



## MEDIATION EFFECT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSCIOUSNESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF OF MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITIES

Aida Mehrad, Hanina Halimatussadiyah Binti Hamsan, Ma'rof Bin Redzuan, Haslinda  
Abdullah

Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia (UPM)

E-mail: aida\_238@yahoo.com

Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia (UPM)

hanina3282@gmail.com

Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia (UPM)

marof@putra.upm.edu.my

Faculty of Human Ecology, University Putra Malaysia (UPM)

lynn@upm.edu.my

### ABSTRACT

Consciousness as one of the main factor of personality influences on job satisfaction of academic staff and both of these factors assumed as important factors in university. Indeed, level of job satisfaction depends on personality characteristic of academic staff at work. The central purpose of current study was to investigating role of emotional intelligence as mediator factor between consciousness and job satisfaction among 440 academic staff in public research universities. Instruments used to collect data were Job Descriptive Index, Big Five Inventory and Emotional Intelligence Inventory. Descriptive and inferential statistic was used to analyze the data and also SEM applied for illustrated role of mediator factor between consciousness and job satisfaction. The results of present study shown that among factors of emotional intelligence, utilization mediates relationship between consciousness and job satisfaction. Certainly, these results have significant implication on the policies universities specially universities in Malaysia.

Key words: Consciousness, Job Satisfaction, Academic Staff, University.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction assumed as an important organizational feeling that covered physiological and psychological factors among staff at university. This inner organizational feeling associated with various factors such as internal and external factors that by their influence changed its levels, brilliantly (Aziri, 2011). Job satisfaction is a combination of internal and external factors that staff contact with them in during of their work and change their attitudes and feeling toward job based on this factors (Olorunsola, 2012). According to the key role of job satisfaction in most of educational organization, considering to this basic human need in university is very imperative. Because university assumed as one of the principle part in educational organization and its outcomes have direct relation with society development (Dhanapal, Alwie, Subramaniam, & Vashu, 2013). This view supported by Gebremicheal and Rao (2013) who explain that job satisfaction has great contribution in health of university and helps to increasing the amount of university's outcomes. On the contrary, lack of consideration to this inner feeling lead to uncommon behavior such as low level of responsibility, aggression and anxiety, cancel the work, exhaustion, insufficient behavior with co-workers etc. (Ahmad, Ahmad & Ali Shah, 2010; Eslami & Gharakhani, 2012).

Regarding to the essential role of job satisfaction at university and effect of various factors on it, presence of internal factors is very considerable. These factors have great contribution on appearing some behavior and reactions such as various levels of performance, activity, burnout, conflict among staff and lead to different insufficient results at university (Ali & Aktar, 2009).

Based on effect of various factors on job satisfaction personality factors are one of these impressive factors. Indeed, personality combined a set of emotions, behavior, approaches etc. that by them individual seem in society and contact with others. Consciousness is one of these internal factors that determined in set of personality factors (Eley et al., 2013; Hazrati, Zabihi, & Mehdizadeh, 2013). This internal factor defined as a kind of self-discipline in managing affairs in private and social life and the key purpose for this characteristic is this factor combined a set of accuracy and responsibilities toward work (Reid-Cunningham, 2008). In 2012, Barkhuizen, Swanepoel, & Ermakova reported there is positive relationship between consciousness and job satisfaction among staff at work environment. Indeed, this internal factor assumed as one of the main predictors that has close relationship with job satisfaction (Naz, Rehman, & Sagib, 2013).

According to the relationship between consciousness and job satisfaction, presence some emotions can mediate their relationship better or worse. Moreover, emotional intelligence assumed as one of these factors that has great role in this relationship and recognizing its factor and realizing effective factor is very important (Alam, 2009). Kalyanasundaram & Lakshmi (2013) focused on role of emotional intelligence factors as internal motivators that motivate skills and social relations among staff and improve the level of job satisfaction. Emotional intelligence involved four central factors such as utilization, perception, managing own emotion, and managing other emotion. Each of these factors has powerful effective on the amount of job satisfaction. Perception defined as realizing emotions that related to facial and voice cause of others. Based on Coetzer (2013) there is positive relationship between perception and job satisfaction and staff show appropriate behavior at workplace. In continue, utilization known as harnessing the influences of emotions in various situation and improve the level of job satisfaction among staff. As well, managing other emotions focuses on different behavioral dimensions such as empathy, communication, organizational awareness, collaboration etc. and conducts them in increasing job satisfaction level (Mousavi, Yarmohammadi, Bani Nosrat, & Tarasi, 2012). And finally managing own emotion covers some behaviors such as adaptability, creativity, and self-control that prepared acceptable field for improving job satisfaction (Darabi, 2012).

