

Role of Trust Towards Charity Foundations in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being in Mothers of Autistic Children

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Abstract

Purpose: Philanthropic pursuits have become common nowadays as more people are motivated by a desire to contribute to the inclination and promotion of well-being and welfare of others, especially autism community. A charity foundation is believed to be one of the tools available to assist people in pursuing their charitable purpose. The present study aims to investigate the role of trust toward charity foundations in the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in mothers of autistic children.

Methodology: This study used a quantitative approach to answer the research questions. The research subject involved 105 mothers with autistic children.

Findings: Mothers in this study have tremendous trust in charity foundations, and emotional intelligence has significant impacts on their trust. However, the result indicated that trust mediates the negative relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Despite their trust in charity foundations, mothers believe that they need to reduce their trust in these institutions to have a better ability to manage their emotions, understand the emotions of those around them, and have a healthier state of psychological well-being.

Limitations: The study includes a sample that is limited to perceptions of mothers with autistic children and lacks representation from individuals living in rural areas. The constraints may have had an impact on the results, prompting additional study to duplicate and validate the findings.

Practical implications: Prior research has found a relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. In addition, expected trust towards charity foundations can help to improve the psychological well-being of parents with autistic children, in most cases are mothers. As a result, it is critical to evaluate the trust established by mothers in charity foundations as a variable that influences the formation of ASD development.

Originality: This result contradicts earlier studies while contributing new findings to the field of study.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Charity Foundations, Emotional Intelligence, Mothers, Psychological Well-Being, Public Trust

Introduction

Both services and needs of the caregivers may differ across the lifespan for individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The needs of individuals with ASD changed over the years and may cause different burdens on the family. Family members of adolescents or adults tended to report fewer individual needs than did family members of young children. There is still a high level of unmet service needs for individuals with ASD and their families (Jani et al., 2021). They frequently discussed the lack of services, worry about the future, challenges with family and social relationships. Although most basic health needs are met, more specific needs, such as therapy services and employment services are received by comparatively few families (Jani et al., 2023). This has the potential to negatively impact families as the child with ASD aged, although fewer personal needs reported by caregivers for older individuals (Shivers et al., 2018).

Children with ASD require extensive care, which is quite expensive for both the family and the government. The facilities and programs must at least double or triple in number to accommodate the predicted rise in demand brought on by the growing population of people with ASD. As a result, government spending keeps rising year after year. Mothers had to shoulder a heavy financial load because of the government's lack of assistance in providing proper care (Zhou et al., 2019). Even though some of the caregivers receive external support from various non-governmental groups such as The National Autism Society of Malaysia (NASOM), The Association of Resource and Education for Autistic Children (REACH) and other community service projects, the support cannot cater to all the ASD population. In fact, they did not have capability to handle more than 1500 children with ASD that currently suffered financially (Murad, 2019: The Star).

The study revealed that mothers, despite their trust in charity foundations, perceive a need to decrease their reliance on these organisations in order to enhance their emotional management skills, improve their understanding of others' emotions, and achieve a greater state of psychological well-being. Mothers often encounter various unpredictable and difficult circumstances that might be anxiety-inducing for their children on a daily basis. These events can lead to increased distress, anxiety, dissatisfaction, frustration, and a negative perception of oneself.

Implementing appropriate therapies to reduce anxiety and enhance the adaptation skills of autistic children in managing daily uncertainties can significantly enhance the overall well-being of both the children and their family (Goodwin et al., 2022). Mothers with autistic children must avoid placing trust on charity foundations in order to improve their quality of life and minimise uncertainty. The organisation's aim necessitates further development in order to effectively assist the community with ASD.

In the next section, there is an overview of charitable foundation, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being in mothers of autistic children, and trust towards charity foundations as a mediator. This followed by an explanation of the constructs and methods used. Next, the hypotheses were tested, and the results of regression models were also discussed. The paper concludes with suggestions for implications and future research.

Literature Review

Charity Foundations

Philanthropic pursuits have become common nowadays as more people are motivated by a desire to contribute to the inclination and promotion of well-being and welfare of others, especially autism community. A charity foundation is one of the tools available to assist people in pursuing their charitable purpose. This foundation strongly depends on the public's trust (Bhati et al., 2020). Trust positively predicts the levels of both charitable giving and formal volunteering (Taniguchi & Marshall, 2014). In Europe and Japan, individuals with high generalised (and institutional) trust are more likely to donate money to various types of organisations. In an era of growing competition for charitable giving, understanding individual giving behaviour is critical to capacity building and the growth or fundraising effort of charitable organisations, especially small organisations (Bhati et al., 2020).

