An exploration of EFL teachers' job satisfaction in the light of stress coping strategies and emotional intelligence

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Abstract

The present study sought to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' job satisfaction, emotional intelligence (EQ), and stress coping strategies. To this end, 188 EFL teachers were selected from private institutes and high schools of Mashhad. The participants were asked to complete three questionnaires: Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS), Teacher's EQ Scale (WLEIS), and Stress Coping Strategy Scale (CISS). WLEIS contained four factors: self-emotion appraisal (SEA), others' emotion appraisal (OEA), use of emotion (UOE), and regulation of emotion (ROE). The CISS focuses on three major dimensions of coping in response to a stressful situation: Task-oriented, Emotion-oriented, and Avoidance-oriented coping. *Task-oriented coping* refers to responses directed at either problem resolution or cognitively reframing the meaning of the stressful situation. *Emotion-oriented coping* refers to responses directed toward oneself rather than the problem at hand. An individual using this coping style may respond to a difficult situation by becoming emotionally distressed or engaging in fantasy activities. *Avoidance-oriented coping* refers to responses designed to avoid dealing with the stressful situation, such as distracting oneself with other situations (e.g., shopping) or through interacting with other persons. A structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed to analyze the data. The results demonstrated that among the coping strategies, task is predicted positively and significantly by job satisfaction and job satisfaction had no role in adopting emotion and avoidance coping strategies. EQ had a positive influence on the adaptation of task strategy, a negative impact on emotion strategy, and no role in avoidance strategy. EQ also predicted job satisfaction positively and significantly. It implies, teachers who had higher levels of EQ were more satisfied with their profession. It was also found that job satisfaction has the highest correlation with UOE followed by SEA. Task had the highest correlation with ROE followed by UOE.

Keywords: job satisfaction; emotional intelligence; stress coping strategies; task coping strategy; emotion coping strategy; avoidance coping strategy

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1. Introduction

One of the most hotly debated topics in the field of English teaching has been the significance of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a key element not only in any organization progress but also in educational systems: therefore; if relevant officials and education policy makers do not pay enough attention to it, both teachers and students, may face different kinds of problems. The more teachers are satisfied with their job, the more they are committed to their occupation, and consequently, the better their students are trained. High levels of productivity, organizational responsibility, physical and mental health are the results of job satisfaction which cause the individual to work with more pleasurable mood (Coomber & Barriball, 2007). Job satisfaction is defined as all the feelings, emotions, and attitudes that an employee has about his/her profession (Spector, 1997). Because of the high importance of teachers' job satisfaction, scholars all around the world try to identify the various issues that may influence it. Among these factors, emotional factors are noticeable thereby their considerable impact on teaching satisfaction is emphasized in contemporary research.

Throughout the history, the focus of the educational systems was has been more on the rational aspects of mind. Recently, however, several investigators like, Goleman, Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, Stern, and Bar-On, to mention a few, have focused on a different dimension of intelligence which is called emotional intelligence (EI) (Shahmohamadi &.Hasanzadeh, 2011). Emotional Intelligence was defined by Salovey and Mayer (1997) as "the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulated emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (p.10). Recently, the study of emotional factors in teachers' education era has received much consideration so investigators in this field reached to this outcome that emotion is at the heart of teaching issues (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010; Yin, Lee, Zhang, & Jin, 2013; Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2015).

As much as the issue of teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' EQ attracted the attention of the contemporary researchers, this study aims to figure out whether there is any significant relationship between EFL teachers' job satisfaction and their EQ. Moreover, it is contended that teacher' job satisfaction and their EQ level influence directly and strongly their stress and anxiety in both work place and private lives which is a serious problem in modern lives that should be considered by the investigators.

Stress can be described as a posing threat that affects the quality of work life, physical health, and psychological well-being (Cox, 1978). How an employee deals with stressful circumstances is known as 'coping strategies' (Nayak, 2008). Coping strategy has three subsets: Task-oriented coping strategy; emotion-oriented coping strategy; and avoidance-oriented coping strategy. According to the CISS technical manual (Endler & Parker, 1990), task-oriented coping happens when a stressed individual engages in a task in order to decrease or even remove the stressor(s). On the other hand, emotion-oriented coping takes place when a stressful person reacts emotionally to stressor(s) e.g. by being unhappy or getting worried or even crying. Both forms of avoidance-coping strategies (distraction and social diversion) require the affected human to ignore the stressor(s) thereby leaving the problem unresolved.

Because of the salient status of coping strategy in education systems, the pivotal focus of this thesis is on the influence of EFL teachers' job satisfaction and EQ on the coping strategy that an EFL teacher may choose in order to relieve the stress level in difficult situations and conflicts they face in the classrooms.

