



How emotional intelligence relates to job satisfaction and burnout in public service jobs

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Abstract

Public service workers require higher levels of emotional intelligence because most public service jobs involve emotionally intense work focused on service to the public. Moreover, such emotional work may lead to a high degree of burnout and job dissatisfaction, which directly relates to organizational outcomes. Focusing on public service workers, the present study investigates the relationships between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, on the one hand, and the dimensions of emotional intelligence and burnout, on the other. In the sample of 167 public service workers in the US, using employed structural equation modeling, the findings reveal that emotion regulation is significantly and negatively related to burnout and that emotional self-awareness is significantly and positively related to job satisfaction.

Points for practitioners

This study contributes to understanding the relationship between the emotional intelligence dimension and burnout, and the emotional intelligence dimension and job satisfaction, in public service jobs. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role for public service workers whose work involves emotionally intense job characteristics. The findings show that training in emotional intelligence abilities may increase job satisfaction and decrease burnout. Practitioners and professionals working in public management and administration may consider measures of emotional intelligence, especially emotional self-awareness and emotion regulation, in the recruitment process to select potentially effective job applicants.

Keywords

burnout, emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, public service workers

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Introduction

People who work in public service jobs require a higher level of emotional management because they interact with citizens, and citizens often seek governmental help during the worst moment of the worst day of their lives (Guy and Lee, 2015). Such emotional work may lead to a higher degree of burnout and job dissatisfaction. Importantly, burnout and job satisfaction directly relate to organizational outcomes, including turnover intention, absenteeism, work performance, and quality of service. Negative organizational outcomes may affect the quality, consistency, and stability of client services and lead to serious problems in organizations (Kim and Stoner, 2008; Mor Barak et al., 2001). Conversely, public service employees' positive attitudes and emotions can foster a pleasant work environment, increase job satisfaction, and create a favorable impression for citizens (Ashkanasy et al., 2002; Hosseinian et al., 2008; Lee and Ok, 2012).

Numerous studies have shown that emotional intelligence plays an important role in determining organizational performance (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Huang et al., 2010; Joshi et al., 2015; Moon and Hur, 2011; Sy and Côté, 2004; Wong and Law, 2002). Emotionally intelligent individuals are aware of their own and others' emotions and manage their emotions to elicit desirable behavior from others in the workplace (Guy and Lee, 2015). For instance, Higgs (2004) and Varca (2004) argue that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are less likely to experience burnout and more likely to increase work performance because they tend to have better interpersonal skills and the ability to tolerate emotional pressure. Moreover, Mayer and Salovey (1997) proposed that emotionally intelligent people promote higher self-esteem and positive moods, which may decrease negative affective emotions and increase job satisfaction.

As such, emotional intelligence is already a popular topic for researchers and in-service training sessions (Guy and Lee, 2015). However, little is known about how to apply emotional intelligence to enhance organizational performance in the public administration arena. To date, few public administration studies have empirically examined the relationship between the various dimensions of emotional intelligence and burnout, on the one hand, and job satisfaction, on the other. Determining which emotional intelligence construct relates to burnout and which relates to job satisfaction will provide practitioners/specialists with valuable knowledge about training public service employees. This study focuses on public service employees and examines the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, on the one hand, and the dimensions of emotional intelligence and burnout, on the other. First, a review of the theoretical literature is conducted, and then a structural equation model is used to test the assumption. Finally, the implications of this study for training and research are discussed.

Review of the theoretical literature

Emotional intelligence

Rooted in social intelligence (Gardner, 1983; Thorndike, 1920), the notion of emotional intelligence was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who defined emotional intelligence as the ability to accurately sense one's own—as well as others'—emotions, to constructively regulate one's state, and to respond in a manner that leads to desirable behavior (Guy and Lee, 2015; Mayer et al., 2004, 2008). Mayer et al. (2004) claimed that emotional intelligence involves an individual's ability to perceive, appraise, understand, regulate, and utilize one's own emotions and those of others. Subsequent researchers who have followed this so-called 'ability model' of emotional intelligence include Karim (2010), Lunda et al. (2010), Lee (2013a and b), and Guy and Lee (2015). Although each of these researchers defined emotional intelligence differently, they all embrace the four-branch emotional intelligence construct that involves 'perceiving,' 'understanding,' 'regulating,' and 'utilizing' emotions. Mayer et al. (2004, 2008), Wong and Law (2002), and Law et al. (2004) empirically demonstrated that the ability model differs from personality traits and that the four constructs entail unitary abilities.

