a vital tool in enhancing job satisfaction and overall workplace dynamics. Furthermore, the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction suggests that dental practices should prioritize the development of emotional competencies within their teams. By fostering an environment that values emotional intelligence, dental organizations can create a culture that supports interpersonal relationships, reduces stress, and ultimately enhances job satisfaction. Dentists who are emotionally intelligent may be better equipped to manage the stresses associated with patient care, leading to a more satisfying professional experience.

CONCLUSION

This study explores the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among dentists. It also aims to understand whether factors such as work setting and gender

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play a role in increased or decreased job satisfaction. Findings reveal a moderately positive correlation between job satisfaction and emotional intelligence, but showed no significant relationship between work setting, gender and job satisfaction. It has also revealed that emotional intelligence indeed plays a role in predicting job satisfaction among dentists. These results underscore the crucial role of emotional intelligence in increasing job satisfaction among dentists. Understanding this relationship can help implement training programs and interventions to increase emotional intelligence among dentists so as to increase their job satisfaction.

Scope and Implications

The study has both theoretical and practical implications that advance the domains of job satisfaction, and emotional intelligence. From a theoretical standpoint, this study supports the notion that job satisfaction is significantly predicted by emotional intelligence (EI). The lack of a significant correlation between gender, work environment, and job satisfaction also calls into question the widely held belief that workplace satisfaction is primarily influenced by outside variables, emphasizing the intrinsic role that emotional intelligence plays in determining professional fulfillment.

In terms of practicality, the findings imply that dental education and professional development programs should incorporate emotional intelligence training. Dental schools and continuing education programs should include Emotional Intelligence (EI)-based workshops and training modules to give dentists the tools they need to maintain job satisfaction because EI improves stress job satisfaction.

Limitations

First and foremost, the study used self-reported measures for job satisfaction and emotional intelligence, which could lead to subjective interpretation of the survey items or social desirability bias. The accuracy of the results may have been impacted by participants' overestimations or underestimations of their emotional intelligence and job satisfaction levels.

Second, the study only looked at dentists, which limited how broadly the results could be applied to other medical professionals or sectors where emotional intelligence is also necessary for success in the workplace. In order to compare outcomes across various fields, future research could broaden the sample to include additional medical professionals, such as doctors or nurses.

The study's cross-sectional design, which records a single moment in time rather than tracking changes in emotional intelligence and job satisfaction over time, is another drawback. Deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence affects job satisfaction at various phases of a dentist's career would be possible with a longitudinal study.

Gender, work environment, and job satisfaction were also not found to be significantly correlated in the study; however, these variables may still interact with other unmeasured variables like workload, organizational support, or work experience.

Future research direction

Building on the findings of this study, future research can explore several key areas to deepen our understanding of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction among dentists.

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Firstly, longitudinal studies should be conducted to examine how emotional intelligence influences job satisfaction over time. Understanding whether EI training and experience contribute to increased job satisfaction throughout a dentist's career would provide more robust insights into the long-term impact of emotional intelligence in dental practice.

Secondly, future studies could expand the sample beyond dentists to include other healthcare professionals, such as physicians, nurses, and dental hygienists. Comparing different medical fields would help determine whether emotional intelligence plays a similarly significant role in job satisfaction across healthcare professions or if its impact varies based on job demands.

Finally, cross-cultural research should be conducted to examine whether the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction differs across different countries and cultural settings. Since workplace dynamics and professional expectations vary globally, such studies could provide valuable insights into how cultural factors influence the role of emotional intelligence in job satisfaction.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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