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Job insecurity and emotional exhaustion among private sector teachers in Morocco: The moderating effect of workplace spirituality

L'insécurité de l'emploi et l'épuisement émotionnel chez les enseignants du secteur privé au Maroc : L'effet modérateur de la spiritualité au travail

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Résumé

Cette étude vise à étudier l'effet de l'insécurité de l'emploi sur l'épuisement émotionnel et l'influence modératrice de la spiritualité au travail. Nous avons réalisé une enquête à l'aide d'un questionnaire auprès de 196 éducateurs d'écoles privées appartenant à la région de Marrakech-Safi, Maroc. L'analyse des données a été faite à l'aide du logiciel Smart PLS. Les résultats de cette étude soutiennent les trois hypothèses. Ainsi, il est démontré que l'insécurité d'emploi mène à une augmentation de l'épuisement émotionnel. De plus, il est prouvé que la spiritualité au travail mitige l'effet négatif de l'insécurité d'emploi perçue sur l'épuisement émotionnel. En effet, l'effet thérapeutique de la spiritualité dans le milieu professionnel caractérisé par l'instabilité et la précarité reste sous-exploré. Les aboutissements de ce document revêtent une grande valeur théorique puisqu'ils étendent les connaissances sur le rôle de la spiritualité dans les organisations où les employés sont souvent sous la menace de perdre leur emploi. Par ailleurs, les résultats, sans aucun doute, profitent aux managers dans le secteur éducatif dans la mesure où ils leur permettent d'améliorer le bien-être des éducateurs grâce à la promotion de la spiritualité au travail.

Mots clés :

Insécurité de l'emploi ; Épuisement émotionnel ; Spiritualité au travail ; Enseignant, ; Maroc.

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of job insecurity on emotional exhaustion and the moderating influence of spirituality at work. We executed a survey using a questionnaire among 196 educators of private schools in the Marrakech-Safi region, Morocco. The data collected have been analyzed via Smart PLS software. The findings of this study support all three hypotheses. Hence, job insecurity has been proved to heighten the level of emotional exhaustion, Moreover, Workplace spirituality has been evidenced to mitigate the causal relationship between the perceived job insecurity and emotional exhaustion. Bearing in mind that the remedial effects of workplace spirituality in instable working environment remain underexplored. The results of this paper are theoretically valuables as they extend knowledge about the role of spirituality in organizations wherein employees are often under the danger of losing their job. Additionally, the findings, unquestionably, profit the managers in education sector seeking to enhance teachers' wellbeing by the virtue of promoting workplace spirituality.

Keywords:

Job insecurity; Emotional exhaustion; Workplace spirituality; Teacher; Morocco.

Introduction

Job insecurity (JI) is a significant psychological phenomenon that arises from alterations in the global economy and their impact on employment relationships (De Witte, 2005). The managers' mounting use of temporary contracts suggests that the perception of JI is a factor contributing to employees' exertion at work. However, it is crucial to note that subjective evaluations must be explicitly marked as such to preserve objectivity. On the contrary, the presence of ambiguity has resulted in heightened levels of unease and apprehension as a mental reaction to the potential forfeiture of monetary earnings and additional occupational advantages (Hellgren et al., 1999). Indeed, a comprehension of the link between JI and emotional exhaustion (EE) can be obtained through a resource-based methodology, specifically the principles of Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). JI indicates a draining of resources, causing workers to focus on conserving them. To put it another way, a job insecure employee would not strive to produce more resources, but rather prioritize safeguarding the ones that already exist (De Cuyper et al., 2012). Research has established a positive correlation between JI and EE (De Cuyper et al., 2008; De Cuyper et al., 2010a). Additionally, subsequent studies have confirmed this relationship (De Cuyper et al., 2012; Kinnunen et al., 2014; Jalali et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020a; Zhang et al., 2020b; Chen & Eyoun, 2021; Konkel & Heffernan, 2021). Probst and Strand (2010) propose that workplace spirituality (WS) can have various effects on JI. On the one hand, WS may mitigate the perception of JI by bolstering employees' ability to handle stressors such as organizational change. On the other hand, WS may heighten workers' vulnerability to the adverse impacts of JI, especially when they view their job as a calling. Psychological problems may arise when the working relationship between the employer and the employee declines. The belief that JI triggers EE represents the primary aspect of burnout. EE pertains to the state of being excessively overworked and drained of physical and emotional resources (Maslach et al., 2001). To mitigate the harmful impacts of JI on employees' mental health, the WS paradigm has gained popularity (Khari & Sinha, 2021). This approach aims to reignite the spiritual aspects of individuals in the workplace. Recognizing the value of WS involves recognizing that organizations are venues for individuals to nurture their hearts and minds, thereby fostering personal growth. WS recognizes that individuals are spiritual entities and that their well-being is enhanced by upholding values, engaging in meaningful and purposeful work, and fostering social connections within the workplace (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000).