1.1 Research Questions

> ➢ Does EFL teachers' job satisfaction play any significant role in their coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance)?

> ➢ Does EFL teachers' EQ play any significant role in their coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance)?

> ➢ Does EFL teachers' EQ play any significant role in their job satisfaction?

2. Literature review

2.1 Job Satisfaction

Recently, employee's satisfaction has become increasingly significant especially in the corporate world as it has been realized that the only way for the organizations in order to gain competitive levels of quality, is to make the employees satisfied (Garcia-Bernal, Gargallo-Castel, Marzo-Navarro, & Rivera-Torres, 2005). According to Wanger and Gooding (1987), job satisfaction is a key element for an organization progress because productivity of any organization depends on their employees' level of job satisfaction. Other scholars like Fitzgerald, Johnston, Brignall, Silverstro, and Voss (1994) as well as Crossman and Abou-Zaki (2003) also asserted the key role of employee job satisfaction in the productivity of organizations. According to Demirtas (2010), it is difficult to define job satisfaction in a clear way that all scholars accept it. Many other concepts in social science do not have obvious definitions too. Job satisfaction is an ambiguous word. What is the reason of its ambiguity? It is difficult to define the term satisfaction because "satisfaction" could mean "satisfactory" in some special situations, but "satisfying" in other situations (Evans, 1997). Evans (1997) combined "job comfort" and "job fulfillment" together in order to define the term job satisfaction as "a state of mind determined by the extent to which the individual perceives her/his job-related needs to be being met" (p. 833). Job satisfaction can also be defined as the extent to which an employee derives pleasure from his/her job. In other words job satisfaction shows a workers' overall assessment of their profession. Job satisfaction includes all of the feelings, behavior and attitudes that an employee has about his/her job experience (Buragohain & Hazarika, 2015).

2.2 EQ

In the first half of the 1990s, Mayer and Salovey used the term "emotional intelligence" for the first time. The individual ability in order to comprehend his/her and others' emotions, making a selection among these feelings and using this information in thoughts and behavior is called emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Salovey and Mayer (1990) stated that emotional intelligence has four aspects: the ability to accurately perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion into thought, understand emotion, and regulate emotions in the self and others. Perceiving emotion is the potentiality of identifying emotion in the self and others. Facilitating emotion is the ability to utilize information that explains felt emotions in order to prioritize and direct thinking. Understanding emotion is the skill to understand relationships among emotions and how emotions transition from one state to another. Regulating, or managing, emotion is the skill to regulate emotion in oneself and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, as cited in Shipley, Jackson, & Segrest, 2010). According to Ryback (1998), emotional intelligence is the individual ability to use his/her awareness and sensitivity to distinguish the emotions underlying interpersonal communication, and to resist the temptation to answer impulsively and thoughtlessly, but instead to act from receptivity and authenticity.

2.3 Coping Strategy

As the stress in modern world is an important factor which affects every aspects of life and should be confronted, the ways to cope with it is so noticeable in articles and books that scholars all around the world paid attention to coping strategies and the ways in which they can decrease stress levels and promote higher quality of

life (Greenglass, 2002). Physical and psychological well-being are affected by coping techniques. The role of coping strategies in well-being is especially obvious when individuals are confronted with negative or stressful life problems. people use different ways to deal with a problem and these ways are so important in their recovery and subsequent adjustment (Endler & Parker, 1999). Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, and Gruen (1986) defined coping as "the person's cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage (reduce, minimize, or tolerate) the internal and external demands of the person-environment transaction that is appraised as taxing or exceeding the person's resources" (p. 572). In other words, perceptual, cognitive or behavioral answers that are used in order to manage, avoid or control difficult situations is called coping (Moos, 1994; Zeidner & Endler, 1996, as cited in Storm & Rothmann, 2003). Three dimensions (task-oriented coping strategy, emotion-oriented coping strategy, and avoidance-oriented coping strategy) was evaluated by Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) which was published by Endler and Parker (1990, 1999). Task-oriented coping strategy includes coping directly with the stressful situation; emotion-oriented coping style means tending to the emotions surrounding the event; and avoidance-oriented coping is known by escape strategies, in the form of distraction and social diversion (Endler & Parker, 1994).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The sample of the study included 188 EFL teachers from Mashhad, a city in northern of Iran. The official language in society of Iran is Farsi so English is the foreign language (EFL). English as a foreign language is used for non-native English speakers who are learning English in a country where English is not commonly spoken, so all of the teachers who participated in the present study were teaching English as a foreign language in private institutes and high schools. 114 of the participants were teaching in private institutes and 74 of them were teaching in schools. A total of 23.1% of the participants were male while 76.9% were female. Specifically, 63 men and 125 women participated in this investigation. The youngest participant of the study was 22 years old while the oldest one was 53. The mean of their age was 31.63 and its standard deviation was 7.66. Also 49.1 of the participants were undergraduate (Bachelor of Arts degree, BA) while 50.9 of them were graduate (Master of Arts degree, MA). Specifically 53 of them were undergraduate and 55 of them were graduate. The minimum of the participants' teaching experience was 1 year and the maximum of it was 30 years. Its mean was 9.20 and its standard deviation was 8.26.

