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## **The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Intention to Turnover Mediated by Job Satisfaction and Perceived Organizational Support**

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The present study aimed to investigate the complex interplay of factors affecting employee turnover by developing a structural equation model. Key variables included job satisfaction, emotional intelligence (EI), and perceived organizational support. A stratified random sample of 112 employees from Tamin Ejtemayee organization in Isfahan province was selected to participate in the study. During the study, participants completed questionnaires to assess their job satisfaction, their Emotional Intelligence, their perception of organizational support, and their intent to leave. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling with AMOS-22 software. Initial model testing showed the need for revisions. The final model, incorporating adjustments to model components, demonstrated excellent fit indices. The results indicated that emotional intelligence indirectly affected turnover intentions through its mediating effect on job satisfaction. Furthermore, perceived organizational support exerted direct and indirect effects on the turnover intentions, partially mediated by job satisfaction.

The model explained 39 percent of the variance in turnover intention. These findings underscore the importance of fostering job satisfaction, and providing perceived organizational support to mitigate employee turnover. Organizations can benefit from implementing strategies that enhance employee well-being and create a positive work environment.

**Keywords:** intention to turnover, job satisfaction, emotional intelligence, perceived organizational support.

A key competitive advantage for any organization lies in its human capital. High employee turnover can have detrimental effects on an organization, including reduced team cohesion, increased costs associated with recruitment, training, and onboarding new employees, and decreased overall productivity (Bae, Kim & Myung, 2023; Brabson, Harris, Lindhiem, & Herschel, 2020; Schlechter, Syce, & Bussin, 2016).

Changing organizational structures, globalization, and technological advancements have led to a marked increase in intra-organizational job transitions in the modern professional context (Turin, Chowdhury, Lake, & Chowdhury). Indeed, focusing on turnover, particularly concerning high-performing individuals within an organization, appears to be crucial (Khan, A. N., Khan, N. A., & Bodla, 2021).

Research consistently indicated that employees' turnover intentions are the most accurate predictor of actual turnover rates (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000). Additionally, there is a connection between the intention to turnover and employees' attitudes toward their job and workplace (Yan, Mansor, Choo, & Abdullah, 2021). Despite the abundance of research on the intention to turnover, relatively limited attention was directed towards organizational variables. One explanation for this phenomenon is that turnover is often viewed as a dependent

variable within the job decision-making process, as shown by studies, such as Feldman (2007) and Singh & Greenhouse (2004), which primarily focus on individuals' career trajectories (Van der Heijden, Van Dam & Hasselhorn, 2009).

Job satisfaction, a pivotal attitudinal variable in employee behavior (Lent, 2008), plays a significant role in person-environment fit theories (Hoff, Song, Wee, Phan, & Rounds, 2020). When employees' personal goals and values align with the organization's mission and objectives, it can significantly contribute to their overall well-being and job satisfaction. Numerous studies established a connection between job satisfaction and turnover (e.g., Gebregziabher, Berhanie, Berihu, Belstie, & Teklay, 2020). Clark (2001) contends that the role of job satisfaction in predicting turnover behavior yields two significant outcomes. Firstly, present data on job satisfaction is not merely additional information but enhances awareness of prevailing conditions. Secondly, studies showed that job satisfaction is often a stronger predictor of turnover than factors, such as wage and work hours, particularly in certain industries or among specific demographics.

Perceived organizational support, alongside job satisfaction, constitutes a central organizational factor. Based on perceived organizational support theory (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003; Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986), employees' perceptions of organizational support are shaped by factors, such as organizational justice, supervisor behaviors, and attention to family matters. Organizational support during challenging times is often seen as a tangible representation of the organization's commitment to employee collaboration, and well-being (Zagenczyk, Scott, Gibney, Murrell & Bennett Thatcher, 2010).

This perception serves as the bedrock of perceived organizational support.

Based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to reciprocate by feeling obligated to the organization (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990). This sense of commitment may reduce individuals' inclination to explore alternative employment options, leading to increased intent to stay within the current organization.