Trait models and mixed models also describe emotional intelligence but are distinct from the ability model. Petrides and Furnham (2000) developed the trait model, whereas the mixed model was developed primarily by Goleman (1998) and Bar-On (1997, 2000). However, certain of the variables used in both the trait and mixed models overlap with those used by the ability model, such as self-awareness, motivation, empathy, and impulsiveness (Lee, 2013a, 2013b). In addition, there remains no explanation for why certain traits and/or abilities are included in some models and others are not (Mayer et al., 2004).

This study employs three variables that focus on abilities, consistent with Wong and Law (2002): *emotional self-awareness*, *emotional other-awareness*, and *emotion regulation*. This measure is also in line with the definition of emotional intelligence used by Mayer and Salovey (1997). Emotional self-awareness is the basis for assessing one's own abilities and knowing how to respond emotionally (Guy and Lee, 2015; Mayer and Salovey, 1997), and refers to the degree to which people are able to identify their own feelings and understand the causes of those feelings.

The second dimension of emotional intelligence is emotional other-awareness. This dimension refers to an individual's ability to perceive and understand the emotions of those around him/her (Guy and Lee, 2015). This ability includes not only the awareness of others' feelings, but also the ability to understand body language, facial expression, and tone of voice. Emotional other-awareness is a must for service workers (Lee, 2013a).

Emotion regulation is the third dimension of emotional intelligence. This ability is a higher-level skill in the emotional intelligence factors (Mayer et al., 2004). This dimension refers to regulating one's own emotions by means of suppressing, expressing, or quieting strategies to achieve one's goals. An employee who is

able to manage his/her emotions knows when he/she is thinking best and can govern the exigencies of the moment (Lee, 2013a, 2013b).

Numerous researchers have empirically shown that emotional intelligence is a vital factor in human performance, including in education, social relationships, leadership, organizational behaviors, nursing behavior, and emotional labor (see, e.g., Deepika, 2016; Guy and Lee, 2015; Higgs and Dulewicz, 2014; Huang et al., 2010; Moon and Hur, 2011; Neerpal, 2014; Vandewaa et al., 2016). Additionally, Goleman (1995, 1998) and Dulewicz and Herbert (1999) have shown that emotional intelligence can be developed through ongoing education and training. Most importantly, emotional intelligence may contribute to positive organizational performance (Huang et al., 2010; Lee and Ok, 2012; Moon and Hur, 2011; Vigoda-Gadot and Meisler, 2010).

Job burnout

Job burnout is the result of the accumulation of work-related emotional stress and consists of patterns of an individual's response to work stressors (Shirom, 2003). The term "burnout" has become a common expression in both the popular press and the research literature since the late 1960s (Guy et al., 2008). Several definitions of burnout have been introduced by numerous researchers, including the following: a psychological syndrome occurring among individuals who do "people work" (Maslach and Jackson, 1986); an affliction of "those who care" (Maslach, 1982); the numbing of the inner signals of emotional feelings, as reflected in the inability to create or feel any emotion (Maslach, 1976); and a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion associated with the chronic emotional stress that can result from intense, emotionally demanding involvement with people over long periods of time (Pines and Kafry, 1981: 139). The majority of burnout studies have followed the conception of burnout developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981), which consists of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion is at the core of burnout (Moon and Hur, 2011) and occurs when individuals are no longer able to give adequately of themselves to perform their job. When employees experience emotional exhaustion in the organization, the energy that they once needed to devote to their work is depleted (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Innanen et al., 2014) and feelings of tension and frustration arise as a result (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Swider and Zimmerman, 2010). In human services, the emotional demands of clients/citizens can make workers exhausted (Campbell et al., 2013; Smith and Clark, 2011). The second dimension of burnout is depersonalization, which often occurs from emotional exhaustion as employees detach from their work, leading to a negative perception of tasks, clients, and/or co-workers (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Kahn et al., 2006; Swider and Zimmerman, 2010). The final dimension to job burnout is reduced personal accomplishment, which refers to a self-perception of incompetence and lack of achievement at work (Maslach and Leiter, 2008).