3.2 Instruments

Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS) - The single-factor Teaching Satisfaction Scale (TSS) which was developed by Ho and Au (2006) was employed in this research in order to evaluate teachers' perception of teaching satisfaction. This questionnaire has five questions. All items of this questionnaire are scored on a 5-point Likert scale. Sample items of this questionnaire are as follows: 1) 1. In most ways, being a teacher is close to my ideal; 2) My conditions of being a teacher are excellent, and 3) I am satisfied with being a teacher. According to Ho and Au (2006), the scale enjoys acceptable reliability and validity indices. The validity indices are as follows ($X^{2=}$ 12.49, df= 5, p=.03, RMSEA=0.34, NNFI=1.00, CFI= 1.00, GFI=1.00); all fell within satisfactory thresholds. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be .88 (Ho & Au, 2006).

Teacher's EQ Scale (WLEIS) - Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) which has 16 items was applied in this investigation in order to assess the level of EFL teachers' emotional intelligence. It was developed by Wong and Law in 2002. There were three reasons why this questionnaire was chosen instead of Bar-on EQ questionnaire which is a widely-used scale for measuring EQ. First, the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) was published in *Teaching and Teacher Education journal* which is a creditable journal in the field of teaching so it was primarily used to measure teachers' EQ. Second, Bar-On EQ questionnaire has 133 questions while Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) has 16 questions;

so, Bar-On scale is time-consuming for the respondents and not all the teachers would be inclined to complete it Third, Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale is more recent; it was designed in 2002 whereas Bar-On EQ questionnaire was designed in 1980. This questionnaire includes four factors, i.e., self-emotion appraisal (SEA, four items), others' emotion appraisal (OEA, four items), use of emotion (UOE, four items), and regulation of emotion (ROE, four items). The items in this questionnaire were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (Yin, Lee, Zhang, & Jin, 2013). 1 stands for strongly disagree, 2 stands for disagree, 3 stands for no idea, 4 stands for agree and 5 stands for strongly agree. Some sample items of this questionnaire are mentioned bellow: 1) I have good understanding of my own emotions; 2) I always know whether or not I am happy, and 3) I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.

The reliability and validity of the scale has been found to be satisfactory (Wong & Law, 2002). Wong and Law reported that the CFA results demonstrated acceptable goodness-of-fit indices (X^2= 773.03, df= 100, p=.00, RMSEA=0.73, NNFI=.97, CFI= .98, GFI=.93). The reliability coefficients with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .67 to .84.

Teacher's Coping Strategy Scale (CISS) **-** Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) which was designed by Endler and Parker (1990) was employed in this study in order to evaluate coping strategy of teachers. This questionnaire has 48 items. 16 items of this evaluate task-oriented coping strategy and 16 items assess emotion-oriented coping strategy. The avoidance scale is divided into two parts: the first part is distraction which has 8 items and the second part is social diversion with 5 items. The three remaining items of the avoidance-oriented scale are filler items so they are not included in the data scoring and analyses. All the three scales are Likert-type so each of them has a 5-points response format (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree) (Mundia, 2010). The respondents should show how they react to various upsetting situations by choosing a number from 1 to 5. Sample items of this questionnaire are as follows: in the case of stress, 1) Schedule my time better; 2) Try to be with other people; 3) Get angry, and 4) Buy myself something. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the scale in various studies varied between 0.82-0.90 (Mundia, 2010).

3.3 Procedure

The data collection of this study took place in January and February 2015. All of the participants of the present study were selected by convenience sampling method from the private institutes and high schools of Mashhad, Iran. A convenience sample is one of the main types of non-probability sampling technique. It is formed when we select the participants of the research from a population on the basis of what elements are easy to obtain. Convenience sampling has some advantages. The main advantage of it is the ease of availability. Hence, the researcher did not have to do any extra effort to gather data. With the convenience sampling technique, the survey can be performed in a short span of time. This happens because the researcher aims to gather the primary data on a subject by asking a handful of easily approachable people. Also this method is very cost-effective. When funding is not available for a research, you can collect data by using this sampling method.

