

Investigating the impact of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Burnout.

Dr/ Sally Kamel Ali Omran

**Assistant Professor, Business Administration Department,
Faculty of Commerce, Cairo University, Giza, Egypt.**

Email: sally_omran@foc.cu.edu.eg

Abstract

Today's business world requires employees who have the capacity to exhibit extra-role behaviors that go beyond their formal job descriptions. Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in enabling employees to manifest organizational citizenship behavior as well as reduce job burnout. Thus, the current empirical study aimed at investigating the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout as well as the indirect relationship through organizational citizenship behavior. To this end, a cross-sectional design was utilized and a path analysis was conducted. Using a sample of 381 respondents from the information and communication sector in Egypt, the results of the path analysis verified the direct relationship but failed to justify the mediation effect. Based on these results, the current investigation set forward some theoretical and practical recommendations.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, job burnout, organizational citizenship behavior*

المستخلص:

يتطلب عالم الأعمال اليوم موظفين لديهم القدرة على إظهار سلوكيات تتجاوز المهام الرسمية المحددة في وصفهم الوظيفي. يلعب الذكاء العاطفي دوراً مهماً في تمكين الموظفين من إظهار سلوك المواطنة التنظيمية وتقليل الاحتراق الوظيفي. لذا، هدفت هذه الدراسة التجريبية إلى التحقق في العلاقة المباشرة بين الذكاء العاطفي والاحتراق الوظيفي، بالإضافة إلى العلاقة غير المباشرة من خلال سلوك المواطنة التنظيمية. لتحقيق ذلك، تم استخدام تصميم مقطعي، وأجري تحليل المسار. ومن خلال عينة مكونة من ٣٨١ مشاركاً من قطاع تكنولوجيا المعلومات والاتصالات في مصر، أكدت نتائج تحليل المسار العلاقة المباشرة بين المتغيرات، لكنها لم تثبت تأثير الوساطة. بناءً على هذه النتائج، قدمت الدراسة بعض التوصيات النظرية والعملية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الذكاء العاطفي، الاحتراق الوظيفي، سلوك المواطنة التنظيمية.

Introduction

The emergence of the human relations perspective has highlighted the significant role of emotions in social interactions, particularly within the workplace setting (Park & Rhee, 2020). This recognition has promoted many organizations to recognize that personal skills are essential for achieving success (Nijhawan et al., 2022). In this context, enhancing employees' emotional intelligence has become a key priority, especially during periods of stress and adversity (Nijhawan et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022). Consequently, a growing number of researchers are directing their efforts toward exploring the effects of emotional intelligence in organizational environments (Cao et al., 2022; Dheebea & Tamizharasi, 2022).

On the other hand, job burnout, a detrimental phenomenon, has been identified as an alarming phenomenon across different professions and industries (Bocheliuk et al., 2020; Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022). This issue is especially pressing in the current global business environment, which often requires employees to manage excessive workloads alongside tight deadlines, ultimately resulting in chronic stress which eventually leads to job burnout (Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020). As a result, the concept of burnout has garnered the interest of scholars who are concerned with occupational health and positive psychology especially in discovering how to mitigate job burnout (Cao et al., 2022).

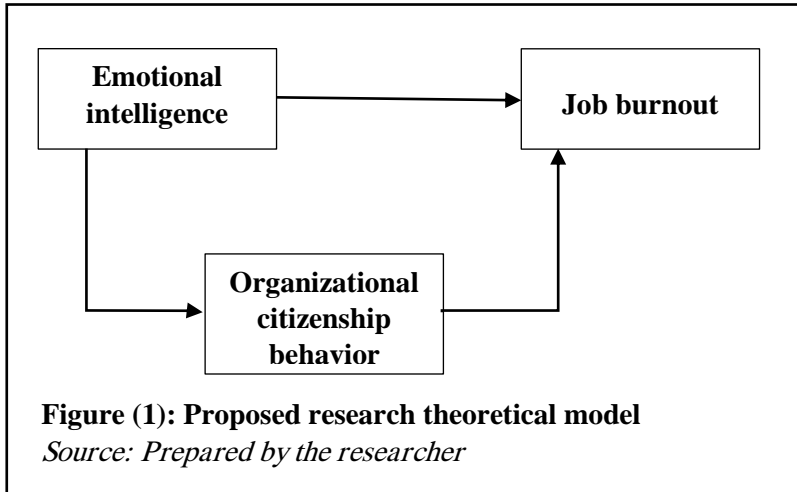
Since emotional intelligence is defined as skill set or capabilities pertaining to identifying, expressing and managing one's and others' emotions when attending to job demands, it can be a helpful skill in preventing or mitigating the effects of job burnout (Jooste & Coetzee, 2022; Lagman, 2023). Despite the important role of emotional intelligence in mitigating the effects of job burnout, there are few empirical investigations that examined the influence of emotional intelligence on job burnout (Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020)

Furthermore, organizational citizenship behavior has become a pivotal construct in organization psychology that significantly affect both people and organizations. In this respect, emotional intelligence is significantly linked to positive emotional states

which enables emotionally intelligent individuals to view situations more optimistically and exhibit greater concern for their peers (Dirican & Erdil, 2019). Consequently, they are more prone to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors (Meniado, 2020; Yu & Takahashi, 2020).