Maslach (1981, 1982) argued that frequent face-to-face interactions that are intense and emotionally charged for long durations may be associated with higher levels of emotional exhaustion, which leads to burnout. Most public service jobs involve such characteristics. In general, job demands lead to employee burnout by requiring substantial physical and/or psychological efforts (Kim et al., 2009). When employees perceive that they have no social support and/or no controlled coping, they become stressed and may exceed their resistance to stress and experience burnout (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Kim et al., 2009). Employee burnout affects one's physiological and psychological health and may lead to serious negative organizational outcomes, such as high job turnover, absenteeism, and deterioration in the quality of service in the organization (Fan et al., 2014; Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004; Lizano, 2015; Moon and Hur, 2011). In sum, high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, in addition to a low level of personal accomplishment, may induce job burnout.

Job satisfaction

Employees' job satisfaction is the source of positive organizational performance. Job satisfaction serves as a "motivator" to job performance and encourages employees to extend their efforts beyond their assigned workload (Güteryüz et al., 2008; Hackman and Oldham, 1975). According to Herzberg (1966), intrinsic factors—including recognition, achievement, growth, responsibility, the work itself, and advancement—may provide higher job satisfaction in the workplace.

Researchers have variously defined job satisfaction as a positive emotional state emanating from an individual's subjective experience with his/her job (Locke, 1976), the degree to which employees have a positive affective orientation toward employment by the organization (Güteryüz et al., 2008), and "the extent to which people like their jobs" (Spector, 1996: 214). Job satisfaction involves an employee's subjective feelings or attitudes that relate to his/her current job. When employees feel good about their jobs (Grandey et al., 2002; Pekrun and Frese, 1992) and consider themselves to be socially valued (Barrett and Campos, 1987; Grandey et al., 2002; Heckhausen, 1984), their job satisfaction may increase. Thus, job satisfaction consists of psychological factors and is a motivating factor for employees that can be fostered by accomplishing one's work goals or by being recognized by others for one's job efforts (Chandra and Priyono, 2016; Güteryüz et al., 2008).

When public service workers make a customer/citizen feel happy, they enhance their own self-esteem (Seery and Corrigan, 2009), which leads to higher job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction also results in higher levels of job performance, such as high levels of organizational commitment, positive job attitudes, decreased turnover, and lower propensity to leave (Lee and Ashforth, 1990).

Emotional intelligence, burnout and job satisfaction

Burnout frequently occurs among service-oriented positions that require emotional work—including among teachers, health-care professionals, social workers, and public service agency workers. Moreover, employees experience more burnout when they interact with difficult clients/citizens. Most public service jobs involve emotionally intense work demands—such as responding to emergencies and/or domestic violence incidents, caring for trauma victims, serving various types of victims, and making law enforcement arrests (Guy and Lee, 2015)—which focus on serving the public (citizen) (Lee, 2013a).

Emotionally intelligent people are able to be aware of their emotional state, to regulate their own emotions, and to develop strategies to interact with others. These individuals are able to perceive their own emotional state, which indicates that they know how to cope with negative and stressful situations, leading to strong psychological and physical health (Taylor, 2001). Employees with high emotional intelligence are more resilient because they understand the causes of stress, and they develop strategies to address the negative consequences of stress (Cooper and Sawaf, 1997). Additionally, people who can regulate their own emotions may be better equipped to address intense emotions that typically increase stress and emotional exhaustion and decrease job satisfaction (Brackett et al., 2010). As people with greater emotion regulation and self-awareness abilities are able to forecast how certain situations will make them feel, they can take actions to prevent these situations from occurring (Brackett et al., 2010; Dunn et al., 2007).

Employees who are unable to perceive their own emotions may not be aware of how work-related stress affects their emotions and/or how their emotions affect their work performance (Huang et al., 2010). Conversely, emotionally intelligent people are sensitive to their co-workers' and clients' emotions; thus, they can support the organization internally and externally by helping to create a positive emotional environment (Brackett et al., 2010). When individuals are surrounded by optimistic and/or caring co-workers in the workplace, positive emotions are enhanced and conflict and tension are pre-empted. Higgs (2004) and Varca (2004) argue that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence are less likely to experience burnout and more likely to increase work performance because they tend to have better interpersonal skills and the ability to tolerate emotional pressure. Unsurprisingly, numerous studies have shown that people with high emotional intelligence may experience less burnout (Bar-On, 1997; Moon and Hur, 2011; Taylor, 2001).

Employee job satisfaction is important because it may lead to employee behaviors that affect both organizational functioning and performance (Chiva and Alegre, 2008; Rowden, 2002). Mayer and Salovey (1997) argue that the ability to regulate emotions enables service employees to more effectively manage adverse emotions and thus prevent the negative affect that might otherwise reduce job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence increases job satisfaction by fostering feelings of emotional well-being, promoting higher self-esteem and positive moods, and

decreasing negative affective emotions (Goleman, 1995; Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Salovey and Mayer, 1990).

