

# **The relationship among emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, performance, and intention to leave**

**Wisnu Prajogo<sup>1</sup>**

## **Abstract**

This research aims to examine the relationship among emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, performance and intention to leave. The main argument is that employees are not always happy in their jobs. In certain condition, when the job is monotonous or stressful or lack of supervisor/organizational support, employee may experience such feeling of being tired emotionally. This might lead to decreasing job satisfaction and performance, and also increasing employee's intention to leave their companies. 399 employees from various organization participated in this research. Data was processed using path analysis with AMOS 24 program. This research found several results. First, emotional exhaustion has significant negative influence to job satisfaction. Second, job satisfaction has significant positive influence to performance. Third, job satisfaction has no influence to intention to leave. Fourth, emotional exhaustion has significant positive influence to intention to leave. Fifth, surprisingly, contrary to hypotheses, emotional exhaustion has significant positive influence to performance.

**JEL classification numbers:** M12

**Keywords:** emotional exhaustion, intention to leave, job satisfaction, performance.

## **1 Introduction**

Job satisfaction is common construct in management research. Many researches focused on examining the antecedents of job satisfaction and while many others

---

<sup>1</sup> STIE YKPN School of Business, Indonesia

focused on examining the consequences of job satisfaction in different settings. This research combines those researches, to examine the antecedent and consequences of job satisfaction simultaneously. This research focuses on emotional exhaustion as an antecedent of job satisfaction while using intention to leave and performance as consequences of job satisfaction.

## **2 Theoretical Review and Hypotheses**

### **Emotional Exhaustion**

Emotional exhaustion is a condition of emotional fatigue experienced by employees at their jobs. Maslach defined this as the leading symptom of job burnout [1]. Having this condition of emotionally fatigue, employee sometimes have the feelings of being emotionally overextended and drained.

Employee might experience this phenomenon in several conditions. First, their job is focused on serving others, such as nurse, doctor, bank teller, customer service, government official, lecturers, etc. Emotional exhaustion will arise as employees who feel that they have serve customers or other employees, the feel they lack of other's or organizational support. They may also feel that their emotional resources are becoming drained and that they lack of energy [2].

Second condition that may result in emotional exhaustion is monotonous job nature. Having monotonous job will make employees feel like being treated as if they were robots. In a quite long time, employees will experience emotional exhaustion.

The third condition is high demanding jobs. High demanding jobs will make employee fell like they never achieve the desired target. In a prolonged time, this will make desperation of employees resulting in emotional exhaustion.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is an employee personal thinking about his/her work. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences [3]. Research about job satisfaction is widely spread in human resource management areas. There are many antecedents of job satisfaction such as: satisfaction to pay, leader behavior, working condition, co-worker support, work environment, etc.

Employees will have attitude towards their jobs as a result of those diverse features of their job. When employees have positive attitude towards the whole business environment as a result their experiences of work environment, it is called job satisfaction.

### **Performance**

Performance is a measure of how well an employee does his/her work. This measure of performance is always referred as in-role performance. But actually there are two kinds of performance: in-role performance and extra-role

performance. In-role performance focus on how well an employee work in his/her own work. Extra role performance focus on how good an employee is willing to do anything beyond his/her own work. Employee with high extra-role performance used to be willing to help his/her workmates and spend extra hours finishing his/her work even if without any demand from the supervisor.

Some researcher advised to use objective performance to measure performance. This measure is assumed to be the most reliable measure of performance. But, since it will be hard to measure that kind of performance for several diverse organization, it is suggested to to use perceptual measure of performance.

Using perceptual measure of performance can be done with two approaches: supervisor assessment or self assessment. Supervisor assessment is a better way, but it requires identification of respondent, so anonymity can not be achieved. So, the most practical way to measure of performance is by self assessment.

Related to causes of good employee performance, there are many antecedents of employee performance such as: leader behavior, satisfaction to pay, organization support, etc. In case of researches, most researches uses positive terms of antecedent to employee performance. This research focuses on using negative term of emotional exhaustion as antecedent of employee performance.