The current cross-sectional study aimed at filling the identified research gaps by investigating the direct impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout as well as the indirect impact through organizational citizenship behavior. As such, the following research questions were determined based on the developed theoretical research model – figure (1):

- a. What is the direct impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout?
- b. What is the direct impact of emotional intelligence on organizational citizenship behavior?
- c. What is the direct impact of organizational citizenship behavior on job burnout?
- d. What is the indirect impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through organizational citizenship behavior?



2. Literature review and hypotheses development

This section is dedicated to providing review of the theoretical foundation of the research variables. Additionally, this section will highlight the reasoning behind the hypothesis development

2.1 Theoretical foundation of the research variables

This sub-section is dedicated to providing an overview on the research variables, namely job burnout, emotional intelligence, and organization citizenship behavior

2.1.1 Job burnout

Burnout is among the most recognized phenomenon that may have severe negative consequences on employees of different professions (Bocheliuk et al., 2020; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022;

Gabriel & Aguinis, 2022; Sharaf et al., 2022) and industries (Huang et al., 2021; Xie et al., 2021; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). In this vein, it is claimed that job burnout has a negative and damaging impact on people, organizations, and societies as whole (Putra et al., 2020; Min et al., 2021; Zaza et al., 2021; Zareei et al., 2022; Hassan et al., 2023). For instance, previous research indicated that job burnout had detrimental effects on job satisfaction (Min et al., 2021; Xie et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Asfahani, 2023; Qi et al., 2024), job engagement (Min et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022), performance (Huang et al., 2021; Shah et al., 2021; Asfahani, 2023; Hassan et al., 2023; Andini et al., 2025), productivity (Asfahani, 2023), and employee wellbeing (Hameli et al., 2024).

Job burnout is classified as an occupational strain that is characterized by an extended state of physical and emotional exhaustion resulting from prolonged exposure to work-related stress (Choi et al., 2019; Putra et al., 2020; Choi et al., 2021; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Lagman, 2023), thereby influencing the individual's professional and health (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Asfahani, 2023). Although it has been defined in different ways, yet the majority of scholars agreed that it is a complex and multifaceted syndrome that is an outcome of extended occupational stress accompanied by the inability to adequately recover (Bayoumy, 2018; Min et al., 2021; Jooste & Coetzee, 2022). Consequently, job burnout leads to decrease in personal

achievement, emotional exhaustion, cynicism (Bayoumy, 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Ingo et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Qi et al., 2024)., and decreased professional efficacy or a general negative outlook about work and life (Bayoumy, 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Huang et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Qi et al., 2024).

Emotional exhaustion is a central dimension of job burnout (Bayoumy, 2018; Huang et al., 2021; Hameli et al., 2024). Here, exhaustion is characterized by a pronounced energy reduction (Lu & Gursay, 2013; Choi et al., 2019; Kim & Qu, 2019; Zaza et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2022; Cheng et al., 2022; Prentice et al., 2023). The latter results in a state of general fatigue whether mental, emotional, or physical (Atouba & Lammers, 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Jooste & Coetzee, 2022) that emerges from prolonged and intense stress - physical, mental and cognitive – due to excessive demands (Jooste & Coetzee, 2022; Hassan et al., 2023). It is argued that such situation hinders a person's ability to function effectively, thus lowering his/her positivity towards their jobs (Bartram et al., 2023). Consequently, employees who suffer from emotional exhaustion usually find it difficult to adapt to their work environment because of lack of emotional energy that is essential for effectively managing their job responsibilities (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022).

On the other hand, depersonalization or cynicism is related to a state of detachment from work (Khan et al., 2018; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Jooste & Coetzee, 2022; Bartram et al., 2023;

Prentice et al., 2023), lack of concern about job duties (Bayoumy, 2018; Choi et al., 2019; Kim & Qu, 2019; Sanchez-Gomez & Bresó, 2020; Zaza et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2022; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022; Kasemy et al., 2023; Tulili et al., 2023) and peers (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Cheng et al., 2022; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). As a representative of the interpersonal aspect of job burnout, it manifests itself in negative attitudes and behaviors such as irritability and a tendency not to interact with others (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022). Finally, lack of professional efficacy manifests as a detrimental assessment of one's professional abilities (Atouba & Lammers, 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Choi et al., 2019; Cao et al., 2022) and uncertainties about the effectiveness of one's performance (Khan et al., 2018; Edú-Valsania et al., 2022), thus leading to reduced productivity (Salama et al., 2022; Prentice et al., 2023; Tulili et al., 2023), morale (Edú-Valsania et al., 2022) and increased feeling of failures (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019).