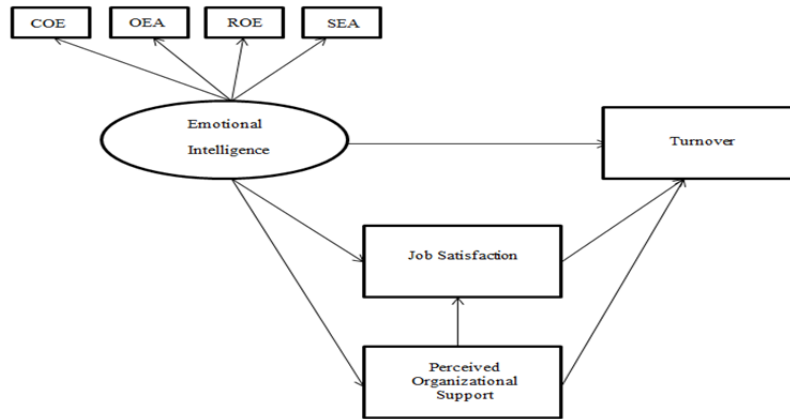
Although organizational factors play an important role in influencing employees' turnover intentions, individual differences are also influential. Individual abilities in coping with routine job stresses, interpersonal communication skills, emotional regulation in the workplace, and related factors are noteworthy contributors to individuals' intention to turnover (De Clercq, D., Khan, M. A., & Haq, 2023). Emotional intelligence (EI) is a fundamental individual difference that attracted extensive empirical research in recent decades in terms of its potential effect on employees' effective performance (e.g., Gara Bach Ouerdian, Mansour, Gaha, & Gattoussi, 2021).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) define emotional intelligence (EI) as the ability to effectively perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as to recognize and respond appropriately to the emotions of others. Dawis (1998) conceptualizes emotional intelligence (EI) as a multifaceted construct comprising four key dimensions: (1) Self-awareness: the ability to accurately recognize and articulate one's own emotions. (2) Other-awareness: the capacity to understand, and interpret the emotions of others. (3) Self-regulation: the ability to effectively manage emotional expression, maintain emotional

balance, and recover from psychological stress. (4) Using emotions: the skill of leveraging emotional energy for constructive activities, including those related to the workplace. Previous research indicated a possible connection among specific elements of EI and employees' intentions to turnover their jobs (Wang, Lin, Chen, Wang, Peters, & Lin, 2023).

Based on research evidence, it appears that an individual's emotional intelligence not only directly affects their intention to turnover (e.g. Gautam & Gautam, 2022); but also, indirectly influences it through job satisfaction (e.g. Côté & Morgan, 2002). When an individual has high emotional intelligence, as measured by their ability to perceive themselves and others, as well as their ability to regulate and control emotions, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and, consequently, are less likely to contemplate leaving the company. Furthermore, emotional intelligence enhances the individual's perception of organizational support, and increases their sensitivity to organization's supportive actions towards them. This, in turn, can further contribute to reducing turnover intention.

Based on previous research, the primary goal of this study is to investigate the direct and indirect effects of job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and elements of emotional intelligence (EQ) on turnover intention. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the hypotheses.



**Figure 1: Conceptual model of Research**

### Method

Using a cross-sectional correlational design, a structural equation model for turnover intentions is developed. The study population comprised 467 employees working in various departments of Tamin Ejtemayee organization, a prominent social insurance provider in Isfahan province, Iran. "10 times rule" was used to determine the sample size, which states the sample size formula as "10 times the maximum number of internal or external links pointing to each latent variable" (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Initially, 30 individuals were selected from a pool of 467 personnel at Tamin Ejtemayee organization to establish the pilot sample for the ensure instrument reliability. A stratified sampling method was employed to select 112 employees from Tamin Ejtemayee for the research sample. This selection was based on the '10 times rule,' which is a commonly used sampling technique in social sciences. The stratified sampling method ensured that the sample was representative of the diverse population within Tamin Ejtemayee.