This paper aims at addressing the following research question. Actually, it is a compound query: Does JI have a significant impact on EE, and how well does WS moderate the relationship between JI and EE? To achieve this objective, Despite, the exploratory nature of this study, we employed a quantitative approach. We collected data by administering a questionnaire to a sample of private school teachers belonging to Marrakech-Safi region. The data were analyzed using Smart-PLS software. Research findings are valuable both theoretically and practically. To the best of our knowledge, no prior studies have investigated the moderating role of WS in the relationship between JI and EE. As per Baron & Kenny's (1986) model, moderation can involve either manipulation or evaluation, situational or personal variables. The purpose of this research is to enlighten educational leaders on the advantages of incorporating spirituality into the workplace to alleviate the impact of JI on teachers' EE. Our objective is to promote the utilization of spiritual potential (Probst & Strand, 2010) as a means to combat experiences of JI and its repercussions (Jalali et al., 2020).

Attaining the paper's main objectives draws upon a smooth and rational structure. With this regards, first and foremost, we delved into literature to define, operationalize the main concepts and to build our hypotheses upon solid and palpable theoretical and empirical foundations. Afterwards, we displayed and evidenced the methodological choices namely sampling and construct measurements. Following this, initially, both measurement and structural models were tested to enable us to effectively test the hypotheses. Then, we discussed the research findings in comparison with other papers'. Eventually, we ended up this study by addressing some issues concerning the findings' theoretical and empirical applications as well as the research limitations and perspectives.

1. Job insecurity and emotional exhaustion: Theoretical underpinnings

1.1. Job insecurity and emotional exhaustion

JI is a significant stressor that adversely impacts employee attitudes and work behavior (Cheng & Chan, 2008). It is a contemporary issue in occupational and organizational psychology (Allvin et al., 2011). Essentially, JI refers to the discrepancy between an employee's desired and actual job security level (Hartley et al., 1990). In the context of Vander Elst et al. (2014b), JI is defined as the negative and personal risk of losing one's current and future employment, accompanied by feelings of fear or apprehension. The matter of JI is highly dependent on the workplace context and employees' perceptions or psychological capital, as most studies indicate (De Cuyper et al., 2012; Konkel & Heffernan, 2021). However, other scholars have identified