Regarding to the role of emotional intelligence as internal factor and its factor definition, this inner motivator has mediator role between personality factors and job satisfaction. Definitely, emotional intelligence has two characteristics, it is affected by other factors and can impacts on another factors. In present study characteristics of emotional intelligence is considerable because it's affected by consciousness factor in one side and the other side influence on job satisfaction. Regarding to the impact of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction some researchers investigated these relationships. In a study conducted by Alam (2009) illustrated that emotional intelligence has positive relation with job satisfaction and lead to high level of job satisfaction. Similarly, Emdady and Bagheri (2013) explained that emotional intelligence has key role in staff performance and encourage them in better decision-making and regulating affairs; presence of these situations organized acceptable feeling toward job. On the other hand, examining relationships between personality factors and emotional intelligence is very important, thereby in this study focused on the mediation effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between consciousness and job satisfaction among academic staff of university.

## 2. METHODS

In present study was used quantitative approach for answer to the aim and research question of the study and also for collecting data and analyzing them applied cross-sectional method. The main reasons for applying the cross-sectional method included budget and time that limit the researcher's area working. The cross-sectional design focuses on collect data based on current attitudes, feelings and believes that applied in social science studies (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2006; Creswell, 2013). A total 440 academic staff selected based on Morgan and Krejcie's table among total three public research universities in Klang Valley, Malaysia.



## a) Measures

### Job Satisfaction

There are three standardized questionnaires that used to measure the data of present study. These questionnaires are Job Descriptive Index, Big Five Inventory and Emotional Intelligence Inventory. The JDI has 72 items and measures work, promotion, supervision, pay and co-worker. These items are rated based on three parts: Yes = 3, No = 0 and I am not sure/no idea = 1. In the current study, job satisfaction measurement show good internal consistency: work ( $\alpha = 0.62$ ), pay ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ), promotion ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ), supervision ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ), coworkers ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ) and overall job satisfaction ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ).

### Personality Factors

The next inventory of this study that used to measure the personality factors is Big Five Inventory that comprised 44 items and measures neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness (Althoff, 2010). All of these five factors are rated, based on 5-point Likert and also this measurement illustrated acceptable internal consistency for present sample: neuroticism ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ), extraversion ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ), openness ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ), agreeableness ( $\alpha = 0.70$ ) and conscientiousness ( $\alpha = 0.75$ ).

### Emotional Intelligence

Another inventory in current study was the emotional intelligence inventory that has 33 items and measures perception, managing own emotion, managing others emotion and utilization of emotion. This scale measured based on 5-point Likert and indicated standard internal consistency: perception (0.78), managing own emotion (0.79), managing others emotion (0.69) and utilization of emotion (0.70).

## b) Data analysis

Descriptive statistics and Cronbach's alpha coefficients between variables were analyzed by SPSS version 20 statistical software and also Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was accomplished to examine the mediation model of the study. The overall model fit was examined using chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ), comparative fit index (CFI), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI). Also, in this study bootstrapping method was used to test statistical significance of mediation with mediator.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the study provides details of distribution of variables and describes the descriptive statistic of all variables (conscientiousness, emotional intelligence factors, and job satisfaction) that used in current study. Table 1 shows the central tendency such as Mean and Standard Deviation and also illustrates the results of correlation between variables.

**Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and correlation between study variables**

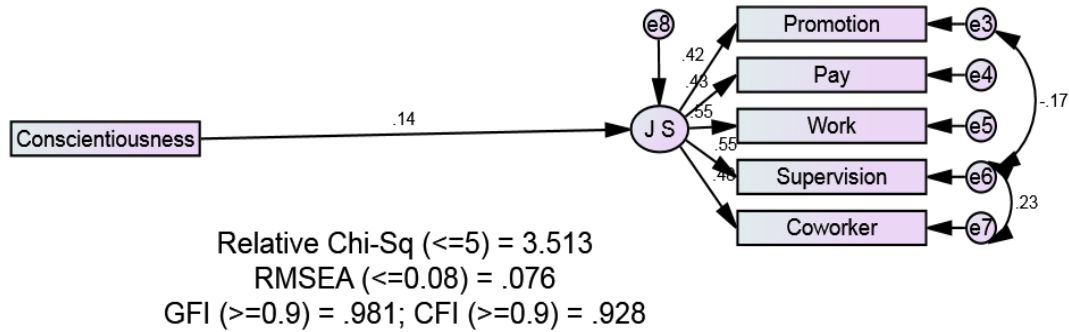
Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Job Satisfaction						
2 Conscientious	.123*					
4 Perception	.113*	.373**				
5 Managing own emotion	.135**	.508**	.652**			
6 Managing other emotion	.098*	.434**	.649**	.661**		
7 Utilization	.142**	.289**	.504**	.631**	.563**	
Mean(SD)	92.37 (6.46)	35.85 (4.29)	40.15 (3.66)	38.22 (3.46)	32.19 (3.03)	24.769 (2.50)