Regarding the age distribution of sample, 4.4% were aged 20-30, 55.4% were 31-40, 38.4% were 41-50, and 1.8% were 51 years or older. Regarding education, 19.6% possessed a high school diploma, 15.2% an associate's degree, 50.9% a bachelor's degree, and 14.3% a master's degree or higher. With respect to work experience, 1.8% had less than 5 years of experience, 9.8% had 5-10 years, 41.1% had 11-15 years, 24.1% had 16-20 years, 16.1% had 21-25 years, and 7.1% had 26-30 years of experience. The sample consisted of 37% females and 63% males, with 7.1% being single and 92.9% being married.

### **Instruments**

O'Reilly et al. intent to leave scale was used to measure the intention to turnover. This scale, consisting of four questions, was developed by O'Reilly and colleagues in 1991. The purpose of the survey is to gauge the extent of the individual's intention to leave by assessing their interest in seeking alternative employment and their interest in continuing to work within the current organization. Participants indicated their agreement with each statement on the Likert scale, ranging from "very few" to "very much." O'Reilly et al. reported a reliability coefficient of .81 for the scale, substantiating its reliability, and the validity ratio of this questionnaire, based on the CVR formula, was reported as .84.

Judge and Bono Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (2000) used in this study comprises five questions rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Responses range from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree), with Question 3 scored inversely. The reliability of the questionnaire, as reported by Fasihzadeh (2011), was .798, indicating a high level of internal consistency. Thus, and the questionnaire demonstrated strong evidence of

measuring what it was intended to assess, with a content validity ratio of .80, further substantiating its effectiveness as a measure of job satisfaction.

Wong and Law EQ scale (2002) was utilized in this study to measure emotional intelligence (EQ), consisting of 16 questions. This scale includes four subscales: self-emotions appraisal, others'-emotions appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. Originally designed for application in leadership and management studies (Wong & Law, 2002), participants responded to the questionnaire statements using a 5-point Likert scale (1=completely disagree / 5=completely agree). Internal reliability coefficients for the subscales were reported as follows: self-emotions appraisal (.82), others'-emotions appraisal (.81), use of EQ (.87), and regulation of emotions (.89) (Law, Wong, Huang, & Li, 2008). The questionnaire's validity, measured by the CVR formula, is robust at .89.

Perceived Organizational Support Questionnaire (POSQ) originally consisted of a 36-item scale developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (1986). The shorter 8-item version of the POSQ was used. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) showed that the shorter version is appropriate, as it lacks subscales yet maintains high internal validity. This shorter form was widely used in previous research (e.g., Rhoades, Eisenberger & Armeli, 2001; Lynch, Eisenberger & Armeli, 1999). Zare (2011) reported satisfactory reliability for the POSQ in Iran, with a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .89, further confirming its reliability and validity. Therefore, the content validity of questionnaire, as measured by CVR formula, was found to be robust at .89.

To evaluate the psychometric properties of research instruments, a pilot sample of 30 participants was selected.



Factor analysis was conducted to assess construct validity. All items exhibited a correlation of over .4 with their corresponding subscales, supporting the construct validity of all questionnaires. Additionally, the validity ratio for each questionnaire via CVR exceeded .7, further confirming the instruments' suitability to measure the study variables. The reliability results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Research Instruments' Reliability**

<b>Intention to turnover</b>	<b>Job satisfaction</b>	<b>self-emotions appraisal</b>	<b>others'-emotions appraisal</b>	<b>use of emotion</b>	<b>regulation of emotion</b>
.725	.763	.678	.776	.808	.798