Giving is a matter of trust. Studies show that individual charitable decisions and the amount of contribution are highly influenced by the individual's level of trust in institutions and in other people, which is also called general social trust. Public trust plays a significant role in charitable organisations whereby this is due to public trust that is essential to the success of charitable organisations (Yang et al., 2014). It is not only providing resources for charities, strengthening commitment of the public, but also offers charities a higher moral than other sectors (Chapman et al., 2022). The failure to maintain public trust could lead to negative consequences, including decreased donations, reputation damage, diminished autonomy, or even organisations collapsed (Yang et al., 2014).

Public trust ensures the sustainable development of charities. Chapman et al. (2022) illustrate that higher degrees of trust in a charity are associated with a greater willingness to become a donor and donate greater sums. In addition, higher levels of trust improve the possibility that a relationship will be entered. On the other hand, according to Alias and Ismail (2013), different people will have different preferences when they have thought about giving time and money for a certain kind of non-governmental organisation. Beldad et al. (2014) highlighted that non-profit organisations must earn the public trust every day to ensure donors of their trustworthiness and effectiveness.

Donors do not contribute to organisations they do not trust and about which they do not feel confident. Organisational trust leads to commitment and further develop giving behaviour among charity givers, therefore, organisational factors cannot be neglected even though people are doing work for public good (Alias & Ismail, 2013). Kashif et al. (2015) stated that tough competition, demanding customers, and lack of public trust pose real threats to the survival and growth of charitable organisations.

In Malaysia, there are several NGOs committed to provide services to autistic children through a variety of programs. These services emphasise on the skills acquisition and behaviour change. The objective is to help autistic children in managing their daily lives, and to work more efficiently at home, school, and in the community by improving learning, social, and language skills. The NGOs that involved in assisting the families and autistic children are including The National Autism Society of Malaysia (NASOM), Hua Ming Autism Centre, IDEAS Autism Centre, Academy of Autism Islamic Adolescent (ARISMA), and Association of Resource and Education for Autistic Children (REACH).

Charitable foundations, being non-profit organisations reliant on public finances and resources, must prioritise establishing themselves as trustworthy organisations and demonstrating

awareness of their tasks and obligations (Isaeva et al., 2020). In addition, it is important for charity foundations to demonstrate accountability to both its beneficiaries and donors to secure ongoing support from these stakeholders. Nevertheless, there is a pressing inquiry over the effective and efficient management of the funding collected to adequately address the requirements and well-being of autistic children.

This phenomenon occurs due to the reliance of parents on these organisations, as they entrust them with the donations collected for the purpose of facilitating therapy, treatment, counselling, and other interventions aimed at fostering the growth and maximising the potential of autistic children. Drawing upon a concept of social behaviour based on exchange introduced by sociologist George Homans in his publication entitled “social behaviour as exchange” (Homans, 1958). This study suggests that psychological well-being of mothers with autistic children is not only based on applying the right emotional intelligence but also the trust towards charity foundations.

Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being in Mothers of Autistic Children

It is essential to establish a relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being in mothers who have children with autism (Jani et al., 2023). Mothers who assume the role of primary caregivers for autistic children frequently face a variety of difficulties. These obstacles encompass notable financial burdens, discriminatory attitudes, social stigmatisation, and the low effectiveness of therapeutic therapies for their children (Jani et al., 2023). Zhou et al. (2019) reported the percentage of mother unemployment at approximately 50.3%. A significant majority of the women who participated in the study, specifically ninety-one percent, indicated that their families encountered a considerable level of financial burden while their children were undergoing rehabilitation treatment.

Unfavourable emotional states and feelings might arise because of adverse financial conditions or heightened household debts. Furthermore, the existence of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in a child might potentially evoke emotions of uncertainty in mothers, leading to the development of emotional symptoms such as anxiety and depression (Ilias et al., 2017; Jose et al., 2017). Besides, Zhou et al. (2019) noted that mothers of children with autism commonly displayed higher levels of anxiety and depression symptoms.