It is argued that job burnout starts in an individual when experiencing emotional exhaustion as a response to prolonged strain. This leads depersonalization which associated with detachment from work and people, thereby eventually leading to reduced professional efficacy (Talachi & Gorji, 2013; Bayoumy, 2018). Thus, in relation to the conservation of resources theory, it could be argued that job burnout could be an outcome when job resources are insufficient to meet job demands (Qi et al., 2024).

2.1.2 Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence has been recognized as a significant contributor to the effectiveness of workplace performance (Schoeps et al., 2021). This was noticed since the rise of the human relations approach (Nijhawan et al., 2022) which emphasized the importance of emotions in social interactions effectiveness (Park & Rhee, 2020; Robinson et al., 2023) especially within today's turbulent business environment (Nijhawan et al., 2022). Such business environment has stressed the significant contribution of people in fostering organizational performance and returns (Dogru, 2022). Consequently, emotional intelligence as a personal skill is recognized as a critical asset that outweighs technical skills for organizational success (Nijhawan et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022). Prior research showed a significant and positive relation of emotional intelligence on psychological empowerment, employee wellbeing, job performance, interpersonal relationships (Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017), and job satisfaction (Bru-Luna et al., 2021; Sharaf et al., 2022)

Emotional intelligence is broadly defined as the capacity to recognize, utilize, comprehend, and regulate emotions (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Omobude & Umemezia, 2020; Schoeps et al., 2021; Cao et al., 2022; Liao et al., 2022), along with the associated emotional information (Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017; Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Kim & Qu, 2019; Cao et al., 2022;

Hassan et al., 2023). This capability is critical for promoting cognitive, intellectual, and emotional development (Cao et al., 2022; Hassan et al., 2023). As such, it entails an accurate understanding and regulation of both one's and others' emotions, as well as an awareness of how these emotions affect behaviors and actions (Liao et al., 2022; Binsaeed et al., 2023; Kasemy et al., 2023). Consequently, emotional intelligence integrates emotional awareness with cognitive processes (Liao et al., 2022), facilitating the development of healthy and well-developed interpersonal relationships (Mahsun et al., 2023), thereby positively impacting role performance (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019; Krén & Séllei, 2021).

Some scholars opted to define emotional intelligence from a trait approach while others resorted to look at it from an ability perspective (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Kim & Park, 2020; Meniado, 2020). Additionally, a third group advocated for a synthesis of both perspectives (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019; Rivers et al., 2019; Kim & Park, 2020; Meniado, 2020). Trait emotional intelligence conceptualized it as a set of personality traits and relatively stable behavioral inclinations that assist in recognizing, interpreting, and responding to emotional experiences (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Bru-Luna et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2022).

On the other hand, ability perspective viewed emotional intelligence as a skill that allows people to effectively process

emotional information concerning themselves and others, and using this understanding to guide their actions (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Kim & Park, 2020; Meniado, 2020). Many of the scholars adopt this perspective and believe that emotional intelligence is a skill that can be learnt (Sharaf et al., 2022; Mortillaro & Schlegel, 2023; Santa et al., 2023), thus enabling individuals to effectively adapt to their environments (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019). Finally, the mixed perspective considered emotional intelligence as a mixture of both personality traits and skills (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019; Rivers et al., 2019; Dimitrov, 2020; Kim & Park, 2020; Meniado, 2020; Cheng et al., 2022; Singh et al., 2022).

The researcher followed the ability perspective to emotional intelligence which is composed of four dimensions. Firstly, 'self-emotions appraisal' refers to an individual's capability to identify and express his/her own emotions (Schlaegel et al., 2020). This encompasses the capacity to accurately recognize one's emotions, thereby improving the person's response to his own feelings as well as facilitating the manner through which feelings are expressed to others (Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Kim & Qu, 2019; Santa et al., 2023). Secondly, 'others' emotions appraisal' encompasses the ability to identify and understand the feelings of others (Schlaegel et al., 2020; Santa et al., 2023). Thus, it is linked to the concept of empathy (Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Santa et al., 2023). Thirdly, 'regulation of emotions' signifies the

individual's level of proficiency in managing his/her emotional states, thus facilitating a timely and effective recovery from psychological hardships (Kim & Qu, 2019; Rivers et al., 2019; Schlaegel et al., 2020). Finally, 'use of emotions' pertains to the capability to direct one's emotions towards constructive and improved performance (Rivers et al., 2019; Schlaegel et al., 2020), thereby allowing an individual to seize opportunities that arise from challenges (Dirican & Erdil, 2019).