Prior to administering the instruments, all of the ethical points for participating in this research were verbally explained to the respondents. It was emphasized that their participation is voluntary, there is no obligation and they can leave the process at any time that they want. The respondents were ensured that their answers will remain confidential and private; in this regard there was no necessity for the participants to write their names on the questionnaires. The significance of this study was explained to the respondents to make them sure that their cooperation would be so helpful for the progress of teaching English in the modern world which can encourage them to complete the questionnaires more accurately and consequently the results would be more reliable and valid.

After explaining the mentioned points to the participants, the questionnaires were distributed among the EFL teachers. Enough time was given to the respondents to complete the questionnaires in order to avoid carelessness and negligence which can make the answers unreliable and not valid. Each participant had one-week time to

reply properly and then they returned it back to the researchers.

3.4 Data Analysis

In order to assess the data in this investigation, the obtained responses from the questionnaires were analyzed by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS® Version 22.0 for Windows). Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were applied to summarize the data. Means and standard deviations were computed for the constructs of teachers' EQ, job satisfaction, and coping strategy. A structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was performed by Lisrel 8.5 statistical package in order to assess the cause-effect relationships among EFL teachers' job satisfaction, EQ and coping strategy variables. A number of fit indices were tested to measure the model fit: The chi-square magnitude which shouldn't be significant and meaningful, Chi-square/*df* ratio which should be lower than 2 or 3, the normed fit index (NFI), the good fit index (GFI), and the comparative fit index (CFI) with the cut value greater than .90, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of about .06 or .07 (Schreiber, Nora, Stage, Barlow, & King, 2006). To study the strengths of the causal relationships among the variables, the *t*-values and standardized estimates were used. The correlation coefficients were calculated among EFL teachers' EQ, job satisfaction, and coping strategy (Dornyei, 2007).

4. Results

4.1 Results of Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1 presents descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' coping strategies, i.e., task, emotion, and avoidance. As it can be seen, task receives the highest mean (*M*=57.55, *SD*=10.87) and it implies teachers in the present study were apt to adopt task coping strategy in facing stress more frequently in comparison with emotion and avoidance strategies.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics of Coping Strategies

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Task	188	30.00	78.00	57.55	10.87
Emotion	188	26.00	73.00	47.13	9.97
Avoidance	188	22.00	65.00	46.23	10.18
Valid N (listwise)	188				

Descriptive statistics of job satisfaction and EQ along with its four subscales (each comprising four items) are presented in Table 4.2. In this table, SEA stands for self-emotion appraisal, OEA for others' emotion appraisal, UOE for use of emotion, and ROE for regulation of emotion. As the table shows, among the subscales of EQ, SEA (*M*=16.11, *SD*=2.48) obtains the highest score.

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics of Job Satisfaction and EQ along with its Five Subscales

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Job satisfaction	188	7.00	25.00	17.74	4.22
EQ	188	33.00	76.00	60.81	7.28
SEA	188	7.00	20.00	16.12	2.49
OEA	188	10.00	20.00	15.17	2.65
UOE	188	6.00	20.00	15.62	2.70
ROE	188	9.00	20.00	13.91	2.70
Valid N (listwise)	188				

To check the normality of data distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed. This test is used to

check whether the distribution deviates from a comparable normal distribution. If the *p*-value is non-significant (*p*>.05), we can say that the distribution of a sample is not significantly different from a normal distribution, therefore it is normal. If the *p*-value is significant (*p*<.05) it implies that the distribution is not normal. Table 3 presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. As can be seen, the obtained sig value for all variables is higher than .05. Therefore, it can safely be concluded that the data is normally distributed across all four variables.

Table 4.3

The Results of K-S Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Task	.063	188	.200[*]
Emotion	.085	188	.200[*]
Avoidance	.094	188	.083[*]
Job satisfaction	.087	188	.200[*]
EQ	.083	188	.200[*]

The reliability estimates of each variable computed via Cronbach's alpha are as follows: task (α= .88), emotion (α= .81), avoidance (α= .78), EQ (α= .79), and job satisfaction (α= .72).