Note: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$



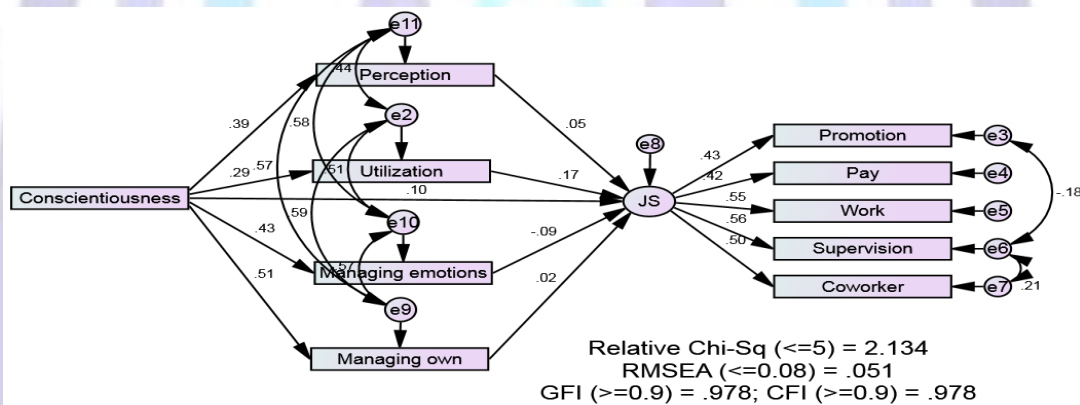


Table 1 displays the results of correlation between conscientiousness, emotional intelligence factors and job satisfaction. As predictable, conscientious was significantly related with job satisfaction ( $r[440] = 0.12; p < .05$ ). In addition, perception was significantly associated with job satisfaction ( $r[440] = 0.11; p < .05$ ). There was significantly relationship between managing own emotion and job satisfaction ( $r[440] = 0.13, p < .01$ ). As well, managing other emotion was significantly associated with job satisfaction ( $r[440] = 0.09, p < .05$ ) and also was found statistically significant association between utilization and job satisfaction ( $r[440] = 0.14, p < .01$ ).



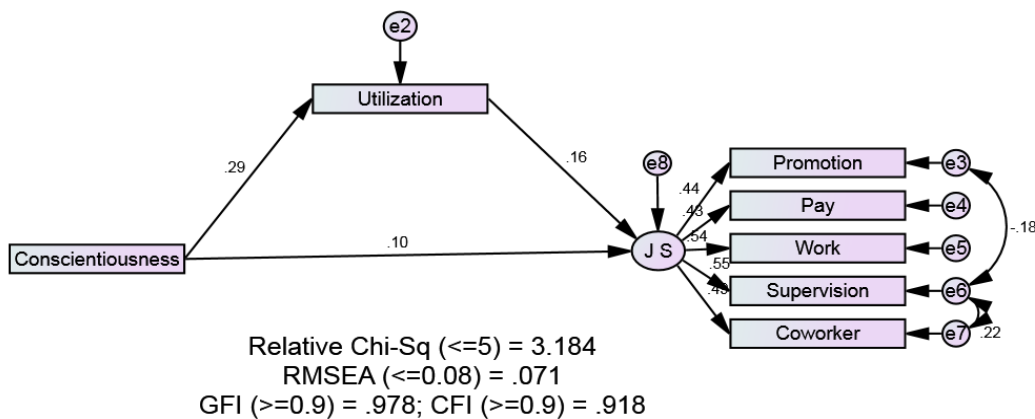
**Figure 1: Direct model of conscientiousness and job satisfaction**

Figure 1 illustrates the structural equations model used to test the direct model between conscientiousness and job satisfaction. Testing the direct model made a good fit to the data of the study ( $\chi^2 = 3.513, p < .05$ , RMSEA = 0.076, GFI = 0.981, CFI = 0.928). Factor loadings on the construct of job satisfaction range from 0.42- 0.55. Based on the processes linking between conscientiousness and job satisfaction, present study suggested that there is significantly association between conscientiousness and job satisfaction; furthermore, for this relationship between these two factors, the stage of mediating continues.



**Figure 2: Indirect model of conscientiousness and factors of emotional intelligence with job satisfaction**

Figure 2 demonstrates the structural equations model that used to test indirect model between conscientiousness, emotional intelligence factors and job satisfaction. These testing displays that there are no significantly association between emotional intelligence factors except utilization with job satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ) in indirect model and the fit model was ( $\chi^2 = 2.134$ , utilization  $p < .05$ , perception  $p = 0.574$ , managing other emotions  $p = 0.298$ , managing own emotion  $p = 0.84$ , RMSEA = 0.051, GFI = 0.978, CFI = 0.978). The factor loadings on construct of job satisfaction range from 0.42- 0.56.