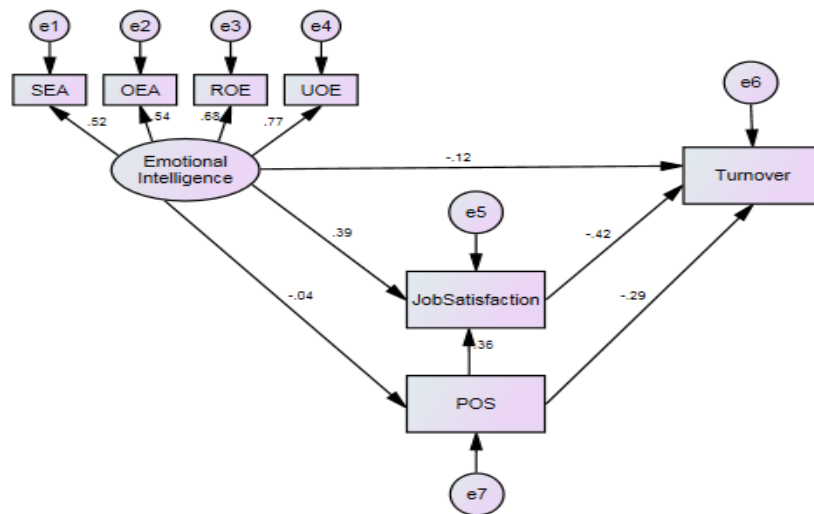
Table 1 provides confirmation of the reliability of research instruments, indicating the consistency of the measures employed in the study.

### **Results**

Prior to developing the structural model, the assumptions underlying structural equation modeling were examined. Univariate normality was assessed, and results indicated that the skewness and kurtosis values of all variables fell within the acceptable range of -1 to +1 (Kline, 2023). Moreover, multivariate normality was confirmed using Mardia's coefficient, which yielded a critical ratio below 5. To assess multicollinearity among the variables, tolerance, and variance inflation factor (VIF) were examined. The results indicated that the values obtained for these indices were significantly below critical threshold of 10, suggesting that multicollinearity was not

a problem in the data. To assess the assumptions of independent errors and linearity in the regression model, the Durbin-Watson test was used. The calculated Durbin-Watson statistic for all regression equations fell within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5. This indicates that the analyzed model meets the assumptions of independent errors and linearity among variables. These findings suggest that the data meet the necessary assumptions for structural equation modeling.

Figure 2 depicts the structural equation model (SEM) developed for this study. The model hypothesizes that emotional intelligence (EI) directly affects turnover intention and indirectly influences turnover via its effects on perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. Furthermore, EI indirectly affects turnover intention via a serial mediation process, where perceived organizational support and job satisfaction act as mediating variables.



**Figure 2. First model with standardized estimates in research:**  
Standardized parameters estimate of the first model demonstrates

relations between EI and job satisfaction; job satisfaction and turnover; POS and job satisfaction; POS and turnover. A negative sign (-) indicates an inverse relationship among the variables.

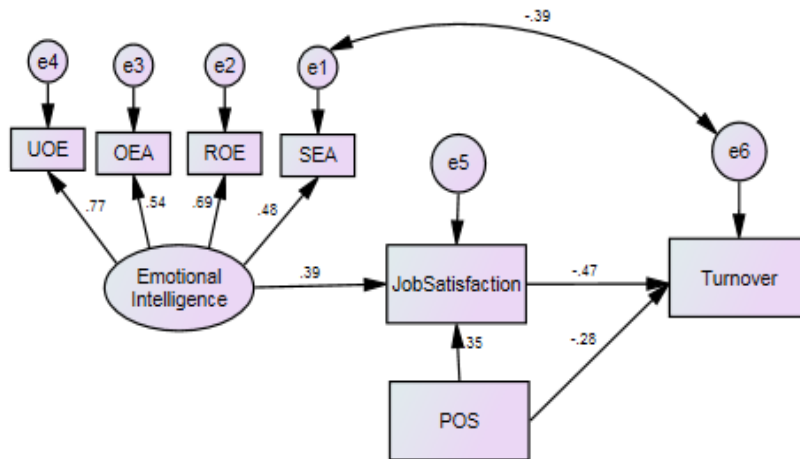
Regarding non-significant relationships between emotional intelligence (EI) and turnover intention, as well as perceived organizational support (POS), in the initial model, these two constructs were removed from the analysis. Furthermore, initial model demonstrated relatively poor fit, as evidenced by the unacceptable values of several fit indices (see Table 2).