4.2 The Proposed Model Tested via SEM

To examine the structural relations, the proposed model was tested using the LISREL 8.50 statistical package (Schreiber et al., 2006). As demonstrated in Figure 4.1, the GFI (.90) reached the acceptable fit threshold. The RMSEA (.028) and the chi-square/*df* ratio (7.59), however, were below those thresholds. This implies that the model does not have a good fit with the empirical data.
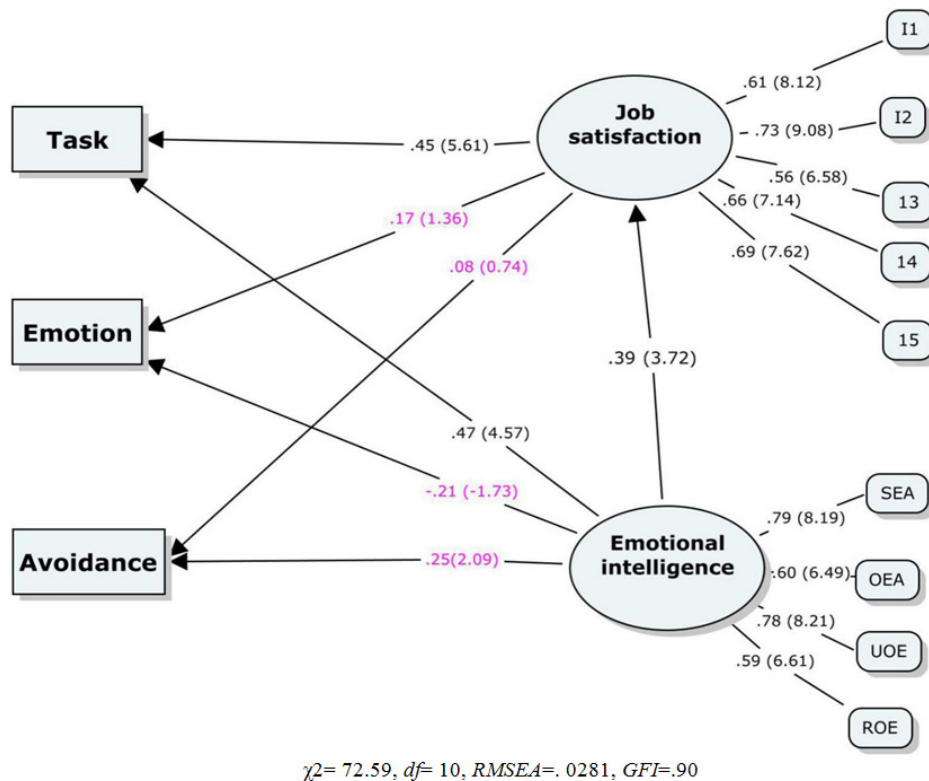

$\chi 2= 72.59$, *df*= 10, *RMSEA*=. 0281, *GFI*=.90

Figure 4.1. The schematic representation of the relationships among the variables in questions.

Note. SEA stands for self-emotion appraisal, OEA for others' emotion appraisal, UOE for use of emotion, and ROE for regulation of emotion.

To reach a better model fit, a post-hoc modification was then conducted. In so doing, path coefficients among coping strategies were inserted in the model. This resulted in an overall fit improvement: chi-square= 32.25, the chi-square/df ratio (2.93), RMSEA=. 069, GFI=.92, NFI=.90, CFI=.90. Figure 4.2 represents the model.
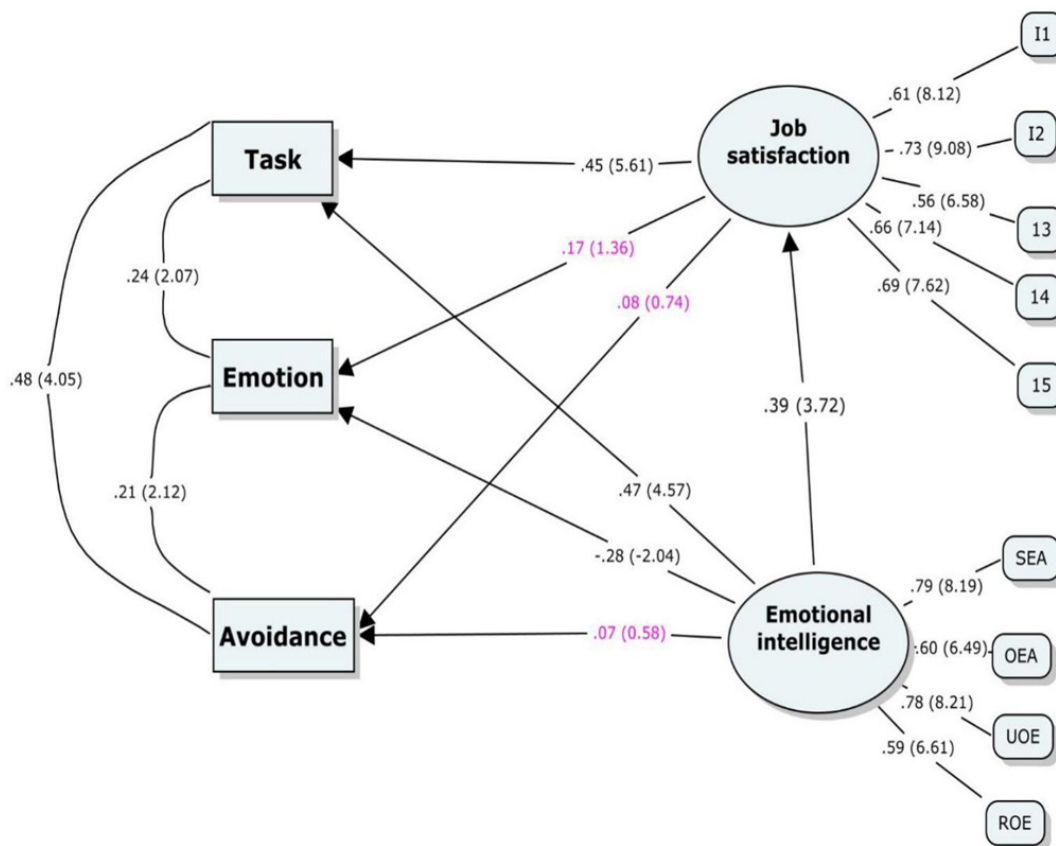
$\chi 2$= 32.25, *df*= 11, *RMSEA*=. 069, *GFI*=.92, *NFI*=.90, *CFI*=.90