The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in public service sector employees has been only minimally investigated in the literature. However, there have been many studies on the relationship between those two variables in the private sector, in the educational field, and in hospitals. Sy, Tram, and O'Hara (2006) found that emotionally intelligent individuals are more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction because they are more adept than employees with a lower level of emotional intelligence at perceiving and regulating their own emotions. Güteryüz et al. (2008) found that nurses with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to have higher levels of job satisfaction, and Wong and Law (2002) found similar results.

Employees who are aware of their own emotions may take appropriate actions to address emotional problems and to find solutions to prevent such problems from influencing their performance and affecting their positive feelings toward their jobs (Huang et al., 2010). Additionally, emotionally intelligent employees are less likely to recall and fixate on disturbing events that occurred in the workplace (Meisler, 2013; Meisler and Vigoda-Gadot, 2014). As these employees are more adept than those with low emotional intelligence at perceiving and regulating their own emotions, they have a higher level of job satisfaction (Sy et al., 2006). Based on the foregoing, the following hypotheses are proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Emotional self-awareness is negatively related to burnout.

Hypothesis 2: Emotional other-awareness is negatively related to burnout.

Hypothesis 3: Emotion regulation is negatively related to burnout

Hypothesis 4: Emotional self-awareness is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Emotional other-awareness is positively related to job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: Emotion regulation is positively related to job satisfaction.

Method

Sample

The survey was conducted between September and October 2012. The respondents who completed the survey were adults who had been in a full-time paying position in a public service organization (federal, state, city, county, or non-profit agency) in a large metropolitan area in the US. A total of 169 surveys were distributed to volunteer participants, 167 of which were completed and used in the analysis (98.8% response rate). Demographic analyses showed that a majority of the respondents were white (74.9%; $n = 125$) and female (64.1%; $n = 107$). This ratio was representative of the population of public service workers in this geographic area. The modal age ranged from 25 to 29 years, and 82% of the respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44. The vast majority (71%) had between one and seven

years of public service work experience in fields that included administrative services, family and children services, health care, law enforcement, information and communication services, legal services, or social work. The remaining 29% of the respondents had either less than one or more than seven years of public service work experience.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire for emotional intelligence was derived from the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). To date, the WLEIS has been the most valid and reliable emotional intelligence self-assessment tool (Lee, 2013a, 2013b) and has fewer questionnaire items than the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) (16 items compared to 141). The job satisfaction and burnout questionnaires are from the Guy-Newman-Mastracci Emotional Labor Questionnaire (GNM) Emotional Labor scale (see Guy et al., 2008). The GNM scale has a high level of internal consistency and goodness of fit (Hsieh and Guy, 2009; Hsieh et al., 2012). The questions were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (*strong disagreement*) to 7 (*strong agreement*).

Exploratory factor analysis was used to derive distinct factors for job satisfaction, burnout, and three emotional intelligence factors (emotional self-awareness, emotional other-awareness, and emotion regulation). The factors were generated using Varimax rotation, which revealed distinct factors in addition to good convergent validity and Cronbach's alpha values higher than .80.

Analysis and findings

To probe the relationships between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and burnout, the current researchers employed structural equation modeling (SEM). The factors in Table 1 were analyzed, beginning with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

The standardized regression value, which represents convergent validity, and the squared multiple correlations (SMCs), which represents content validity (*R*-squared), were also examined. All emotional intelligence factors, job satisfaction, and burnout showed good convergent validity and content validity. Table 2 shows the standardized solution of the re-specified item measures, as well as the items and alpha coefficients.

The model fit was assessed using goodness-of-fit indices, including absolute fit indices (chi-square and degrees of freedom index (CMIN/DF) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)) and incremental fit indices (normed fit index (NFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), and comparative fit index (CFI)). The CMIN/DF, TLI, CFI, NFI, and RMSEA satisfied the commonly accepted thresholds for fit indices of CMIN/DF < 2, TLI > 0.9, CFI > 0.9, NFI > 0.9, and RMSEA < 0.1 (in general, less than 0.05 is good; however, a range between 0.05 and 0.10 is acceptable). The results are shown in Figure 1.

Table 1. Intercorrelations.