JI with the nature of the employment contract, particularly for temporary workers (Pearce, 1998). One aspect of JI that has received extensive research is the subjective nature of the matter. Numerous studies have highlighted the potential consequences of JI. The findings from these studies have been consolidated in various meta-analyses (De Witte & Näswall, 2003; Cheng & Chan, 2008; Sverke et al., 2019). From this perspective, JI promotes employees who sense that their resources are at risk to utilize and distribute them, as indicated by Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt (1984). An unequal exchange of resources results in negative consequences, such as resource depletion and incapacity, according to Zhang et al. (2020a). The need for resources is instigated by JI and the desire for stability, which is consistent with the COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). Employees use emotional and psychological resources to mitigate the negative effects of JI, enabling them to stay employed. Indications of EE manifest when employees are incapable of replenishing their resources (Crawford et al., 2010). EE is the primary dimension of burnout that is distinguished by physical and mental exhaustion, negative behaviors, and diminished self-esteem (BERRICHI et al., 2021). This scenario could change employee attitudes and conduct (Soelton et al., 2020). Research on the psychological effects of JI indicates that employees who face the possibility of unemployment experience negative emotions, such as low self-esteem (Kinnunen et al., 2003) and high levels of anxiety (Mohr, 2000). These emotional responses can lead to physical and mental health problems, including EE, depression (Hanson Magnusson et al., 2015), and psychiatric issues (Ferrie et al., 2002). It is crucial to address JI as this can lead to detrimental consequences for individuals and organizations alike. EE's significance is well-supported (Gaines & Jermier, 1983). It is widely acknowledged as the primary cause of burnout (Klusmann et al., 2021), and is the initial marker of burnout in a stepwise process, often the focus of discussions. As such, it presents a critical opportunity for intervention. Additionally, EE is defined by its intense affective quality, making it an emotional response at its core. Thus, EE is a significant indicator of work-related stress and helps estimate its cumulative effects. Out of the few concepts that provide insights into the chronic and intense emotional dimensions of work, EE is particularly noteworthy. It is widely recognized that JI causes stress (Maslach et al., 2001). Stress, as a result of JI, can affect an individual's economic, social, and psychological life, especially if it leads to potential loss of employment. Creed & Macintyre (2001) provide a comprehensive explanation of the significance of work in Jahoda's latent deprivation model. The stress-inducing effects of JI can be attributed to several factors, including the levels of predictability and controllability of the event. Unpredictability implies the uncertainty of the occurrence of an event, leading to

overwhelmed and ineffective response from concerned individuals to the risk. Uncontrollability is also a significant characteristic of JI. Individuals facing this threat feel powerless since they are incapable of mastering it (Witte, 1999). The lack of control over an approaching adverse event can negatively affect one's well-being. Thus, JI is among the most damaging stressors an individual may face, exceeding the impact of a layoff. De Witte's (2005) assertion indicates that after job loss, well-being improves compared to during JI. The difference results from the ability to control one's fate to some degree. Numerous empirical studies have shown that JI has a harmful effect on mental health. The studies conducted by Soelton et al. (2020) and Kocak et al. (2018) indicate that JI has a positive and significant effect on burnout. The same conclusions were reported by Aybas and Dündar (2015). These researchers also introduced the term "survivor syndrome" to describe the reactions of individuals who have survived an organizational crisis or change that resulted in the layoffs of their colleagues. Survivor Syndrome could cause stress, low morale, and burnout. A recent study focused on 224 public-sector teachers in Turkey revealed a notable relationship between JI and burnout (Çetin & Çolak, 2020). Additionally, the empirical evidence gathered through the survey supports the significant impact of JI on EE. The data shows that JI intensifies the degree of EE. The correlation of the two variables is explained through the intermediary processes of breaching the psychological contract and deficiency in distributive justice (Piccoli & De Witte, 2015). Based on the aforementioned, it can be inferred that:

H1: JI has a significant and positive correlation with EE.

1.2. Workplace spirituality and emotional exhaustion

The term spirituality originates from the Latin word "Spiritus", which signifies vapor, breath, wind, or air. It suggests the existence of a sacred component in all living beings. This component has diverse origins, which include religion. Several authors find it difficult to distinguish between religion and spirituality. According to them, religion has an outward focus on rites and rituals, while spirituality has an inward focus. Chirico et al. (2020) state that transcendental religious practices represent merely a singular dimension of spirituality. While the idea of WS may seem new, spirituality has a long history in human experience. It has been intertwined with the emergence of religious ceremonies, which promote reflection on life and encourage individuals to lead a purposeful and meaningful existence in balance with nature (Ashmos & Duchon, 2000). It is important to note that WS is not a religion and should not be equated with conversion or advocacy for any specific belief system. Cultivating employee