### **Intention to Leave**

Intention to leave is employee's intention to search for another opportunity to work to another organization. This does not mean that the employee really want to quit from the organization. It only measures the intention to try another opportunity in another organization. Some researches found several antecedents of intention to leave: pay, supervisor's attitude, organization culture, etc.

Supportive organization culture will make employee enjoy working in a certain organization, so he/she will not have intention to leave the organization. Also when a supervisor treated an employee fairly, this will make the employee has low intention to leave the organization.

### **Hypotheses Formulation**

When people has high level of emotional exhaustion, he/she will experience lower level of job satisfaction. People with high emotional exhaustion tend to feel that they are emotionally drained. They will not enjoy the working process, because they are emotionally fatigue. Becoming emotionally fatigue will make people less satisfied with his/her job. Therefore, we define hypotheses 1 as follows:

H1: Emotional exhaustion has negative influence to job satisfaction.

When people has high level of emotional exhaustion, he/she will achieve low performance. People need to have a good condition and motivation to be able to work well. When they are motivated, people will try to work more than what is required. In another condition, people with bad condition will not be able to work well. Therefore, we define hypotheses 2 as follows:

H2: Emotional exhaustion has negative influence to performance

When people has high level of emotional exhaustion, he/she will experience high intention to leave. Intention to leave has to do with someone's intention to pursue another career opportunity in another organization. People with high emotional exhaustion will not try to stay longer in their job. They tend to pursue another career development in another organization [4]. Therefore, we define hypotheses 3 as follows:

H3: Emotional exhaustion has positive influence to intention to leave

When people has high job satisfaction, he/she will experience low intention to leave. When people has high job satisfaction, then he/she is happier with his/her job and working in the organization. In another word, happy employees will stay longer in an organization. Therefore, we define hypotheses 4 as follows:

H4: Job satisfaction has negative influence to intention to leave

When people has high job satisfaction, he/she will experience high performance. A satisfied employee is an employee who is happy with his job. This kind of employee will try to do better in his job and always try to work hard, so he can get a higher degree of performance. Therefore, we define hypotheses 5 as follows:

H5: Job satisfaction has positive influence to performance.

### 3 Research Methods

399 employees from various organization taken with non proportional sampling participated in this research. Table 1 explained the respondents demographics.

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

		Count	%
Gender	Male	267	66.9
	Female	132	33.1
Age	Mean (year)	37,6	
Marriage Status	Married	340	82.5
	Not Married	59	14.8
Work Tenure	Mean (year)	12.3	

The study started with designing research instruments. This study uses previous questionnaires from previous researchers and then adapted the questionnaires to the research setting in Indonesia. All instrument use 5 point likert scale (1 strongly disagree & 5 strongly agree)

Emotional exhaustion is an emotional fatigue experienced by individuals during their working life. This variable was measured using an instrument developed by Maslach and Jackson [5]. Sample item for questionnaire of this variable is “I feel emotionally drained from my work”.

Job satisfaction is related to a person's sense of satisfaction regarding his/her work in the office. This variable was measured using an instrument developed by Alsaqri [6]. Sample item for questionnaire of this variable is “I am fairly well satisfied with my job”

Performance is the achievement of a person on the job according to his/her job description. This variable was measured using instruments of in-role performance developed by Williams and Anderson [7]. Sample item for questionnaire of this variable is “I Adequately completes assigned duties”

Intention to leave is individual intention to search for new opportunity to work in another place. This variable was measured by instrument developed by Alsaqri [6]. Sample item for questionnaire of this variable is “I am thinking about leaving this organization”.

Hypoteses will be tested by using path analysis using AMOS 24 program. Path analysis is used because this research aimed to test a simultaneous relationship among several dependent variable, expecially when there is more than one dependent variable and a research model involving a mediating variable.

## **4 Results and Discussion**

Factor analysis was used to test the validity of the items and statements followed by calculating the value of reliability (alpha) for each variable. An item will be preserved (not dropped) if the loading factor equal to or greater than 0.5 with reference to the guidelines set by Comrey and Lee (1992) as quoted Tabachnick and Fidell [8] which states that the criterion of 0.5 has the ability to explain less over 30% of variance.