	Emotional self-awareness	Emotion regulation	Emotional other-awareness	Job satisfaction	Burnout
Emotional self-awareness	1.000				
Emotion regulation	.412***	1.000			
Emotional other-awareness	.463***	.193**	1.000		
Job satisfaction	.386*	.421	-.190	1.000	
Burnout	-.021	-.166+	.091	-.125*	1.000

Notes: $N = 167$. + $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 2. Standardized solution of revised measures.

Latent variable	Standardized factor loading	R-squared
Emotional self-awareness ($\alpha = 0.891$)		
Q42 I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time	.721	.520
Q43 I have a good understanding of my own emotions	.945	.894
Q44 I really understand what I feel	.898	.807
Q45 I always know whether or not I am happy	.646	.418
Emotional other-awareness ($\alpha = 0.870$)		
Q22 I can always tell my friends' emotions from their behavior	.755	.570
Q23 I am a good observer of others' emotions	.917	.842
Q24 I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others	.659	.434
Q52 I have a good understanding of the emotions of the people around me	.801	.641
Regulation of emotion ($\alpha = 0.869$)		
Q57 I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally	.764	.584
Q58 I am quite capable of controlling my emotions	.879	.773
Q59 I can calm down quickly when I am very angry	.727	.528
Q60 I have good control of my own emotions	.903	.815
Job satisfaction ($\alpha = 0.811$)		
Q9 My work is satisfying	.790	.624
Q10 My job provides career development opportunities	.637	.406

(continued)

Table 2. Continued

Latent variable	Standardized factor loading	R-squared
Q11 There is substantial variety in the types of things I do	.795	.632
Q13 I continually learn new things in my position	.879	.772
Burnout (alpha = 0.877)		
Q34 I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally	.527	.278
Q35 I leave work feeling tired and rundown	.879	.772
Q36 I leave work feeling emotionally exhausted	.898	.806
Q37 I feel “used up” at the end of the workday	.926	.858

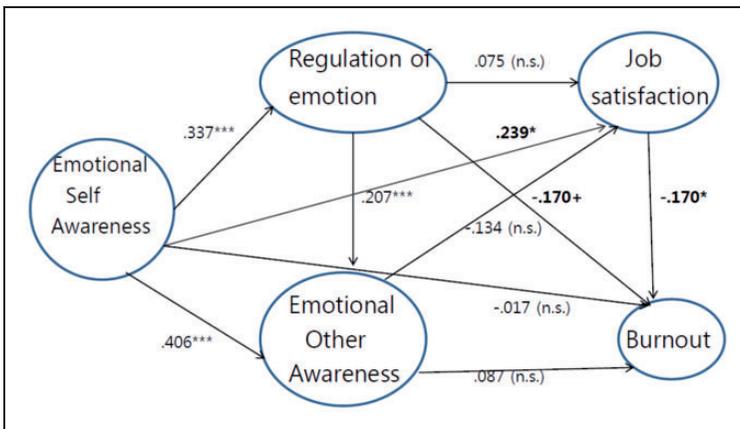


Figure 1. Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction and burnout.

Notes: *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .001$, * $p < .005$, + $p < .01$.

CMIN/DF = 13489, NFI = .891, TLI = .948.

CFI = .960, RMSEA = .054, (HI 90 = .068, LO 90 = .039).

As predicted, the relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is positive, and the relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout is negative. However, not all emotional intelligence dimensions are related to job satisfaction and burnout. Emotion regulation is the sole factor that shows a negative and significant relationship with burnout. Additionally, only emotional self-awareness is positively and significantly related to job satisfaction. As emotion regulation increases, burnout decreases, and as emotional self-awareness increases, job satisfaction increases.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported: neither emotional self-awareness nor emotional other-awareness was related to burnout in our respondents, and emotional other-awareness was not related to burnout. Hypothesis 3 was supported:

emotion regulation is negatively and significantly related to burnout ($\beta = -.166$, $p < .10$). Hypothesis 4 was supported: emotional self-awareness is positively and significantly related to job satisfaction ($\beta = .386$, $p < .05$). However, Hypotheses 5 and 6 were not supported, as neither emotional other-awareness nor emotion regulation was related to job satisfaction.

Discussion

The findings from this study suggest that different dimensions of emotional intelligence influence burnout and job satisfaction to different degrees. Specifically, of the three emotional intelligence constructs, only emotion regulation was related to burnout, and emotional self-awareness was related to job satisfaction.