awareness of their inner spirituality is crucial as it can have a positive impact on their work experience. Ashmos & Duchon (2000) define WS as the acknowledgement that employees possess an inner life that reinforces and is nourished by significant work within a community setting. This interpretation of WS suggests a feeling of a renewed sense of ambition and objective in the workplace that transcends materialistic goals. It also improves the sense of connection among members of a professional community. Kinjerski (2013) identifies WS as a unique state characterized by distinct dimensions: physical, emotional, cognitive, interpersonal, spiritual, and mystical. WS plays a role in the initial cognitive assessment and emotional incorporation of stress factors (Probst & Strand, 2010). WS can be viewed as an emotional asset that is nurtured through spiritual practices. This emotional resource is vulnerable to depletion after an individual evaluates their surroundings, which is in line with the COR Theory (Hobfoll, 1989). Individuals with weaker job identification and a strong sense of spirituality are less likely to view environmental changes as threats to their identity. Religious beliefs and spiritual experiences place value on individuals beyond their wealth, employment, or social status. Nonetheless, everyone is considered valuable and has inherent worth (Probst & Strand, 2010). Individuals with a strong spiritual background may be better equipped to handle potentially stressful organizational events like JI, which could otherwise result in EE. Therefore, WS has the potential to effectively alleviate both JI and EE (Jalali et al., 2020).WS has been identified as a solution to burnout by Khari and Sinha's (2021) recent study. Nevertheless, it elevates organizational stress and thereby minimizes employee burnout. Hence, WS emerges as an alternative solution to mitigate stress and maintain ideal mental wellness. Additionally, Chirico and colleagues (2020) conducted a study involving Catholic school teachers who received prayer training, which found evidence supporting the therapeutic benefits of spirituality. The researchers observed a significant decrease in EE (16.80-4.92, $p < 0.001$) among the group who prayed in comparison to control. Their investigation implies an inverse correlation ($r = -0.52$) between work satisfaction and burnout. Furthermore, various methods, such as meditation and other spiritual practices, can alleviate the harmful effects of occupational stress and EE among educators (Luken & Sammons, 2016). In their effort to explain the negative correlation between WS and EE, Sharma and Sharma (2018) employ a vivid analogy. They draw a parallel between an athlete who pushes themselves to the limit without experiencing fatigue due to the enjoyment of their activity, and the positive impact of meaningful work as a factor of WS on EE. Similarly, Khari and Sinha (2021) argue that workplace interventions, such as workshops and training sessions, replenish depleted internal resources that cause burnout. According to the authors,

employees who participate in these interventions perceive their job as meaningful, rewarding, influential, invigorating, uplifting, and conducive to fostering a sense of camaraderie. Based on this argument, we propose the following hypothesis:

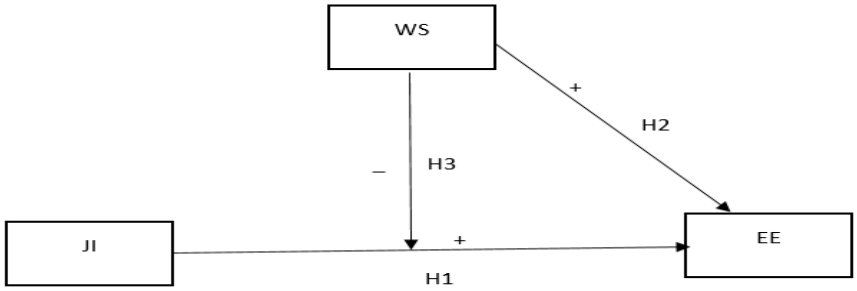
H2: WS impacts significantly and negatively EE

1.3. Job insecurity and workplace spirituality

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), JI results from an individual's cognitive appraisal of events causing fear of unemployment. It can be argued that JI is perceived differently by individuals, leading to varying levels of EE at work. This assumption implies that there are underlying mechanisms, such as WS, which moderate the linear relationship between JI and EE, as suggested by Probst and Strand (2010). Emmons (2000) suggests that spirituality comprises a form of intelligence that enables individuals to effectively manage stressful external events. Considering that JI is a significant source of stress, it is possible that workers might resort to "religious coping" measures in the event they feel that their existing coping mechanisms have been depleted (Pargament et al., 1998). Paul and Jena (2022) detected a positive correlation between WS and teachers' professional well-being in the educational sector. Furthermore, they uncovered that positive psychological capital mediates the relationship between the two variables. The main focus of this research paper is to analyze the relevance of mental health in preventing EE, an aspect emphasized by López-Núñez et al. (2020). Kumar and Kumar (2014) examined the impact of WS on moderating the relationship between EE and health among individuals in India. Their findings suggest that stress negatively impacts health, whereas WS has a positive association with health. These results inspire further exploration into the potential function of WS as a moderator in the JI-EE relationship. While limited research exists on the topic, we hypothesize in line with the aforementioned outcomes.