**Figure 3: Indirect model of utilization as mediator between conscientiousness and job satisfaction**

Figure 3 shows the structural equations model that was used to test utilization as a mediator between conscientiousness and job satisfaction. Testing this indirect model displays that there is no significant association between conscientiousness and job satisfaction based on the structural equations model, while there is a significant association between utilization and job satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ) and also the indirect model made a good fit to the data of the present study ( $\chi^2 = 3.184$ ,  $p < .05$ , RMSEA = 0.071, GFI = 0.978, CFI = 0.918). In general, the results show that there is full mediation between conscientiousness, utilization, and job satisfaction.

**Table 2: Summary of SEM analysis**

Path		Estimate	SE	CR	p	Total Effect	Indirect effect	p
Conscientiousness	Utilization	0.169	0.027	6.335	***			
Utilization	Job Satisfaction	0.156	0.066	2.359	0.018			
Conscientiousness	Job Satisfaction	0.056	0.037	1.509	0.131	0.142	0.045	.014

**Abbreviations:** SE, standard error; CR, critical ratio.

Table 2 shows the mediation effect of utilization between conscientiousness and job satisfaction. The results illustrate that there is no association between conscientiousness and job satisfaction ( $CR = 1.50$ ;  $p = 0.13$ ) while the results display that there is a significant relationship between utilization and job satisfaction ( $CR = 2.35$ ;  $p < .05$ ). In addition, the total effect of conscientiousness on job satisfaction, which covers both mediating and direct effects, is significant ( $\beta = 0.14$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The mediated effect of conscientiousness, through utilization, on job satisfaction is found to be 4%. This indicates that slightly more than one-third of the total effect of conscientiousness on job satisfaction is mediated through utilization. In continuation, the next step of analysis for this section, a bootstrapping method was used to make conclusions regarding the significance of indirect effects of conscientiousness through utilization, support towards job satisfaction. The results of the bootstrapping analysis exposed that utilization meaningfully mediated the effect of conscientiousness on job satisfaction ( $p < .05$ ).

The present study proposes that utilization as one of the emotional intelligence factors mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and job satisfaction among academic staff in universities, Malaysia. In fact, in this study, the role of emotional intelligence factors as positive motivators that mediate the relationship between personality characteristics of academic staff and job satisfaction and also show the effect of conscientiousness as one of the personality factors on job satisfaction among staff at university. Consequently, these results are dependable with some previous investigations that concentrated on these variables and their relationships among staff. In fact, these results are in agreement with Chiva and Alegre (2008) that explained factors of emotional intelligence effect on job satisfaction and have a great contribution in increasing its amount at workplace. Indeed, factors of emotions that cover private and social effects by other factors (internal and external) and carry their outcome to behavior and reaction at work. Also, in 2011, Jordon and Troth mentioned that factors of emotional intelligence provide operative changes that impacted various factors on job satisfaction at workplace. In line with Kafetsios and Zampetakis (2008) found that each factor of emotional intelligence has a positive association with job satisfaction and mediates the influence of various motivators (internal and external) on job satisfaction at work.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study derives from the results. These results designated job satisfaction of academic staff impacted by conscientiousness and utilization. In the current study, some methods were used to discover the distribution, correlation between key variables, and the role of utilization as a mediator variable between the dependent variable (conscientiousness) and the independent variable (job satisfaction). The results of this study obviously determined the main role of job satisfaction among academic



staff that impacted by different factors at universities. Certainly, the results showed that internal factors motivate job satisfaction of academic staff at workplace.

Regarding to the background of universities in Malaysia which have principally contribution in mounting of information, presence of job satisfaction as positive organizational behavior among academic staff is very imperative. So, it can be decided influence of difference factors appear several levels of job satisfaction at university. Furthermore, in present study exposed that presence of utilization as mediator between consciousness and job satisfaction covers social and personal dimensions of staff's life. Truly, the staff who apply their emotional intelligence or motivated by them have better feeling toward their job and its environment and also they cope with problems based on their personality. As well, utilization conducts consciousness and mediates its effect in fully forms. In accordance with utilization role, this factor plays key role between consciousness and job satisfaction among academic staff.

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### **Author's biography with Photo**

Aida Mehrad as PhD student in social psychology from university Putra Malaysia (UPM). She received her Master of public psychology from Islamic Azad University in Iran. She writes about mediation effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between consciousness and job satisfaction among academic staff of Malaysian universities.