Figure 4.2. The final model representing the relationships among the variables in questions.

To check the strengths of the causal relationships among the variables, the *t*-values and standardized estimates were examined. As indicated in Figure 4.2, two estimates were displayed on the paths. The first one is the standardized coefficient (*β)* which explains the predictive power of the independent variable and presents an easily grasped picture of effect size. The closer the magnitude to 1.0, the higher the correlation and the greater the predictive power of the variable is. The second measure is the *t*-value (t); if *t* > 2 or *t* < -2, we call the result statistically significant.

The results demonstrated that among the coping strategies, task is predicted positively and significantly by job satisfaction (*β*= .45, *t*= 5.61) and job satisfaction had no role in adopting emotion and avoidance coping strategies. EQ had a positive influence on the adaptation of task strategy (*β*= .47, *t*= 4.57), a negative impact on emotion strategy (*β*= -.28, *t*= -2.04), and no role in avoidance strategy (*β*= .07, *t*= 0.58). EQ also predicted job satisfaction positively and significantly (*β*= .39, *t*= 3.72). It implies, teachers who had higher levels of EQ were more satisfied with their profession. Coping strategies exhibited significant associations with each other.

The correlation coefficients among EFL teachers' coping strategies, EQ, and job satisfaction are presented in Table 4.4. As it can be seen, EQ is positively and significantly associated with task ($r = 0.537$, $p < 0.05$). It correlates positively but weakly with avoidance ($r = 0.264$, $p < 0.05$) and is negatively associated with emotion ($r = -0.238$, $p < 0.05$). Job satisfaction correlates positively and significantly with task ($r = 0.351$, $p < 0.05$) and EQ ($r = 0.392$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.4

The Correlation Coefficients among EFL Teachers' Coping Strategies, EQ, and Job Satisfaction

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Task	1.00				
2. Emotion	.043	1.00			
3. Avoidance	.495**	.059	1.00		
4. EQ	.537**	-.238**	.264**	1.00	
5. Job satisfaction	.351**	.083	.132	.392**	1.00

Note. **Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05.

To examine the relationship between task coping strategy and the subscales of EQ, a correlation analysis was applied to the data. The results are presented in Table 4.5. As the table reveals, job satisfaction has the highest correlation with UOE ($r = 0.369$, $p < 0.05$) followed by SEA ($r = 0.336$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.5

The Correlation Coefficients among EFL Teachers' Job Satisfaction and EQ Subscales

	Job satisfaction
1. SEA	.336**
2. OEA	.195**
3. UOE	.369**
4. ROE	.229**

Note. **Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05.

Identical analysis was performed for detecting the relationship between task coping strategy and EQ subscales. As can be seen, task has the highest correlation with ROE ($r = 0.491$, $p < 0.05$) followed by UOE ($r = 0.534$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.6

The Correlation Coefficients among EFL Teachers' Task Coping Strategy and EQ Subscales

	Task coping strategy
1. SEA	.359**
2. OEA	.093
3. UOE	.534**
4. ROE	.491**

Note. **Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion of Research Questions

Research Question 1: Does EFL teachers' job satisfaction play any significant role in their coping strategies (task, emotion, and avoidance)?