H3: WS moderates the JI and EE relationship, this effect being weaker when WS level is high.

Figure N° 1: Research model



Source: The authors

2. Research methodology

2.1. Participants and Sampling

This study focuses on teachers working in private schools located in the Marrakech-Safi region, who are often subject to both JI and EE phenomena due to the requirement of working under vulnerable conditions for a minimum of 8 hours per day. This population provides a suitable sample for testing our research hypotheses. To ensure comprehensive coverage of all towns and districts in the region, we created and distributed a questionnaire through a variety of channels, including face-to-face and online surveys and various social media platforms. The survey's response rate was high, with 196 participants. Table 1 displays the participants' socio-demographic data.

Table N°1 : Respondent socio-demographic data

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	108	55,67
	Male	86	44,33
Age	< 28 years	22	11,34
	28-38	57	29,38
	39-49	70	36,08
	> 49 years	45	23,20
Qualification	Secondary school diploma	39	20,10
	1st cycle	34	17,53
	Bachelor	104	53,61
	Masters /Engineer	17	8,76
	PhD	0	0
Seniority	Less than 5 years	62	31,96
	Between 5 to 10 years	43	22,16
	More than 10 years	89	45,88
Number of hours per week	12 hours or less	14	7,22
	Between 12 and 18 hours	26	13,40
	Between 19 and 25 hours	32	16,49
	Between 25 and 31 hours	47	24,23
	32 hours or more	75	38,66
Nature of contract	Trial Period	16	8,25
	Temporary Contract	48	24,74
	Permanent contract	130	67,01

Source: Authors calculation

2.2. The measurement of variables

To assess job insecurity perception, we utilized the four-item JI Scale, which was created by Vander Elst, et al. (2014a). The scale serves as a comprehensive JI measure that assesses participants' perceived risk and anxiety pertaining to job loss. Respondents are instructed to rate the scale on a 1-5 range, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

To measure emotional exhaustion, an adapted scale developed by Firth et al. (2004) and adapted from the MBI-GS (Maslach et al., 1996) was used. The scale consists of eight items, which are rated on a scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on the scale suggest a more progressed state of EE.

To gauge workplace spirituality, we employed an 18-item scale encompassing four dimensions, which Kinjerski (2013) validated. The participants rated themselves on a 5-point scale that ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)

3. Analysis and results

3.1. Reflective Measurement models evaluation

This paper drew upon Smart-PLS for good reasons. firstly, this software is widely used for structural equation modeling (SEM) particularly in the field of HRM (Wong, 2013). Secondly, this statistical technique is suitable to test our conceptual model, somehow complex, with latent variables; job insecurity (exogenous variable), emotional exhaustion (endogenous variable) and workplace spirituality (moderating variable). Thirdly, Smart-PLS is, undoubtedly, recommended for in exploratory papers. This benefited to the aim of unveiling the moderating effect of WS on the relationship between IJ and EE. Finally, to increase the validity of the results without worrying about the sample size or normal data distribution, Smart-PLS is prioritized (Hair et al., 2014).

The assessment of a structural model requires evaluating its measurement constructs. PLS-SEM methodology prioritizes three primary criteria in this assessment: internal consistency and reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity. Given the reflective nature of the model's three main constructs being reviewed, these elements are particularly emphasized.