A recent study has documented an increased probability of experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression among mothers who have children with autism, when compared to mothers whose children do not have such illnesses (Ilias et al., 2017). Furthermore, it was shown that mothers who had children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) exhibited elevated levels of both depressive symptoms and parenting-related stress.

The study conducted by Kiani and Nami (2016) revealed that mothers have a significant impact on their autistic children, since they not only offer support but also take charge of decision-making and undertake the primary responsibility for carrying out interventions. The well-being and health of other family members may also be affected by this phenomenon. In situations where a mother is affected by depression, the negative thoughts and beliefs commonly associated with this disease may contribute to poor decision-making in relation to dietary choices and child care practices (Ilias et al., 2017). Hence, it is important for mothers to prioritise good mental health and enhance psychological well-being, since these factors possess the capacity to influence not only their personal well-being but also the welfare of those under their care.

According to Alenazi et al. (2020), the financial burden associated with caring for a child with ASD is influenced by various factors, including the need for frequent healthcare visits, prescribed interventions, specialist education, and the coordination of family services. Moreover, this phenomenon exerts influence on parental employment decisions, perhaps leading them to voluntarily terminate their existing employment, reject job offers, or switch to alternative employment agreements to accommodate their child's needs (Alenazi et al., 2020).

The lack of a conclusive solution for children with ASD, together with inadequate parental support services, ineffective support groups, and the consequent burden on families, particularly mothers, brings attention to the need for identifying potential factors that could assist mothers in effectively managing their autistic children and achieving enhanced psychological well-being. Hence, it can be concluded that the provision of financial assistance plays a crucial role in reducing the negative impacts on the mental health of mothers.

Trust Towards Charity Foundations as a Mediator

Parents who have children with autism often report experiencing a range of challenges, particularly in terms of financial strain. The provision of care for a child diagnosed with autism is related to a greater financial burden due to various factors, including frequent visits to healthcare facilities, prescription therapeutic interventions, specialised educational services, and the need for coordinated support services for everyone in the family (Alenazi et al., 2020).

In Malaysia, it is common for parents to allocate a significant portion of their monthly budget, amounting to hundreds of Malaysian Ringgit, or even thousands annually, towards expenses related to speciality schools, teachers, or tutors. This is primarily due to the high costs associated with these educational services. Another perspective is that parents who have children with autism face the challenge of generating sufficient income to provide for their family, as well as the substantial financial load associated with caregiving.

According to Zhou et al. (2019), a significant majority of the mothers indicated that their families had a moderate to high level of financial strain while their children were undergoing rehabilitation treatment. This finding suggests that parents should be willing to bear a considerable financial burden to provide care for their child, as the expenses associated with caring for a child with autism were discovered to be three times greater in comparison to children without autism. Consequently, individuals experiencing unfavourable financial conditions or a substantial amount of household debt are likely to experience adverse emotions and psychological states.

Moreover, the requirement for specialised care for children with autism has a consequential impact on the career decisions made by their parents. These decisions may involve leaving a current job, refraining from pursuing job opportunities, or modifying their current employment arrangements to fit the unique demands of their children (Sullivan, 2017; Alenazi et al., 2020). For example, within a household consisting of two parents, it is common for one parent to voluntarily terminate their employment in order to assume the role of a primary caregiver for their child. According to a study conducted by Zhou et al. (2019), it was shown that around 50.3% of mothers opted for unemployment to provide care for their autistic children.

Despite the efforts made by several non-governmental organisations, such as The National Autism Society of Malaysia (NASOM), to address the demand for early-intervention centres

across the country, they have encountered challenges related to financial constraints and logistical obstacles (Lisut & Shuib, 2019). Furthermore, other expenses are acquired including swimming classes, horse riding, and social events. Nevertheless, engaging in these activities incurs significant costs, leading parents to allocate substantial amounts of money, often reaching hundreds of Malaysian Ringgit on a yearly basis.

Certain individuals diagnosed with ASD may necessitate the use of specialised tools and equipment to facilitate their acquisition of knowledge, enhance their ability to engage with their surroundings, and foster social interactions within a non-adversarial setting. The expenses can be categorised into three distinct types: direct costs, indirect costs, and anticipated direct costs. Nevertheless, it is observed that the direct costs associated with medical and treatment expenses tend to decrease during a child's life. The costs associated with interventions for children may exhibit variability based on factors such as the child's condition, their response to early interventions, and the extent to which parents may effectively act as substitutes in certain areas.