**Table 2**  
**The Fit Indices of Initial Model**

Indices	$\chi^2$	df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	IFI	PNFI	PCFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2/df$
<b>Initial model</b>	31.82	11	.931	.825	.884	.841	.778	.89	.441	.463	.13	2.891

Note.  $\chi^2$ =chi-square; df= degree of freedom; GFI= goodness of fit index; AGFI= adjusted goodness of fit index; CFI=comparative fit index; NFI=normed fit index; TLI=Tuker-Lwis index; IFI=incremental fit index; PNFI=parsimonious goodness of fit index; PCFI= parsimonious comparative fit index; RMSEA=root-mean-square error of approximation.

The modified model of the research is presented in Figure 3.



**Figure 3. Final model with standardized estimates in research:** Standardized parameters estimates of the final model demonstrates relations between EI and job satisfaction; job satisfaction and turnover; POS and job satisfaction; POS and turnover. A negative sign (-) indicates an inverse relationship among the variables.

Table 3 shows the standardized regression weights and the direct and indirect effects of the research variables.

**Table 3**

**Table of Standardized Regression Weights and Direct and Indirect Effects of Research Variables**

The way in final model	RW Of final model	P	Standardize d Direct Effect	Standardize d Indirect Effect	Standardize d Total Effect
EI → UOE	1.83	<.001	.769	-	.769
EI → ROE	1.716	<.001	.686	-	.686

EI	→	OEA	1.341	<.001	.539	-	.539
EI	→	SEA	1	<.001	.482	-	.482
EI	→	JS	1.299	<.005	.391	-	.391
EI	→	Turnover	-	-	-	-.183	-.183
JS	→	Turnover	-.323	<.001	-.468	-	-.468
POS	→	JS	.222	<.001	.350	-	.350
POS	→	Turnover	-.121	<.001	-.276	-.164	-.440

SRW of final model was showed that all of relation were significant. The research findings demonstrate that emotional intelligence has a direct effect of .391 ( $p < .05$ ) on job satisfaction. The indirect relationship between these two variables via perceived organizational support is not statistically significant. Therefore, perceived organizational support has a direct effect of .35 ( $p < .05$ ) on job satisfaction. Regarding turnover intentions, job satisfaction (-.468) and perceived organizational support (-.276) were found to have significant direct effects on turnover intentions. Interestingly, emotional intelligence had no direct effect on turnover intentions, but by influencing job satisfaction indirectly, it exerted a -.183 effect, indicating complete mediation.

**Table 4**  
**The Fit Indices of Final Model**

indices	$\chi^2$	Df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	IFI	PNFI	PCFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2/df$
<b>final model</b>	16.382	12	.962	.911	.976	.918	.957	.977	.525	.557	.057	1.365

Note.  $\chi^2$ =chi-square; df= degree of freedom; GFI= goodness of fit index; AGFI= adjusted goodness of fit index; CFI=comparative fit index; NFI=normed fit index; TLI=Tuker-Lwis index; IFI=incremental fit index; PNFI=parsimonious goodness of fit index; PCFI= parsimonious comparative fit index; RMSEA=root-mean-square error of approximation.

The final model was determined to show a good fit to the data, as evidenced by the fit indices reported in Table 4. Each of the fit indices fell within acceptable bounds, and there was an improvement in the fit indices compared to the first model. Therefore, the final model is considered to be a well-fitting representation of the data.