In conclusion, high emotionally intelligent individuals are capable of identifying, understanding and expressing their own and others' emotions. As such, those individuals are typically accepted at the social level. Furthermore, they know how to take advantage of their own emotions, thereby enabling them to adapt and modify their emotions and behaviors when facing negative situations (Cao et al., 2022).

2.1.3 Organizational citizenship behavior

In today's constantly changing business environment, organizations desiring effective functioning should rely on individuals who proactively engage in behaviors that go beyond their job obligations (Siswadi et al., 2023; Gebresilase et al., 2024). This implies that employees who exhibit organizational citizenship behavior do not expect personal gains, but they significantly contribute to the success of their organizations and peers (Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Meniado, 2020; Younas et al.,

2023). Among those benefits are enhanced organizational effectiveness (Meniado, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021), increased productivity (Meniado, 2020; Siswadi et al., 2023), decreased costs (Siswadi et al., 2023), elevated performance (Almahdali et al., 2021; Siswadi et al., 2023) and improved commitment (Gebresilase et al., 2024).

Organizational citizenship behavior is defined as a voluntary behavior that falls out of an employee's formal duties and responsibilities (Talachi & Gorji, 2013; Khan et al., 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Park & Rhee, 2020; Dogru, 2022; Nijhawan et al., 2022; Anisa et al., 2024) but promotes the effective performance of an organization (Lailatur Rizki et al., 2019; Kim & Park, 2020; Omobude & Umemezia, 2020; Mahsun et al., 2023). In other words, it could be referred to as a positive discretionary behavior that involves assertive employees' actions that goes beyond their prescribed roles and for which the employee is not rewarded (Yu & Takahashi, 2020; Romia et al., 2021; Santa et al., 2023; Younas et al., 2023). Consequently, organizational citizenship behavior is typically associated with social and psychological aspects within an organization (Dogru, 2022).

Organ's five-dimensions model of organization citizenship behavior is the most commonly used (Nijhawan et al., 2022). This model includes the following dimensions

- Altruism involves selflessly helping peers at work. Consequently, it helps in reducing miscommunication and conflict between employees (Siswadi et al., 2023). (Sangperm, 2018; Meniado, 2020; Park & Rhee, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021; Dogru, 2022).
- Courtesy is associated with refraining from infringing on the rights of others within an organization (Bayoumy, 2018; Park & Rhee, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021; Dogru, 2022; Nijhawan et al., 2022).
- Conscientiousness is related to following organizational rules and regulations (Bayoumy, 2018; Park & Rhee, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021; Dogru, 2022), thereby fostering teamwork effectiveness, organizational performance (Siswadi et al., 2023) and commitment to work (Talachi & Gorji, 2013).
- Civic virtue is related to actions taken by an employee and benefits the organization (Talachi & Gorji, 2013; Bayoumy, 2018; Park & Rhee, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021; Dogru, 2022). This could be manifested in, for example, the active participation, genuine interest in the organization's policies (Nijhawan et al., 2022), and employee involvement (Meniado, 2020).
- Sportsmanship involves utilizing constructive techniques and avoiding any complaints regarding inconveniences within an organization (Bayoumy, 2018; Sangperm, 2018; Park &

Rhee, 2020; Yorulmaz & Karabacak, 2021; Dogru, 2022). Thus, it allows for prioritizing crucial job functions, thereby enabling organizations to maintain organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Meniado, 2020).

Based on the above dimensions, organization citizenship behavior could be dissected into behaviors that benefit the person (OCB-I) or the organization (OCB-O) (Bayoumy, 2018; Khan et al., 2018; Organ, 2018; Dirican & Erdil, 2019; Dimitrov, 2020; Nijhawan et al., 2022). The former may include assisting colleagues whereas the latter may incorporate the protection of company properties (Organ, 2018; Dimitrov, 2020; Robinson et al., 2023).

2.2 Hypotheses development

This sub-section is devoted to discussing the relationship between the research variables. In this respect, the direct relationship and the indirect relationships would be discussed in an attempt to set the argument for the research hypothesis

2.2.1 The direct relationships

This sub-section elaborates on the rationale that contributes to the formulation of the hypotheses regarding the direct relationship among job burnout, emotional intelligence, and organization citizenship behavior.