In addition, there has been an important growth of early intervention centres and specialised pre-schools in response to the rising demand. This is attributed to reports from medical professionals, including doctors, psychologists, and psychiatrists, who have observed a rise in the number of children diagnosed with ASD being referred to their clinics (Lisut & Shuib, 2019). In addition, it is crucial to provide early intervention in behavioural and social education for children with autism who are between the ages of two and six, since this prepares them for their educational journey (Lisut & Shuib, 2019). Nevertheless, the availability of public and government-operated early intervention centres designed exclusively for children with autism under the age of seven is limited.

In Malaysia, there exists only one early-intervention institution, known as Pusat Genius Kurnia, which is exclusively dedicated to serving children diagnosed with autism. This centre is situated in the city of Kuala Lumpur. Presently, because of the extensive waiting list observed in public institutions, it has become increasingly prevalent for parents to pursue treatment options from organisations such as NASOM or privately-owned institutions. Evidently, this alternative is prohibitively costly.

This is because private institutes typically impose a fee of approximately RM150.00 per hour for specialised therapy sessions, or a monthly cost that may reach into the thousands (Lisut & Shuib, 2019). For example, Early Autism Project Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. provides Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) therapy in both home and centre settings (Early Autism Project Malaysia, 2013). Similarly, Autism Link Sdn. Bhd. offers classroom and group programmes for children aged three to six years (Autism Link Malaysia, 2013). These organisations require payment for the services rendered at their respective facilities.

This implies that parents from lower-middle income households or non-urban settings encountered challenges in accessing or affording professional support for their children (Lisut & Shuib, 2019). According to Siti Marziah and Mohamad, the primary obstacle faced by parents in offering optimal treatment or therapy for their autistic children is financial constraint. This is supported in a study conducted by Kamaralzaman et al. (2018), the annual cost of supporting a child with autism amounts to RM35,365.62. This financial commitment poses a significant strain for parents. Indeed, empirical investigations have demonstrated that financial limitations impede the overall well-being of households.

Kawther et al. (2019) asserted that the only independent predictor that exhibited statistical significance in relation to mothers' quality of life was family income. Parents are confronted with the difficult and demanding endeavour of seeking and obtaining assistance for their children, a responsibility that holds significant importance for the overall welfare of their children. Moreover, the presence of financial stressors, transportation requirements, tight work schedules, and inadequate familial assistance are significant obstacles that impede the ability of autistic children to obtain necessary treatments (Krawczyk et al., 2017). Hence, the economic implications associated with the provision of care for a child with autism are substantial.

Research has indicated that this responsibility places parents in a vulnerable position, increasing their susceptibility to experiencing poverty, particularly among those in low-income groups (Krawczyk et al., 2017). Hence, the present study suggests that trust in charity foundations, when combined with emotional intelligence, can serve as a mediator to enhance the psychological well-being of mothers who have autistic children.

Social Exchange Theory

The trust towards charitable foundations proposed in this study is based on a concept of social behaviour based on exchange introduced by sociologist George Homans in his publication entitled "social behaviour as exchange" (Homans, 1958). Homans (1958) presented the idea of exchange stating that exchange could involve more than material goods such as value exchange. Homans (1958) defined social behaviour as an exchange of goods, material goods that include non-materials such as the symbols of approval or prestige. Meanwhile, social exchange theory (SET) as exchange of activities, intangible or tangible or more or less rewarding or cost between two parties (Homans, 1961).

SET is one of the most well-known theories in the organisational behaviour literature that is most researched, validated, and influential theories in the field (Zoller & Muldoon, 2019; Muldoon et al., 2018) and useful approach to predicting, understanding, and changing attitudes and behaviours (Schwab et al., 2017). For instance, social behaviour and form of social organisation produced by social interaction by showing 'A' behaviour to reinforced 'B' behaviour and how 'B' behaviour in contingent fashion reinforced B behaviour in return (Cook, 2013).