To examine the mediating role of job satisfaction in the relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intention, and between perceived organizational support and turnover intention, bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples and a 95% confidence level was used. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**  
**The Results of the Mediating Analysis of Job Satisfaction in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Perceived Organizational Support with the Intention to Turnover**

Indirect Path		Standardized Indirect Effect	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emotional Intelligence Satisfaction	Job	-.164	-.3	-.81
Perceived Support	Organizational Job Satisfaction	-.183	-.256	-.081

Based on the bootstrapping results, which indicated that the confidence interval for indirect effect did not include zero, the indirect relationship between emotional intelligence and turnover intention was significant. Job satisfaction fully mediated this relationship. A significant indirect relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention was found as well, with a confidence interval that did not include zero. However, given the significant direct relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intention, job satisfaction played a partial mediating role in this relationship. In general, this model, with its direct and indirect effects, accounted for 39% of the variance in turnover intention.

### **Discussion**

The present study sought to develop and test a model examining key factors affecting employee turnover. An individual's emotional intelligence (EQ) can significantly affect their decision to stay or leave an organization. Individuals with high EQ are better equipped to manage their emotions effectively, which can lead to enhanced problem-solving abilities and adaptability in the face of workplace challenges (Davis & Humphrey, 2012; Jordan & Troth, 2021). emotional intelligence can indirectly impact turnover intentions via job satisfaction. The trait-based model of emotional intelligence proposed by Baron (2000) states that individuals with high emotional intelligence have improved interpersonal relationships, stress management skills, and a positive attitude. These factors, in turn, lead to higher job satisfaction, which can reduce turnover intentions as employees are less likely to consider leaving an organization when they are content with their work.

Findings suggest that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and emotional intelligence. As reinforcement theory posits (Skinner, 1938), job satisfaction positively affects an individual's desire to remain in their current role. The cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) posits that job dissatisfaction can lead to people looking for alternative employment. These theories together provide a comprehensive explanation for the fundamental role of job satisfaction in turnover intentions, as supported by previous research (Lambert & Hogan, 2009; Pu et al., 2024; Hua et al., 2023). These findings align with previous research, such as Grund and Sliwka's (2001) study, which established a robust positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Individuals possessing high emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate workplace challenges, leading to enhanced job satisfaction. This, in turn, can significantly decrease turnover intentions.

Perceived organizational support has direct and indirect effects on turnover intention. The direct effects can be interpreted via the lens of Blau's social exchange theory (1964). Individuals feel obligated to reciprocate when they perceive the organization supports them, thereby increasing organizational dedication. This commitment can make individuals less likely to leave, even when presented with better job opportunities.

Moreover, perceived organizational support is positively correlated with job satisfaction, which can further reduce turnover intention. An individual's decision to stay or leave is affected by a complex interplay of factors, including organizational support, job satisfaction, and emotional intelligence. If an individual consistently perceives positive



support and satisfaction, they are more likely to remain committed to the organization.

A potential explanation for the lower turnover intention among individuals with more years of service lies in the findings of this study. There was a significant relationship between job satisfaction, self-emotions, and perceived organizational support, which combined accounted for 39% of the variance in turnover intentions. To address turnover challenges, organizations should prioritize and strategically enhance these three variables by implementing psychological and human resource programs aimed at increasing job satisfaction, fostering emotional well-being, and bolstering perceived organizational support.

A limitation of this study was the correlation between SEA subscale and intention to turnover. This correlation may indicate a shared underlying construct, such as emotional introspection, which could affect both self-appraisal of emotions and turnover intentions. Despite this limitation, the study provides valuable insights into the relationship between these variables.

The sample in this study consisted of personnel from the Tamin Ejtemayee organization in Isfahan province. There is a risk of generalizing these findings to other organizations since job backgrounds can have an effect on job-related variables. Thus, the study adopted a relational design, which limits the ability to establish causation. Further research is needed to confirm causal relationships.

Future researchers exploring the role of perceived organizational support in turnover intentions may benefit from examining the mediating role of organizational commitment. Previous studies have demonstrated a strong relationship among

these two variables. Besides, the replication of this study in industrial environments could offer valuable insights into potential differences across different types of jobs. Additionally, investigating the role of managerial and non-managerial positions could shed light on factors that may contribute to variations in these relationships.

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