a. Emotional intelligence and job burnout

People who possess a strong capacity to recognize and effectively respond to the emotions arising from the surrounding environment will understand the probable reasons and effects of emotions, and manage their emotions. In this vein, people with high emotional intelligence would be better equipped to regulate their emotions, cope and maintain a positive outlook within stressful work environments (Martínez-Monteagudo et al., 2019; Silbaugh et al., 2021). Consequently, emotional intelligence plays a critical role in lowering the vulnerability to encounter job burnout (Silbaugh et al., 2021; Kotaman et al., 2022). Based on this argument, several empirical investigations found that emotional intelligence was significantly and negatively correlated with burnout (Platsidou, 2010; Kant & Shanker, 2021; Seyedi et al., 2021; Silbaugh et al., 2021; Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Sharaf et al., 2022; Bagatini et al., 2024). Based on previous research, the researcher developed the following hypothesis:

H₁: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant impact on job burnout

b. Emotional intelligence and organization citizenship behavior

In today's challenging and turbulent business environment, organizational citizenship behavior is one of the critical outcomes for organizational success (Omobude & Umemezia, 2020). This

is simply because individuals who possess high emotional intelligence tend to excel in managing interpersonal relationships, regulating their emotions, and comprehending the viewpoints of others (Miao et al., 2017). All those competencies promote behaviors that are consistent with organization citizenship behaviors and elevating the overall workplace atmosphere. For instance, employees with high emotional intelligence exhibit greater altruism especially within a challenging and stressful work environment (Anisa et al., 2024).

In this vein, several empirical investigations reported a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organization citizenship behavior (Ni Putu et al., 2019; Omobude & Umemezia, 2020; Munawaroh et al., 2021; Kim & Park, 2022; Anisa et al., 2024). Based on the afore-mentioned argument and prior empirical investigation, the researcher posited that:

H₂: Emotional intelligence has a positive and significant impact on organization citizenship behavior

c. Organization citizenship behavior and job burnout

Some researchers opted to study the impact of job burnout on organizational citizenship behavior while others investigated the reciprocal relationship. In both instances, there was a negative and significant impact between the two variables. For example, the study of Khan et al. (2018) and the study of Sangperm (2018) found that job burnout negatively and significantly influence

organizational citizenship behavior. On the other hand, other study found that organizational citizenship had a negative and significant impact on job burnout (Ashoori, 2017; Andini et al., 2025). In this respect, the researcher takes the stand that organizational citizenship behavior reduces the likelihood that an employee would suffer from job burnout. This assumption is based on the researcher's belief that employees who manifest organizational citizenship behavior tend to create a positive work environment that encourages teamwork, collaboration and supportive workplace. This in turn is expected to reduces the amount of stress that may be encountered, thus reducing the possibility to suffer from job burnout. Based on this assumption and the results of prior research, the researcher posited that:

H₃: Organization citizenship behavior has a negative and significant impact on job burnout

2.2.2 The indirect relationship

As mentioned earlier, several empirical investigations have reported a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior. Additionally, there is paucity in the study of the influence of organizational citizenship behavior on job burnout. However, those few studies reported a negative relationship between the two variables. In this vein, the researcher believes that emotional intelligence could play a central role in elevating employees

organizational citizenship behavior which in turn would reduce their susceptibility to manifest job burnout. Accordingly, the researcher hypothesized that:

H₄: Emotional intelligence has a negative and significant impact on job burnout through organization citizenship behavior

3. Empirical investigation

This section is dedicated analyzing the results of empirical study as well as testing the research hypotheses.

3.1 Population and sampling

The present empirical study was conducted in the information and communication technology sector in Egypt. As indicated by the online database of the Information Technology Industry Development Agency (IDITA), this critical sector employs approximately 115,720 employees. The current study utilized online google forms for data collection where respondents were ensured complete confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The researcher received 381 responses, thus accounting for 98.44% response rate based on a random sample size of 387 responses

3.2 Measurement instruments

A 5 point-Likert scale was adopted which ranged from “1” denoting total disagreement and “5” reflecting total agreement. Furthermore, the researcher relied on an expert in the area of

organizational behavior to translate the administered questionnaire into Arabic because all respondents were Egyptians. Finally, all research variables were examined through the use of validated measurement instruments as follows”

- a. Job burnout: The measurement instrument of Malach and Jackson was utilized (1981 as cited in Lee et al., 2022). An exemplary statement is “I feel emotionally drained from my work” (Lee et al., 2022, p. 15)
- b. Emotional intelligence: When investigating emotional intelligence, the research relied on Liao et al. measurement tool. “I am capable of knowing why I have certain feelings” (Liao et al., 2022, p. 1117) is an example of the statements incorporated in this tool.
- c. Organizational citizenship behavior: The current research relied on Van Dyne and LePine’s (1998) measurement instrument. Statements from this tool were adapted, “I provide constructive suggestions about how my department can improve its effectiveness” is an example of the adapted statement.