The results indicated that among the three coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance), task was predicted positively and significantly by job satisfaction. More precisely, job satisfaction correlated positively and significantly with task coping strategy. Also, job satisfaction had no role in adopting emotion and avoidance coping strategies. It implies as the job satisfaction of EFL teachers increases, they tend to use the task coping strategy more and as their job satisfaction decreases, they are likely to use the task coping strategy less.

As mentioned before, teachers employ various strategies in order to tolerate, handle, eliminate, or decrease stress and deal with conflicts. Coping techniques can be task-oriented, emotion-oriented, or avoidance-oriented. According to the findings, the more EFL teachers are satisfied with their occupation, the more they tend to use the task coping strategy and the less they are likely to perform emotion and avoidance coping strategies.

Satisfied EFL teachers try to minimize their anxiety by focusing on detecting the root of the problem and solving it logically. For example, an EFL teacher may tend to schedule his time better, when he becomes stressful before his classes, instead of spending his time aimlessly by becoming disappointed or demotivated. Why satisfied EFL teachers prefer to use tasks in stressful situations, instead of reacting emotionally or leaving the problem unresolved, is the main question. An earlier study done by Khaleque (1981) demonstrated that dissatisfied employees suffer from greater level of stress as compared to the satisfied employees. A few more investigations also have demonstrated that job satisfaction has significant impact on employees in terms of health and well-being (e.g., Kornhauser, 1965; Gardell, 1971; Caplan, Cobb, French Jr., Harrison, & Pinneau Jr., 1980). Stress can directly damper the creativity of the teachers because it blocks the flow of creative ideas in the mind. So, the more an EFL teacher is satisfied, the less he is stressed and consequently the more he is creative. According to Logan (2015), an increased participation in the creative arts allows for a higher perceived potentiality to perform positive coping styles like task coping strategy. A creative teacher is more curious and adventurous to test novel things so at the time of difficulty he is motivated and enthusiastic to experience various logical ways to solve the problem which is a positive coping strategy. A creative teacher prefers to overcome adversity by performing different logistic methods instead of emotionally reacting or leaving the problem unresolved. An EFL satisfied teacher, in stressful situations, is eager to determine a course of rational ways and follow it, like: planning and scheduling his time before a difficult stressful exam. Consequently, the more an EFL teacher is satisfied with his occupation, the less he is stressful, and the more he is creative, and therefore the more he is enthusiastic to apply task coping strategy.

This obtained finding is consistent with another investigation which was done by Williams and Welbourne (2004). According to their study, respondents with a high level of job satisfaction cope with stress by emphasizing positive ways to resolve the situation (Williams & Welbourne, 2004).

Research Question 2: Does EFL teachers' EQ play any significant role in their coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance)?

The results revealed that EQ had a positive impact on the adaptation of task coping strategy, a negative influence on emotion strategy, and no role in avoidance strategy. In other words, EQ is positively and significantly associated with task. It correlates positively but weakly with avoidance and is negatively associated with emotion. Among task coping strategy and EQ sub scales, task had the highest correlation with ROE followed by UOE. This clearly reveals, as the EFL teachers' EQ increases, they tend to employ the task coping strategy more in stressful situations and as their EQ decreases, they are unlikely to use task coping strategy.

These findings are also in line with other studies. According to Kim and Agrusa (2011), EQ is by far the most prevailing predictor of task coping among all coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance) and it does not have much influence on emotion coping. It is significantly associated with avoidance coping encompassing social diversion and distraction. A study which was done by Barnett (2011) also confirmed this result. His investigation suggested that there is a significant positive correlation between EQ and task-oriented coping strategy and a negative correlation between EQ and emotion-oriented coping method. Furnham, Petrides, and Spencer-Bowdage (2002) also asserted that emotional intelligence is associated with healthy social coping styles.

Riley and Schutte (2003) contended that emotional intelligence is a coping mechanism that leads to helpful self-regulation in order to gain the desired goals. Each person shows interest to one of the coping strategies (task, emotion, avoidance) in order to manage, control, or even remove the anxiety which results from stressor(s). A teacher with high level of EQ is more eager to distract himself in stressful situations by implementing different logical ways for problem solving. Emotional reactions like crying or depression are less attractive for an EFL teacher with high level of EQ. What is the main reason that teachers with high EQ are inclined to use task coping strategy instead of emotional responses? According to Dadvar, Mohamadrezaii, and Fathabadi (2012), there is a significant and positive relationship between EQ and creativity so a teacher with high EQ is very willing to suggest innovative ideas and assess them. Furthermore, Logan (2015) contended that increased participation in

the creative arts allows for a higher perceived capability to employ positive coping styles like task coping strategy. Performing different logical ways at the time of stress can be considered as a positive coping method because instead of becoming sad or frustrated, which is an emotion oriented coping style, the stressed individual distracts himself by testing rational methods of problem solving. As a result, we can conclude that the more the EQ of an EFL teacher is, the more he is creative and therefore the more he is enthusiastic to use task coping method.