Table N° 2: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
EE	0,919	0,942	0,933	0,638
JI	0,847	0,872	0,907	0,764
Moderating Effect 1	0,961	1,000	0,962	0,445
WS	0,900	0,903	0,915	0,498

Source: Smart-PLS calculation

To assess the reliability of the four measures, we calculated Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and mean variance extracted (refer to Table 2). All measures exhibited Cronbach's alphas ranging from 0.847 to 0.961, surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.70. The composite reliability values for all measures were also within the recommended range of 0.60 by Fornell & Larcker (1981), falling between 0.907 and 0.962. The results indicate a high level of internal reliability for the measurement items. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures the variance among the indicators represented by latent constructs, providing a more cautious evaluation of the measurement model's validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As displayed in Table 2, the AVE for the final two constructs (Moderating Effect 1; WS) is below the recommended threshold level of 0.5. However, if the AVE is below 0.5, our results are still valid if the composite reliability surpasses 0.6, as proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and verified in Table 2. To ensure convergent validity of constructs, we determine the level of positive correlation among indicators of the same construct by analyzing outer loadings. All outer loadings should exceed the critical value of 0.708 to capture a significant portion of the measurement models. However, some indicators may not meet these parameters, and those without loadings below 0.4 are initially eliminated. Consequently, 7 WS items were removed. The other items were subsequently retained despite falling below the critical threshold of 0.7. This decision was made since excluding them did not result in a rise in composite reliability.

Table 2 illustrates that almost all construct models have a value higher than the critical threshold of 0.5, with the exception of WS, which approaches that value. The AVE values for JI, EE, and WS are 0.764, 0.638, and 0.498, correspondingly. The measurement models' composite reliability and AVE are both within the critical threshold. Therefore, convergent validity has been sufficiently proven for the model's constructs. Finally, to examine the distinctiveness and

uniqueness of the three constructs in describing the investigated phenomena, we evaluate the cross-loadings of the diverse items and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The outer loadings exhibit the highest values for each construct, while the cross-loadings with other constructs are lower. The Fornell-Larcker criterion confirms that JI, EE, and WS are indeed distinct constructs. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the reflective constructs JI (0.874), EE (0.798), and WS (0.706) exhibit higher values compared to other variables' correlation in the path model, as presented in Table 3. In conclusion, we can confidently assert that the constructs in the model adhere to PLS-SEM's prescribed discriminant validity norms.

Table N°3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	EE	JI	Moderating Effect 1	WS
EE	0,798			
JI	0,413	0,874		
Moderating Effect 1	-0,398	-0,244	0,667	
WS	-0,520	-0,403	0,320	0,706

Source: Smart-PLS calculation

3.2. Structural model assessment

To assess the structural model in PLS-SEM, it is imperative to first examine the collinearity between the independent variable (JI) and the dependent variable (WS). This can be accomplished by utilizing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which was found to be below the critical value of 5.00. Upon examining Table 4, we can observe that all of the outer VIF values for the predictor variable (JI) are below this acceptable threshold.

Table N°4: Outer VIF values

Items	VIF	Items	VIF
EE1	3,806	WS 1	4,345
EE2	2,533	WS 10	3,167
EE3	3,319	WS 11	4,161
EE4	2,803	WS 2	4,551
EE5	4,807	WS 3	3,045

EE6	4,344	WS 4	3,009
EE7	3,409	WS 5	2,319
EE8	3,307	WS 6	3,609
JI1	2,173	WS 7	3,335
JI2	2,141	WS 8	4,259
JI3	1,889	WS 9	2,257

Source: Smart-PLS calculation

As there are no collinearity problems in the model, we can now continue with further data analysis to examine the path coefficients within the structural model.