3.3 Exploratory factor analysis

To determine the most reliable and valid instruments related to each latent construct, an exploratory factor analysis was undertaken. As indicated in table (1), all factor loadings met the minimum standard of 0.50 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.4 Testing reliability and validity

It is essential to evaluate the effectiveness and consistency of the measurement tool (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). As indicated in table (1), one dimension of emotional intelligence (regulation of emotions) failed to meet the threshold of Cronbach's alpha but the composite reliability of all latent construct exceeded the minimum threshold of 0.60. On the other hand, when assessing the validity of the measurement tool, all latent constructs met the minimum threshold of variance extracted and average variance extracted (0.70, 0.50 respectively) (Hair et al., 2019)

Table (1): Exploratory factor analysis, Validity and reliability						
	Factor loading	p-value	Validity %		Reliability %	
			EV*	AVE*	Cronbach's Alpha	CR*
Job burnout: Emotional exhaustion		<0.001	77.05	73.97	85.00	89.47
BRO1	0.893					
BRO2	0.914					
BRO3	0.760					
Table (1): Exploratory factor analysis, Validity and reliability (continued)						
Job burnout: Depersonalization		<0.001	78.82	72.61	83.30	88.64
BRO5	0.741					
BRO7	0.901					
BRO8	0.879					
Emotional intelligence: Self- emotions appraisal		<0.001	82.86	81.96	89.60	93.15
EMI1	0.875					
EMI2	0.893					
EMI3	0.841					
Emotional intelligence: Regulation of emotions		<0.001	72.62	50.85	62.39	67.39
EMI4	0.875					
EMI5	0.893					

Table (1): Exploratory factor analysis, Validity and reliability (continued)						
Emotional intelligence: others' emotions		<0.001	82.16	82.06	89.10	93.20
MI8	0.844					
EMI9	0.901					
EMI10	0.883					
Organizational citizenship		<0.001	58.85	62.08	64.70	76.07
OCB1	0.620					
OCB2	0.699					
OCB4	0.727					
* EV: Explained variance, AVE: Average variance extracted, CR: Composite reliability Source: Prepared by the researcher						

3.5 Descriptive analysis

Table (2) shows the average score of the research variables. From the table, the average score (mean) was above average for all latent constructs with the exception of one dimension of job burnout, namely depersonalization. It was also noted that one dimension of emotional intelligence, regulation of emotions, was insignificant (p -value = 0.198) though respondents' perception was above average (mean = 3.41)

Table (2): Average scores and their significance				
Latent construct	Mean	95% Confidence level		p-value
		Min.	Max.	
Job burnout: Emotional exhaustion	3.26	2.98	3.53	<0.001
Job burnout: Depersonalization	2.16	2.04	2.33	<0.001
Emotional intelligence: Own's emotions	3.60	3.51	3.68	<0.001
Emotional intelligence: regulation of emotions	3.41	3.38	3.45	0.198
Emotional intelligence: Others' emotions	3.80	3.62	4.03	<0.001
Organizational citizenship behavior	4.02	3.90	4.15	<0.001
Source: Prepared by the researcher				

The researcher conducted further analysis to determine whether there was significant difference against demographic variables. With respect to gender, the examination of gender revealed a distribution of 79.60 % and 20.40 % for males and females respectively. There was insignificant difference between males and females for all variables ($p\text{-value} > 0.05$) except for one dimension of job burnout, depersonalization, there was a significant difference ($p\text{-value} = 0.015$). Notably, there was insignificant difference and respondents perception on all research variables was above average between males and females for all research variables except for 'depersonalization' – a dimension of job burnout. Here, there was a significant difference and a below average score for both males and females.

With respect to the second demographic variable, experience, the distribution of indicated that 22 % of the respondents had experience of less than 3 years, 18.10% had 3 – less than 5 years, 15.70% had 5 – less 7 years, and 44.10% had more than 7 years. In this vein, the analysis revealed that there was an insignificant difference among research variables except for one dimension of job burnout, depersonalization ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$), and organizational citizenship behavior ($p\text{-value} < 0.001$). In this case, Duncan test showed that employees with experience less than 3 years and less than 7 years had an above average score that was lower than those with experience above 7 years. However, when examining the effect of experience on

‘depersonalization’, a dimension of job burnout, showed that all respondents’ perception was below average. In this respect, those with experience below 3 years and less than 5 years had lower average compared to those with experience 5 years and more than 7 years.

3.6 Correlation analysis

As indicated in the correlation matrix presented in table (3), although the bivariate relationship emotional intelligence (independent variable) was negatively correlated with the two dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization), it was only statistically significant with depersonalization ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). However, they all manifested a weak relationship. When examining the relationship between emotional intelligence, all its dimensions showed a weak to moderate and statistically significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. On the other hand, an examination of the relationship between organizational citizenship and job burnout revealed a negative and statistically significant bivariate relationship. Finally, the relationship between emotional intelligence and its dimensions (self-emotions appraisal, regulation of emotions, and understanding others’ emotions) were positive and statistically significant.