Research Question 3: Does EFL teachers' EQ play any significant role in their job satisfaction?

Results indicated that EQ predicted job satisfaction positively and significantly. In other words, job satisfaction correlates positively and significantly with EQ. Job satisfaction has the highest correlation with UOE followed by SEA. So as the EFL teachers' EQ increases, growth in his job satisfaction is found. It implies that EFL teachers who had higher levels of EQ were more satisfied with their teaching profession.

Several studies asserted the positive correlation between EQ and job satisfaction. For instance, Yin, Lee, Zhang, and Jin (2013) sought to see whether there is any meaningful relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction or not. The findings of their investigation asserted the significant and positive influence of teachers' emotional intelligence on teaching satisfaction. It means that any enhancement in teachers' EQ level, directly increases their job satisfaction. Also, Ealias (2012) noted that there is a very high positive relationship between EQ and job satisfaction. Masrek, Osman, Khamis, and Paiman (2014) also demonstated the contributing impact of EQ on job satisfaction in Malaysian Information Technology Professionals which means that any increase in EQ makes improvement in job satisfaction.

Why does job satisfaction is affected by EQ? Sunil and Rooprai (2009) found a negative correlation between EQ and stress and anxiety. His findings demonstrated that if an individual increases his EQ level, his stress and anxiety will decrease. The research studies conducted by Oginska et al., (2005), Matthews et al., (2006), Montes-Berges et al., (2007), Naidoo et al., (2008) also demonstrated the same results. So, EQ is a helpful instrument to restrain negative emotions like anger, anxiety, and discomfort. On the other hand, it was proved in a study which was done by Bemana, Moradi, Ghasemi, Taghavi, and Ghayoor (2013) that there is a significant negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. It means that by decreasing stress, job satisfaction will increase. Employees can be satisfied in their profession if they are far from tension. We can conclude from all these studies that the higher the level of teacher EQ is, the less his stress and anxiety will be, and consequently the more satisfied he will be with his profession. This finding can be seen as an asset for developing teaching satisfaction which is a valuable and significant factor that affects directly both teacher' lives and students' learning process.

5.2 Pedagogical Implications

Due to the importance of teachers' job satisfaction, EQ and coping strategy in the field of teaching, and their great and unique influence on both teachers' lives and students' achievement, it is recommended that education policy makers and authorities pay more attention to these factors by providing Teacher Emotional Intelligence Training Course. It provides the teachers with a good opportunity to develop their EQ level. It helps the teachers to improve their self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management which are four attributes of emotional intelligence. By developing EQ, teaching satisfaction is improved indirectly because as the present study revealed, there is a positive correlation between EQ and job satisfaction. According to the current study, EQ and job satisfaction had significant positive correlation with task coping strategy so any improvement in EQ and job satisfaction, encourages the teachers to employ positive coping strategies like task one.

5.3 Conclusions

To conclude, the present study provides some evidence concerning the importance of emotional intelligence (EQ), job satisfaction, and coping strategy in the field of teaching. The SEM analysis on the interrelationships

among teachers' emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and coping strategy revealed that EFL teachers' EQ significantly influences on teaching satisfaction. The increase in EFL teachers' EQ leads to an enhancement in their teaching satisfaction. Also any progress in the EQ and satisfaction level encourages the EFL teachers to adapt task coping strategy which is a positive technique for handling the anxiety in stressful situations.

In general, the present study attested to the contention that emotional intelligence should be paid more attention by the education policy makers, because it is a positive trait that makes the teachers more creative, self-confident, active, balanced, self-aware, and motivated. Teachers with high level of EQ have effective social skills so they communicate better and therefore they experience better relationships in their lives. They are better at both self-management and others management because they have high leadership ability. They are also more successful teachers from their students' perspective (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010). EQ is also a unique tool for improving thinking skills. It helps the EFL teachers to think more logically and rationally.

Job satisfaction and utilizing task coping strategy at the time of stress are two valuable gifts of EQ too. Task coping style has high superiority to emotion coping strategy and avoidance coping strategy because it focuses on the logical strategies of problem solving by finding the source of stress and trying to remove it. Teaching satisfaction also cannot be disregarded as it impacts directly not only on the teachers' success both in their private lives and their occupation but also on the students' learning quality and achievement (Kamali, Ghanizadeh, & Akbari, 2017). It is concluded that by improving teachers' emotional intelligence, both their teaching satisfaction and their task coping strategy develop.

6. References

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