

# The Moderating Effect of Spiritual Intelligence on Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Wellbeing among Healthcare Workers in Hospital Pengajar Universiti Putra Malaysia: A Pilot Study

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of our cross-sectional pilot research was to investigate the moderating role of spiritual intelligence (SI) in influencing the link between dimensions of emotional intelligence (EI) and psychological well being (PWB) among 30 healthcare workers in HPUPM. Positive responses were obtained with regard to the clarity of sentences and instructions given. The respondents could easily comprehend all the questions. The results indicate that the entire measures achieved a high-reliability coefficient that ranged from 0.76 to 0.94, based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient test (they all exceeded 0.70 benchmark) with no significant deviation of skewness values from zero. In addition, the results of the study indicated that spiritual intelligence (SI) significantly influenced the link between dimensions of emotional intelligence (EI) and psychological well being (PWB) among healthcare workers in HPUPM.

**Keyword:** Emotional Intelligence, Psychological Wellbeing, Spiritual Intelligence

## INTRODUCTION

Quality health care is of crucial importance to healthcare consumers, and healthcare providers across the world are assessed based on their standards of care and service excellence (Ajele et al. 2021). Health care organizations – where health care providers are belonging – are not factories and, in comparison with industrial model of management, they require a different set of human resources practices and systems to support a particular kind of service (Arsat et al., 2022). Health care settings are plagued by a wide variety of which increasing job demands due to the introduction of sophisticated technologies and greater concern of patients' satisfaction. Health care providers spend their entire lives providing services to the people and community health (Ceri & Cicek, 2021).

As a health care organization, hospital requires health care workers to be more committed and have better cohesive working relationships. Therefore, organization recognized the importance of emotional and spiritual intelligence of individuals (Aliabadi et al., 2021). Emotional intelligence is defined as ability to perceive, understand and apply the power and sharpness of emotions effectively (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) as well as a source of energy, information, building connections and influence among humans. While spiritual intelligence is a set of abilities that individuals use to apply, manifest and realize spiritual resources, values and qualities (Anwar et al., 2021) that enhance daily function and spiritual well-being. With these two intelligences used by healthcare workers effectively, it may helps them to improve their psychological well-being and have a purpose in life, which can lead to the health provision of them and their patients. Working conditions have

always been challenging for healthcare workers, even before the pandemic (Ramachandran et al., 2023). Work in healthcare often involves:

- Intensely stressful and emotional situations in caring for those who are sick
- Exposure to human suffering and death
- Unique pressures from relationships with the patient, family members, and employers
- Working conditions with ongoing risk for hazardous exposures such as COVID-19, other contagious infectious diseases, hazardous medications
- Demanding physical work and risk of injuries such as from patient handling
- Long and often unpredictably scheduled hours of work. This is often related to as-needed scheduling, unexpected double shifts, and unpredictable intensity of on-call work.
- For many health workers, unstable and unpredictable work lives, and financial strain
- High administrative burdens and little control over schedules

Many healthcare workers place the well-being of others before self. On the surface, this dedication to patients may seem admirable (Chui et al., 2021). However, it can ultimately be harmful if it delays or prevents workers from getting the help that they need for their own health and well-being.

The well-being is becoming an important consideration in developing sustainable competitive edge for better worker performance and fulfillment (Chan et al., 2021). The importance of workers' well-being lies in both its relationship to performance and because it is a crucial component of healthy organizations (DeCock et al., 2021).

The health and well-being of health care workers should always be scrutinized to ensure the best outcome for patients. Previous studies reported a linked in worker well-being with decreased workplace turnover (Drigas et al., 2023); improved physical health (Ensafadaran et al., 2022) and higher worker performance (Fakharyzade et al., 2023). Furthermore, in case of poor well-being and moderate to high levels of burnout among health professionals are associated with poor patient safety outcomes such as medical errors, due to health professionals are either feeling ill while present at work, or feel disengaged and demotivated (Hassan et al., 2022). Thus, it is strongly suggested improving and enhancing overall workers' well-being significantly result in better patient experience (Karakas et al., 2020). Hence, in improving the overall well-being, it is crucial to identify significant predicting factors associated with employees' psychological well-being. As reported in previous literatures, psychological well-being is affected by several factors including motivation, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, achievement, deindividuation, physical and psychological fatigue, environment and organization identification psychological fatigue, environment, and organization identification (Kasler et al., 2022; Kinchah, 2021; Li et al., 2021). Even though health care workers were identified as high-risk occupation, however, there has been relatively little research on the emotional and spiritual intelligence to well-being among them. In recent years, different work-related and psychosocial factors impacting on psychological well-being at work have been evaluated (Makmee et al., 2021).

Therefore, this study aims to identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among healthcare workers in Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia, Kubang Kerian Kelantan. The moderating role of spiritual intelligence helps to conceptualize the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being relationships. Mroz et al. (2023) suggested that psychological well-being can be meaningful if a moderating is included in elucidating and understanding its relationship with the predictors. This is accordance to Alrashidi et al. (2022) suggested that spiritual intelligence could be the suitable mediators for psychological well-being which provides more meaningful research result.

A pilot test is a preliminary test that uses a small sample size of the study before employing the full-scale sample of the study (Kassim et al., 2021). As a result, this study conducted a pilot test to assess the instrument's validity, reliability, and to gain a sense of the situation in terms of detecting and correcting flaws. The investigation was conducted with a small sample size in mind. Instrument validity is the degree to which an instrument accurately measures what it is designed to measure, whereas measurement reliability is the degree

to which an instrument is error-free, consistent, and stable through time and across distinct scale items (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). As a result, this paper presents the findings of a pilot study on emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing among healthcare workers in HPUM, Selangor.