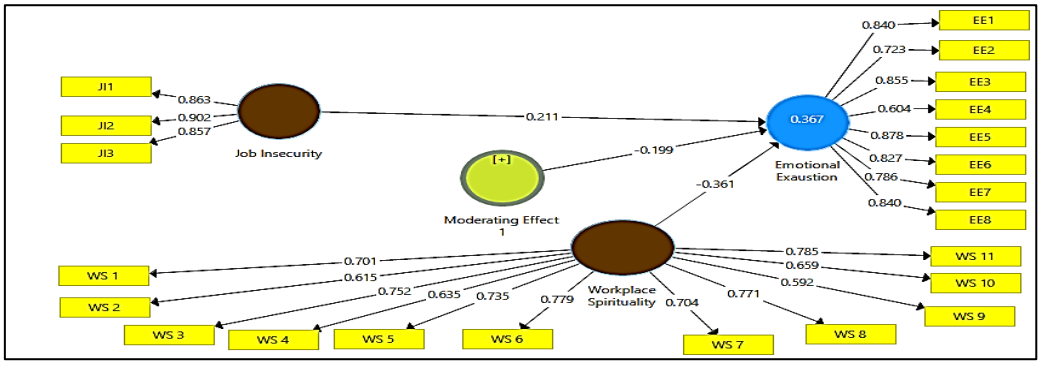
Table N° 5: Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
JI -> EE	0,211	0,197	0,069	3,059	0,002
Moderating Effect 1 -> EE	-0,199	-0,224	0,045	4,474	0,000
WS -> EE	-0,361	-0,366	0,046	7,862	0,000

Source: Smart-PLS calculation

Table 5 displays the main statistical parameters of the structural model. Based on our empirical data, JI and EE show a positive correlation (0.211), whereas WS displays a negative correlation with EE (-0.361). Additionally, WS moderates the relation between JI and EE (-0.199). Thus, the mean sample values for the JI and EE relationship are 0.197, for the WS and EE relationship is -0.366, and for the moderating impact is -0.224. As for the significance of the results, all P-values for the relationships between variables in the structural model are extremely significant, with a range between 0.000 and 0.002 and a 97.5% confidence interval.

Figure N° 2: Structural Model



Source: Smart-PLS output

PLS-SEM enables the assessment of a predictive model's accuracy. The R^2 score is 0.365 (Fig. 1), indicating a medium effect size. It can be inferred that 36.5% of the change in EE stems from JI. However, this moderate variance suggests that there are additional predictor variables beyond JI that contribute to EE

3.3. Hypothesis results

As indicated in Table 6, the three hypotheses receive varying support. For H1, there exists a positive correlation between JI and EE, with a beta of 0.211 and a P-value of <0.01. Concerning H2, EE negatively correlates with WS, showing a beta of -0.361 and a P-value of <0.001. Lastly, for H3, beta is -0.199, and the P-value is less than 0.001. This suggests that the presence of WS weakens the impact of JI on EE as WS moderates the relationship between JI and EE.

Table N° 6: Overview of Hypothesis Conclusions

Hypothesis	Outcome	Conclusion
H1: JI is significantly and positively correlated with EE.	Significant: (beta = 0.211, p < 0.01)	**Supported**
H2: WS is significantly and negatively correlated with EE.	Significant: (beta = -0.361, p < 0.001)	**Supported**
H3: WS moderates the relationship between JI and EE.	Significant: (beta = -0.199, p < 0.001)	**Supported**

Source: Authors

4. Discussion

The research findings provide support for all three hypotheses of our research model. The first hypothesized construct (H1) that JI enhances teachers' EE has been validated. This affirmation corresponds precisely with the existing research outcomes. Zapf et al. (2001) conducted a study that revealed employees who experience JI, a work-related stressor, are more susceptible to experiencing EE. Other recent studies have provided additional evidence for JI's complimentary effect on EE (Zhang et al., 2020b; Liu et al., 2021). Moreover, JI has a considerable and indirect predictive impact on EE, mediated by presenteeism (Zhang et al., 2020a). Similarly, Jalali et al. (2020) showed that workplace harassment has a constructive indirect influence on EE through interpersonal justice. Chen and Eyoun (2021) conducted a study with frontline restaurant workers amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. They found that fear of COVID-19 indirectly affects EE through JI. The workers' mindfulness also moderated the positive correlation between fear of COVID-19 and JI. Moreover, employee perception of organizational support strengthens the positive correlation between JI and EE.

In line with the COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989), our research indicates that teachers increase their time and work intensity when they sense their professional stability is at risk, as a means to mitigate the insecurity brought on by an excessive workload. Table 1 reveals that the majority of teachers, 38.66%, work 32 hours or more per week. These findings demonstrate that teachers with limited career development opportunities prioritize stability to conserve their resources. Continuous consumption of resources without recovery leads to increased anxiety, loss of passion for work, reduced professional achievement, and ultimately, EE. Moreover, emotionally exhausted teachers exhibit lower job performance, leading to diminished JI. These findings are consistent with Piccoli and De Witte's (2015) research.