Based on psychology, SET embraced the fundamental concept of modern economics analysing human behaviour and relationship in determining social structure complexity (Homans, 1958; Shiou & Luo, 2012). All social exchange involves some degree of uncertainty that depends on the unverifiable quality of the good exchange or in the determinable quality of the exchange partner (for example whether a charity foundation is trustworthy in handling assets or property). This theory offers several mechanisms by which uncertainty may be reduced or mitigated such as through trust, satisfaction and others of person or institution (Corcoran, 2013). Thus, this study aimed to investigate charity foundations (social) behaviour could mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of mothers with autistic children.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative approach to answer the research questions. The research subject in research was mothers with autistic children. The sample taken for this research was a total number of 105 mothers. The questionnaire was developed and distributed using Google Form.

This study used the Likert scale which was often used in research to determine psychological well-being. It uses the measurement of 'agree' or 'disagree' using five scale Likert scales.

This study was implementing a quantitative study using SmartPLS 3.0 program to assess the PLS-SEM. It was used to analyse the correlation or reciprocal relationship between variables that were being studied. This method makes it possible for researchers to construct a complex model with several constructs and indicators without false assumption regarding the distribution of the data. The PLS-SEM model used two elements which are structural model and measurement model.

Participants

This study involved one hundred and five (105) working and non-working mothers with autistic children. Firstly, they received a questionnaire regarding Utilisation of Emotions [UE], Managing Emotions [ME], Perceiving Emotions [PE], and Facilitating Emotions [FE]. Three weeks later they received a second questionnaire concerning psychological well-being. Participants were requested to put the completed questionnaires sent by personal and group WhatsApp or Telegram.

Three persons failed to return the questionnaires, whereas three were excluded due to missing data. Majority age of respondents were young educated parents in the age of 30-39 years (52.5%). There were 70 (70.7%) of the respondents in this study who had finished undergraduate studies, meanwhile, 16 (16.2%) had finished high school, and 13 (13.1%) were degree holders. For the status of marriage, seven (7.1%) of the respondents were single, 90 (90.9%) were in marriage, and 2 (2.0%) were divorced or widowed.

Measurement

Referring to the hypothesis of this study, the indicators include emotional intelligence, psychological well-being, and public trust on charity foundations. The independent variable of this study was the emotional intelligence of mothers with autistic children. To measure emotional intelligence construct, 33 items developed by Schutte et al. (1998) were used. This construct consists of Managing Emotions (ME) (8 items), Utilisation of Emotions (UE) (9 items), Perceiving Emotions (PE) (10 items), and Facilitating Emotions (FE) (6 items). Respondents were asked to rate items across a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All items ranged from 1=strongly disagree, to 5=strongly agree. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.86, reported by Malinauskas and Malinauskiene (2018).

Psychological well-being instrument consisting of 42 items developed by Ryff (1989) known as Ryff Psychological Well-being Scale (RPWBS). The RPWBS consists of a series of items reflecting six (6) aspects of psychological well-being (PWB) such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989). The participants were asked to rate each item on a 5 point-Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach alpha for the instrument is 0.84 (Malinauskas & Malinauskiene, 2018). The mediator of this study is public trust on charity foundations that includes five (5) items developed by Mat Isa (2018).

Result and Discussion

The measurement model in Table 1 shows the measurement model of this study. The variables include facilitating emotions (FE), managing emotions (ME), perceiving emotions (PE),

utilisation of emotions (UE), trust, autonomy (AU), environmental mastery (EM), personal growth (PG), purpose in life (PL), positive relations with others (PR), and self-acceptance (SA). All items of this instrument were considered reliable and valid since the Cronbach's Alpha is above 0.5.

Table 1: Measurement Model

Variable	Items	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
EI_FE	EI_FE1	0.61	0.702	0.804	0.501
	EI_FE2	0.672			
	EI_FE4	0.692			
	EI_FE5	0.705			
	EI_FE6	0.674			
EI_ME	EI_ME4	0.721	0.76	0.846	0.58
	EI_ME5	0.799			
	EI_ME6	0.772			
	EI_ME8	0.75			
EI_PE	EI_PE3	0.62	0.81	0.863	0.515
	EI_PE4	0.802			
	EI_PE5	0.643			
	EI_PE6	0.827			
	EI_PE7	0.704			
	EI_PE9	0.684			
EI_UE	EI_UE3	0.553	0.808	0.863	0.515
	EI_UE4	0.823			
	EI_UE5	0.729			
	EI_UE6	0.752			
	EI_UE7	0.756			
	EI_UE9	0.661			
TRUST	TRUST1	0.907	0.956	0.966	0.849
	TRUST 2	0.906			
	TRUST 3	0.94			
	TRUST 4	0.926			
	TRUST 5	0.927			
PW_AU	PW_AU3	0.797	0.564	0.774	0.535
	PW_AU4	0.746			
	PW_AU6	0.642			
PW_EM	PW_EM2	0.737	0.761	0.848	0.582
	PW_EM3	0.762			
	PW_EM5	0.797			
	PW_EM6	0.755			
PW_PG	PW_PG1	0.629	0.718	0.823	0.543
	PW_PG3	0.87			
	PW_PG5	0.626			
	PW_PG7	0.793			
PW_PL	PW_PL3	0.881	0.613	0.837	0.719
	PW_PL4	0.814			
PW_PR	PW_PR2	0.779	0.653	0.81	0.588
	PW_PR3	0.803			
	PW_PR6	0.716			
PW_SA	PW_SA3	0.848	0.678	0.819	0.605
	PW_SA5	0.841			
	PW_SA6	0.624			