After testing the validity, the questionnaire reliability will be measured with Cronbach's Alpha value. The questionnaire revealed reliable if it meets the criteria of reliability expressed by Nunnally (1967) as quoted by Churchill (1979) which is a measure of reliability of 0.50 or 0.60 can already be considered adequate for an exploratory study, although still in the category of low reliability.

Table 2: Validity and Reliability Test Result

STATEMENT	FACTOR LOADING	
<b>Emotional Exhaustion</b>		
I feel emotionally drained from my work	0.696	Alpha = 0,784
I feel used up at the end of the workday	0.785	
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job Working with people all day is really a strain for me	0.817	
I feel frustrated by my job	0.775	
I feel I'm working too hard on my job Working with people directly puts too much stress on me	<0,5	
<b>Intention to Leave</b>		
I am thinking about leaving this organization	0.876	Alpha = 0,8
I am planning to look for a new job.	0.815	
I intend to ask people about new job opportunities	0.821	
I don't plan to be in this organization much longer.	<0,5	
<b>Performance</b>		
I adequately completes assigned duties.	0.823	Alpha = 0,92
I perform tasks that are expected of me.	0.882	
I engage in activities that will directly affect my performance evaluations.	0.821	
I fail to perform essential duties (R).	0.812	
I fulfill responsibilities specified in job description.	0.811	
I meet formal performance requirements of the job.	0.86	
I neglect aspects of the job I am obliged to perform (R).	0.825	
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
I am fairly well satisfied with my job.	0.8	Alpha = 0,9
I consider my job rather unpleasant.	0.86	
I definitely dislike my job.	0.895	
Most days I am enthusiastic about my job.	<0,5	
I find real enjoyment in my job.	0.837	
I am often bored with my job.	0.809	

After the validity and reliability test has been fulfilled, then the data processing can be continued. Table 3 describes descriptive statistics for the related variable.

Table 3: Validity and Reliability Test Result

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4
Emotional Exhaustion	1.81	0.71	1.00	-.369**	0.01	.562**
Job Satisfaction	3.93	0.70	-.369**	1.00	.622**	-.283**
Performance	3.96	0.64	0.01	.622**	1.00	0.06
Intention to Leave	1.69	0.82	.562**	-.283**	0.06	1.00

Once the data has been tested and it is declared valid and reliable, the analysis can be continued to test the research model. Testing research model using values fit that can be calculated on the basis of existing research model. To be able to use path analysis, first we have to calculate the fit values of the certain model. The good fit values indicates that the model is supported by data.

The following table shows the values of absolute fit measures, incremental fit measures, and parsimonious fit measure. Results of testing the model by looking at the absolute, incremental, and parsimonious fit values. If the model has a good value of goodness of fit, then the hypothesis testing can be done with existing models. Table 4 describes the result of fit values calculations.

Table 4: Model Fit Testing

ABSOLUTE FIT	CRITERIA	FIT VALUES
Chi square	P < 0,05 (Hair et al., 1998)	p > 0,05
GFI	>0,9 (Hair et al., 1998)	0,996
RMR	<0,1 (Arbuckle, 2005)	0,005
RMSEA	<0,1 (Arbuckle, 2005)	0,077
INCREMENTAL FIT		
AGFI	>0,8 (Sharma, 1996)	0,958
CFI	>0,9 (Hair et al., 1998)	0,995
PARSIMONIOUS FIT		
CMIN/DF	2-5 (Arbuckle, 2005)	3,359

The fit values (Table 4) shows that basically the model has good fit values in all goodness of fit criteria, so hypothesis testing can be done with the model. Since all the fit criteria are all fulfilled, we conclude that the model is supported by data. Therefore, hypotheses testing can be proceeded.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing Result