3.7 Path analysis and hypotheses testing

To evaluate the direct, indirect, and total effect of the outcome variable, the researcher performed a confirmatory factor analysis. Before testing the hypotheses, the researcher verified the fit of the model. As indicated in table (4), all goodness-fit indices showed an acceptable model fit as recommended by Hair et al. (Hair et al., 2019).

Table (3): Correlation matrix							
	EMIa	EM Ib	EM Ic	BROa	BROb	OCB	EMI
EMIa	1.000						
EM Ib	0.407**	1.000					
EM Ic	0.452**	0.322**	1.000				
BROa	-0.060 0.121	-0.043 0.201	-0.047 0.180	1.000			
BROb	-0.175**	-0.125 0.007	-0.138 0.003	0.386**	1.000		
OCB	0.383**	0.273**	0.304**	-0.113 0.013	-0.332**	1.000	
EMI	0.755**	0.539**	0.598**	-0.079 0.061	-0.231**	0.507**	1.000
* EMI: emotional intelligence, EMIa: emotional intelligence- understanding one's emotions, EM Ib: emotional intelligence – regulation of emotions, EM Ic: emotional intelligence – understanding others emotions, OCB: organizational citizenship behavior, BROa: job burnout – emotional exhaustion, BROb: job burnout - depersonalization ** p-value < 0.0001 Correlation matrix extracted from Lisrel 10.2 output and p-value was calculated using Minitab 17 Source: Prepared by the researcher							

Table (4): Goodness-of-fit indices	
Index	Results
RMSEA	0.066
Chi-squared/degrees of freedom	2.67
NFI	0.931
NNFI	0.945
CFI	0.955
IFI	0.955
RFI	0.915
RMR	0.059
SRMR	0.059
GFI	0.919
AGFI	0.889
PGFI	0.667
Source: Results generated from Lisrel 10.2 software report Prepared by the researcher	

When assessing the indirect relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout through organizational citizenship behavior, it was partially verified because it only influenced one dimension of job burnout, namely depersonalization. However, the path coefficient of the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and depersonalization was -0.231 which was identical to the indirect relationship through organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, it could be concluded that the mediating effect was left unverified. In other words, the mediation variable did not influence the relationship.

The current empirical investigation aimed at studying the direct impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout as well as the indirect influence through organizational citizenship behavior. As indicated in the proposed theoretical model "as previously mentioned in the introduction", the researcher posited a negative and significant impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout. As shown in table (5), this assumption was partially verified (H_1) because emotional intelligence had a negative and significant impact on depersonalization but a negative and insignificant impact on emotional exhaustion. In addition, emotional intelligence had a positive and significant influence on organizational citizenship behavior, thereby justifying H_2 . Furthermore, organizational citizenship behavior had a direct negative and significant impact on both emotional exhaustion

and depersonalization (dimensions of job burnout), thereby verifying H_3 .

Table (5): Hypotheses testing						
Effect	Path coefficient	Std error	t-value	p-value	Sig.	Hypotheses test
Direct effect						
EMI → EMIIa	0.755	0.075	10.565	< 0.0001	S	
EMI → EMIIb	0.540	0.092	5.896	< 0.0001	S	
EMI → EMIIc	0.601	0.070	8.124	< 0.0001	S	
EMI → BROa	-0.079	0.049	-1.586	0.0568	IS	H ₁ : Partially verified
EMI → BROb	-0.231	0.077	-2.990	0.0015	S	
EMI → OCB	0.507	0.075	6.577	< 0.0001	S	H ₂ : Verified
OCB → BROa	-0.100	0.054	-1.854	0.0323	S	H ₃ : Verified
OCB → BROb	-0.292	0.089	-3.124	0.0009	S	
Indirect effect						
EMI → BROa	-0.079	0.057	-1.586	0.0563	IS	H ₄ : Partially verified
EMI → BROb	-0.231	0.059	-2.990	0.0015	S	
Data was extracted from Lisrel 10.2 output and p-value was calculated using Minitab 17						
Source: Prepared by the researcher						

4. Discussion

This section is devoted to discussing the direct and indirect relationship between the research variables.

4.1 The direct relationships

The current empirical investigation partially aligned with the results of prior research on the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout (Platsidou, 2010; Kant & Shanker, 2021; Seyedi et al., 2021; Silbaugh et al., 2021; Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Sharaf et al., 2022; Bagatini et al., 2024). In this study, the researcher established a direct, negative, significant (p-value < 0.05), and weak (r= -0.231) relationship between emotional intelligence and depersonalization (p-value <0.05) but failed to justify the relationship between the former and emotional exhaustion (p-value > 0.05). The researcher

believes that other confounding variables may play a role in emotional exhaustion. For example, some individuals may have high resilience levels which enables them to quickly bounce back from stressful situations, thereby emotional exhaustion may not translate into job burnout. Furthermore, consideration might be given to the cultural context. For instance, emotional exhaustion might be viewed as part of the normal work life, thereby reducing the perceived influence of emotional exhaustion on job burnout.

When investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational citizenship, the current study aligned with several previous studies (Ni Putu et al., 2019; Omobude & Umemezia, 2020; Munawaroh et al., 2021; Kim & Park, 2022; Anisa et al., 2024). In the current investigation, there was a direct, positive, significant ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$), and strong relationship ($r = 0.507$). This could be explained through the competencies exhibited by individuals who are highly emotionally intelligent. In other words, those individuals are usually successful in realizing, understanding, and managing their own emotions as well as the emotions of others, thereby creating a positive work environment that fosters collaboration and helping behavior. This eventually would be manifested in organizational citizenship behavior (Anisa et al., 2024).

In addition, this empirical investigation examined the direct relationship between organizational citizenship and job burnout. The analysis of the results revealed a negative and significant

influence of organizational citizenship and both dimensions of job burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization). However, though the relationship was statistically significant the strength of =emotional exhaustion was weak ($r=-0.113$) but the strength of depersonalization was moderate ($r=-0.332$). This implies that organizational citizenship had a higher impact on depersonalization compared to emotional exhaustion. For instance, the researcher believes that an individuals who are emotionally intelligent has the capacity to regulate their emotions. This means that they can control their behavior and act responsibly, thereby leading to conscientious behavior including adherence to organizational norms and take the responsibility for tasks beyond their in-role behavior.

It was also noted that emotional intelligence was strongly correlated to its dimensions, namely self-emotions appraisal ($r=0.755$), regulations of emotions ($r=0.540$), and understanding the emotions of others ($r=0.601$). On the other hand, when examining the correlation between the two dimensions of job burnout, the bivariate relationship was found to be significant and moderate ($r=0.386$).

4.2 The indirect relationships

The current empirical investigation failed to justify the indirect impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through organizational citizenship. The researcher believes that other

confounding variables may affect this indirect relationship such as the job design, the leadership style, or work overload may override the effects of organizational citizenship on job burnout. In other words, emotional intelligence may translate into the manifestation of organizational citizenship behavior but may not effectively mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout due to some confounding variables.

5. Implications and recommendations

This research attempted to fill the gap on the direct impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout, the direct impact of emotional intelligence on organizational citizenship, and the direct impact of organizational citizenship on job burnout especially within the information and communication technology sector in Egypt. Furthermore, the researcher attempted to examine the indirect impact of emotional intelligence on job burnout through organizational citizenship. To this end, the researcher partially verified the first direct relation, fully verified the second and third direct relationship but failed to verify the mediating effect of organizational citizenship between emotional intelligence and job job burnout within the information and communication technology sector in Egypt. Thus, it is recommended to conduct future research in different geographical contexts and industrial sectors.

At a practical level, the researcher recommends that employers consider both cognitive and behavioral factors when selecting, training and developing employees. This consideration is particularly vital in a fast-evolving business landscape that requires emotionally intelligent employees who have the capacity to collaborate and perform beyond their formal job descriptions. Undoubtedly, leaders would play a significant role in motivating their subordinates to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior. Another area that needs to be tackled is related to designing jobs. In this respect, organizations need to design jobs in a way that is challenging to motivate employees but at the same time does not involve a very heavy work overload that would eventually lead to job burnout.

6. Limitation

This research provides important insights regarding the direct influence of emotional intelligence on job burnout and the indirect impact through organizational citizenship behavior. Nonetheless, several limitations must be recognized. The results are confined to the IT sector in Egypt, which considerably limits its ability to be generalized on other sectors or geographical contexts. Furthermore, being a cross-sectional study restricts its ability to observe changes in behavior over time. Additionally, the presence of common method bias may compromise the reliability of the results. Lastly, it is crucial to consider that other

confounding variables could affect the conclusions derived from this study.

7. Conclusion and future research

The present empirical study has provided significant insights into the direct and indirect relationships between emotional intelligence and job burnout, as well as the indirect influence through organizational citizenship. While the findings indicated a negative and significant effect of emotional intelligence on only one dimension of job burnout, namely depersonalization, it did not establish a significant effect on the other dimension, emotional intelligence. In light of this, the researcher set forward several recommendations. This included conducting longitudinal studies to examine the change in behavior over time as well as examining the theoretical model within different industries and geographical areas. Additionally, the current investigation did not verify the mediating effect of organizational citizenship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. To this end, the research, recommended examining other mediating variables such as personality traits, psychological empowerment, and employee wellbeing. Future research may also consider some moderating variables such as age, experience, educational back ground and managerial level.

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