### **Research Objectives:**

In order to achieve the aim of the study, the following objectives are formulated:

1. To investigate the influence of dimensions of EI on PWB among healthcare workers in HPUPM.
2. To investigate the moderating role of SI in influencing the link between dimensions of EI and PWB among healthcare workers in HPUPM.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do dimensions of EI influence PWB among healthcare workers in HPUPM.
2. To what extent does SI moderate the link between dimensions of EI influence PWB among healthcare workers in HPUPM.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Even though most of the items in the questionnaires had been adopted from a well-established instrument, a pilot test is still required. A pilot test is important prior to the actual test being conducted so as to ensure clear wordings and content relevancy. The process is considered important in any research to ensure accuracy and consistency of the responses gathered via questionnaires (Hair et al, 2019).

As stated in the previous chapter, this study is about a pilot test of an ongoing research using a small sample of lecturers as respondents, in accordance with Faruk (2019) recommendation that the pre-test sample size should be around 15 to 30 respondents, but it can be increased if the test involves multiple stages. Furthermore, Sekaran and Bougie (2019) noted that Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most used test of inter-item uniformity dependability. This is because the inter-item uniformity reliability is the most realistic measure of pilot test, and the reliability measurement is referred to as Cronbach's alpha coefficient's most popular value (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). Thus, the Cronbach alpha test is used in this work to establish and assess the tool's internal uniformity.

A pilot test was conducted in March 2024 to pre-test the items and to examine the reliability value of each dimension in the instrument. A total of 30 healthcare workers from Hospital Pengajar Universiti Putra Malaysia (HPUPM) were involved in the pilot test. Healthcare workers from HPUPM were selected in the pilot test because of they are working in teaching hospital. HPUPM is a teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, UPM. The workload of the staff at HPUPM is different from public hospitals in Malaysia. Their duties are the same as other teaching hospital staff such as HUSM and HCTM. Therefore, health workers at HPUPM are very suitable for this study.

### **Measurement of Variables and Instrumentation**

The questionnaire used in this study was appropriately constructed and consisted of multiple-choice, closed-ended items. For questionnaires, a 5-point Likert scale was employed to cover the independent, moderating, and dependent variables in order to fulfil the criteria of measuring scales for latent constructs in social science research (Almadana et al,2021).

### **Reliability Test**

A reliability test should be conducted in addition to the face and content validity tests. There are other types of reliability tests, but the internal consistency reliability test is the most popular among scholars (Nayar et al., 2020). This is the level at which objects "dangle together as a set," as well as the capacity to independently

measure the same idea about the degree at which the items are linked. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most widely used inter-item consistency reliability test (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019), hence it was used in this study to determine the mechanism's internal consistency.

Despite the fact that concept measures were derived from earlier studies and literature, testing and validation (Hair et al., 2019) are still necessary (Hair et al., 2019). Pinto et al. (2023) said that while a Cronbach alpha value of 0.70 is commonly considered the minimum, smaller coefficients may be acceptable as well. The data was analysed using the SPSS version 27 programme, and the results suggest that the items are reliable, ranging from 0.76 to 0.94, which is consistent with other research that used the same assessment and found it to be reliable.

Table 1 Reliability of each variable and its dimensions for pilot test

Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>		<b>.92</b>
Self-awareness	11	.76
Emotion regulation	15	.77
Self-motivation	9	.94
Social-awareness	9	.91
Social-skills	13	.86
Emotional Receptivity	13	.92
<b>Spiritual Intelligence</b>		<b>.88</b>
Logical thinking	6	.77
Reasoning	6	.88
Surpassing	6	.70
Consciousness	6	.83
<b>PWB</b>		<b>.93</b>
Autonomy	7	.82
Environmental mastery	7	.81
Personal Growth	7	.90
Positive Relations with Others,	7	.76
Purpose in Life	7	.72
Self-Acceptance	7	.81

## Data Distribution

According to Kassim et al. (2021), the normality test is the universal benchmark for inferential statistical methods. The term "normality" refers to the distribution of scores for each variable (Hair et al., 2019). Normality may be tested using changing values of skewness and kurtosis of the data distribution, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019)

This is because some statistical programmes provide empirical measurements for skewness and kurtosis, and hence the metric variables for both Skewness and Kurtosis should lie between -1.96 and +1.96. (Hair et al., 2019).

Thus, the current study's data were analysed for skewness and kurtosis and found to be normal, falling within the typical range of -1.96 and +1.96. (Ebenehi et al., 2019).

## CONCLUSION

The goal of this pilot research is to assess the measuring equipment' reliability and validity in preparation for a larger investigation. This study used a small sample size of 30 instances for the pilot test, since specialists were utilised to make required modifications before the bigger study. This study looked at face and content validity, whereas the main study would look into the implications of the study components. Furthermore, the inter-item reliability test demonstrated that all of the items under investigation were reliable and above the 0.07 minimal threshold. The skewness and kurtosis values all fall within the usual range, indicating that the data is normal. The results of this study indicated that emotional intelligence and work spiritual intelligence affect healthcare workers' psychological well-being. The result of this study will benefit the top management and the policymaker of HPUPM in increasing the awareness about the importance of improving the well-being among healthcare workers. The necessary action should be made so the healthcare workers psychological well-being not be jeopardized in the future.

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