	STATEMENT	$\beta$	P value	Description
H1	Emotional exhaustion has negative influence to job satisfaction	-0,43	< 0,01	Supported
H2	Emotional exhaustion has negative influence to performance	0,38	< 0,01	Not Supported
H3	Emotional exhaustion has positive influence to intention to leave	0,75	< 0,01	Supported
H4	Job satisfaction has negative influence to intention to leave	0,01	>0,01	Not Supported
H5	Job satisfaction has positive influence to performance.	0,85	< 0,01	Supported

Hypotheses 1, 3, and 5 are all supported. The higher the level of emotional exhaustion, the lower the job satisfaction will be. Employees experiencing emotional exhaustion will not enjoy his/her daily work. This will result in declining employee's job satisfaction. Employees with high level of emotional exhaustion will also have higher level of intention to leave. When people has high level of emotional exhaustion, he/she will actively search for better opportunity in another place hoping that he/she will get better working condition in another organization. Employee with high job satisfaction will perform better. This due to high satisfied employee with his work, will try his/her best to work, so he /she will reach a higher performance.

Finding related to hypotheses 2 is contrary to hypothesis. The influence of emotional exhaustion to performance is significant but in a different direction. Emotional exhaustion should have negative influence to performance, but this research found that it has positive influence to performance. The reason may be employee has strict performance target. Not achieving performance target will result in bad performance evaluation. Since those employees do not like being bad evaluated, even if they are in a drained emotional condition, they will try to work well. The other reason may due to employee's hope to find another organization to work with when they have high emotional exhaustion. Since they want to get another (better) job, they have to get a good performance, so they will try to work hard even if they are in high condition of emotional exhaustion.

Hypotheses stating that employees satisfied with their job will lower their intention to leave is not supported. This research found insignificant influence from job satisfaction to employee intention to leave. This may due to research setting in Yogyakarta, Indonesia where people will tend to accept anything that they have, even if when they have a bad treatment. This also may due to it is very hard to find another job for employees tenured more than 10 years (participant mean tenured year is 12,3) since many companies used to search for fresh graduates to fill the job vacancies. So, based on this setting, at any level, job

satisfaction has no influence to intention to leave.

## **5 Conclusion**

This research aims to examine the relationship among emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, performance and intention to leave. This research found several results. First, emotional exhaustion has significant negative influence to job satisfaction. Second, job satisfaction has significant positive influence to performance. Third, job satisfaction has no influence to intention to leave. Fourth, emotional exhaustion has significant positive influence to intention to leave. Fifth, surprisingly, contrary to hypotheses, emotional exhaustion has significant positive influence to performance.

## **References**

- [1] Maslach, Schaufeli, W.B., Leiter, M.P. 2001. Job Burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52:397–422.
- [2] Cordes, C. L., & Dougherty, T. W. (1993). A review and an integration of research on job burnout. *Academy of Management Review*, 18(4), 621–656
- [3] Singh & Jain (2013). A Study of Employees' Job Satisfaction and Its Impact on Their Performance. *Journal of Indian Research*, 1 (4): 105-111.
- [4] Lam, C.K, Huang Xu, & Janssen, O. 2010. Contextualizing Emotional Exhaustion and Positive Emotional Display: The Signaling Effects of Supervisors' Emotional Exhaustion and Service Climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 95 (2): 368–376.
- [5] Maslach, C. and Jackson, S. E. 1981. The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Organization Behavior*, 2: 99–113
- [6] Alsaqri, S.H. 2014 A Survey of Intention to Leave, Job Stress, Burnout and Job Satisfaction among Nurses Employed in the Ha'il Region's Hospitals in Saudi Arabia. Dissertation.
- [7] Williams, L.J. dan Anderson, S.E. 1991. Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment as Predictors of Organizational Citizenship and In-Role Behaviors. *Journal of Management*, 17(3):601-617.
- [8] Tabachnick, B.G. and Fidell, L.S. 1996. *Using Multivariate Statistics*. Harper Collins College Publishers.
- [9] Lise M. Saari and Timothy A. Judge. 2004. Employee Attitudes and Job Satisfaction. *Human Resource Management*, 43 (4): 395-407.