Interacting with citizens/clients may be challenging for service employees because they must suppress their own feelings to follow organizational rules. Employees repeatedly suppressing their own emotions and acting differently may lead to emotional discrepancies (Grandey, 2000; Lee and Ok, 2012). This emotional discrepancy leads to emotional stress, which, in turn, leads to burnout and job dissatisfaction (Zapf, 2002). Conversely, when employees can perceive and manage their own emotions effectively, their personal accomplishments and job satisfaction may increase and burnout may decrease, which may contribute to strong organizational performance. These findings are consistent with Huang et al. (2010). The results show that emotion regulation is negatively related to burnout and is a vital factor for service workers. Other similar findings have also shown that emotion regulation—and the use of emotion—tends to have more consistent effects on individual work outcomes (such as burnout) than emotional self-awareness and emotional other-awareness (Ciarrochi et al., 2002; Lopes et al., 2004). As people who are able to regulate their own emotions are better at coping with fatigue and emotional exhaustion, individuals who can regulate their own emotions may experience lower levels of burnout in the workplace. Additionally, individuals who can regulate their own emotions are more likely to cope effectively with environmental demands and pressures resulting from work stress, which is associated with burnout in the organization. Burnout not only relates to individual well-being, but may also affect measures of organizational performance, such as turnover rate, absenteeism, low productivity, and negative feedback from clients/citizens.

Emotional self-awareness is the sole factor that is relevant to job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with Day and Carroll (2004), in which the researchers found that there is a significant relationship between emotional perception and job satisfaction but not emotion regulation and emotional understanding. Hosseinian et al. (2008) argue that employees who are able to recognize their own emotional states can also regulate their own emotions. Additionally, such employees can also realize their professional needs and control these such that their job satisfaction may increase (Hosseinian et al., 2008: 904).

Bar-On (1997) and Abraham (2000) showed that the relation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction is modest. The researchers argued that employee

job satisfaction increases when the work environments fit his/her needs (Abraham, 2000; Bar-On, 1997; Chiva and Alegre, 2008; Zeidner et al., 2004). As job satisfaction reflects the degree to which a person's needs or expectations are met at work, employees' job satisfaction increases when they are congruent (Cranny et al., 1992).

We can infer from previous studies and this study that job satisfaction is a "subjective" feeling and/or attitude toward a current job. Thus, the level of job satisfaction may vary by person. When individuals are not able to appraise their own emotions or are not honest regarding their feelings toward their jobs, they may not be satisfied with their jobs. Moreover, as an individual's emotional self-awareness increases, they are more sensitive to signs that may disturb their organizational performance (Hosseinian et al., 2008). Therefore, people who are able to perceive their own emotional states well may not allow anger and other emotions to interfere in their lives (Hosseinian et al., 2008). Additionally, emotional self-awareness enables individuals to adjust their emotions to achieve individual goals in the workplace (Lee, 2013b).

In conclusion, this study contributes to understanding the relationship between the emotional intelligence dimension and burnout, and the emotional intelligence dimension and job satisfaction, in public service jobs. The findings provide researchers and managers in public service fields with information regarding how to increase job satisfaction and decrease burnout by training emotional intelligence abilities. Since emotional intelligence plays a significant role in the work environment and employees' well-being, when recruiting new employees, measures of emotional intelligence, especially emotional self-awareness and emotion regulation, should be used in the recruitment process to select potentially effective job applicants. Thereafter, public service agencies should provide employees with ongoing training and development programs in emotional intelligence. When employees enhance their ability to perceive their own emotions and to regulate their own emotions, the likelihood of experiencing burnout may decrease and job satisfaction may increase. Therefore, turnover and absenteeism may be lessened and employees may be more committed to their organization. Furthermore, prolonged job burnout by interacting with demanding citizens may cause negative side effects, for instance, depression, social phobia, insomnia, and even suicidal thoughts. Job burnout is therefore not just an individual problem; public service agencies, governments, and whole nations must pay great attention to such issues and look for the solution.

However, the findings also show that the emotional intelligence constructs are related to burnout and job satisfaction but not as completely as is generally assumed. Additional research should consider using different emotional intelligence instruments and compare the outcomes with this study; for comparison, studies should be conducted in the private sector as well. There are potential problems with generalizing the findings of this study. The respondents are at earlier stages of their public service careers, and the findings may be skewed as a result. Future research may carefully select samples of all ages; otherwise, repeated studies are required to obtain more generalizable results.

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