Regarding the second hypothesis (H2), WS negatively predicts EE. This finding strengthens previous research. According to Galea's (2014) research, WS plays a vital role in bolstering nurses' resilience in relation to EE susceptibility. Additionally, Liang et al. (2016) found that high spirituality levels among staff members mitigate the connection between psychological contract disruption and EE. Chirico et al. (2020) suggest that prayer, meditation, and other mind-body practices have the potential to be significant tools for mitigating occupational stress and preventing EE in teachers and other public service workers. Wu et al. (2020) propose that spiritual climate moderates the effects of leadership in reducing EE. Additionally, Harris and Tao (2022) proposed a model that shows a positive correlation between WS and mental well-being, as well as a negative association between mental well-being and EE among direct care

nurses in a faith-based hospital system. Similarly, Khari and Sinha (2021) acknowledged that WS may act as a moderator of worker EE, and discovered that WS had an indirect relationship with worker EE through the integration of organizational trust as an intervention variable. According to the second hypothesis (H2) of this study, a significant and negative correlation exists between WS and EE. Therefore, consistent with Zou and Dahling (2017), Estupian and Kibble (2017), and Gabay and Weinstein (20-22), incorporating spiritual values may help alleviate EE.

The third hypothesis (H3) proposes that WS moderates the association between JI and EE. In line with this, Jalali, et al. (2020) found that spirituality, as defined by practices such as prayer, serves as a moderating factor in the relationship between JI and EE. The moderation relationship has contributed to the stress process approach (Nooney, 2005), which highlights religion's role in mitigating the impacts of daily stressors and mental illness. Additionally, the findings indicate that with increased work satisfaction among private teachers, the significance of JI in forecasting EE diminishes, moderated by the negative correlation between JI and EE. This conclusion is supported by the findings of Jalali et al. (2020), Ellison et al. (2001), and Lorenz et al. (2019), who indicate that religion and spirituality can assist in alleviating the negative repercussions of all stressors.

The request for WS to decrease EE among the surveyed teachers can be attributed to the age effect. As per the demographic data from Table 1, 59.28% of the surveyed teachers were 39 years old or older. This observation aligns with Fowler's (1981) faith development model, which suggests that older individuals typically experience the highest levels of spiritual growth.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that WS plays an important role in moderating the relationship between JI and EE. Therefore, this research has significant theoretical and practical implications. It enhances the EE scientific literature in various ways, providing valuable insights into the association between JI and EE by incorporating WS as a moderating factor. The study affirms prior research on the correlation between JI, EE, and WS (Piccoli & De Witte, 2015; Jalali et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020), and discerns WS as a moderator in the link between JI and EE. Valuably, no preceding studies have analyzed this threefold relationship in the teaching domain, as confirmed by a February 2023 search through Scopus and Web of Science databases. Assessing JI and EE is essential to determine the psychological impact on employees, especially when faced with financial hardship. Private educational institution

managers should prioritize addressing EE issues among teachers to ensure their well-being. It's noteworthy that EE is not restricted to human services like teaching and nursing but can occur in other fields. This study's results can be extrapolated to other organizational contexts (Kocak et al., 2018).

Although the study holds significance, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. It is worth noting that the hypothesis of WS on JI has not been explored despite its reasonable plausibility. The lack of a strong theoretical foundation has impeded progress in achieving this goal. As a result, future research should concentrate on investigating this less-studied domain. To this end, we suggest conducting an exploratory qualitative study to examine the impact of WS on JI before establishing statistical confirmation. If the sample in this study exclusively comprises private school teachers in the Marrakech-Safi region, forthcoming research can scrutinize the importance of this model on a broader scale by incorporating other areas of the country. This would enable testing of the conceptual framework in a dissimilar cultural and economic milieu and facilitate a comparison of the particular stress-reducing efficacy of WS in a professional workspace.

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