The minimum threshold for outer loading was set at 0.5 as this study follows the rule of thumb by Hair et al. (2014). Based on the analysis, the indicators in this research had outer loadings more than 0.60. There were no items deleted with the intention to meet the AVE threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014). Table 1 displays items with an acceptable level of AVE, between 0.501 (EI_FE) and 0.719 (PW_PL). All items of emotional intelligence have an acceptable level of Composite Reliability (0.804–0.863); EI_FE (0.804), EI_ME (0.846), EI_PE (0.863), and EI_UE (0.863). Composite Reliability for trust was the highest with the value of 0.966. Meanwhile, the range for Composite Reliability for PW was in the range of 0.774 to 0.848.

Table 2 displays the second-order validity whereby all items identified were significant for the relationship emotional intelligence and psychological well-being as a construct with the *p*-value of 0.00. Hence the significant first-order relationship was maintained and established for further analysis. The first finding for structural models was emotional intelligence. Among the various characteristics that have been identified as determinants of emotional intelligence, it has been reported that utilisation of emotions (UE) exhibits the highest correlation when compared to EI_FE, EI_ME, and EI_PE. As for psychological well-being, the most significant construct was environmental mastery (EM) compared to PW_AU, PW_PG, PW_PL, PW_PR and PW_SA.

Table 2: Second-Order Validity

Second-order	Path-construct	Path coefficient	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Result
Emotional intelligent	EI -> EI_FE	0.815	24.738	0.00	Significant
	EI -> EI_ME	0.866	32.995	0.00	Significant
	EI -> EI_PE	0.842	31.667	0.00	Significant
	EI -> EI_UE	0.918	47.520	0.00	Significant
Psychological wellbeing	PW -> PW_AU	0.742	16.112	0.00	Significant
	PW -> PW_EM	0.877	31.255	0.00	Significant
	PW -> PW_PG	0.854	26.001	0.00	Significant
	PW -> PW_PL	0.846	26.471	0.00	Significant
	PW -> PW_PR	0.855	34.651	0.00	Significant
	PW -> PW_SA	0.856	32.007	0.00	Significant

$P < 0.05$, $t > 1.645$ (one-tailed)

Next, in regression analysis the hypotheses were tested (see Table 3). The bootstrapping procedure was used to generate *t*-samples, with 5000 resamples to assess the hypothesis. This research includes three (3) hypotheses which the following presented the result of the hypotheses testing in Table 3.

The first hypothesis was confirmed. The score has a positive significant relation to the trust towards charitable foundations. Hypothesis 1 (H_1) has a value of 3.891 for the *t*-value. The effect of EI on TRUST was examined. EI ($\beta = 0.82$, $p < 0.000$) had a positive and significant effect on TRUST, thus being able to explain 14.6% of the variance of TRUST. The relationship was the most highly correlated among two (2) other hypotheses provided. Therefore, a higher emotional intelligence score has a strong impact on the trust towards charity foundations. This confirms the high effects of trust as provision of emotional intelligence.

Table 3: Relationship Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path coefficient	t-value	VIF	p-value	R ²	Hypothesis Result	Analysis Result
Hypothesis 1	EI -> TRUST	0.382	3.891	1.00	0.00	14.6	Has a positive effect and significant influence	H1: Accepted
Hypothesis 2	TRUST -> PW	-0.339	3.362	1.00	0.001	11.5	Has a negative effect and significant influence	H2: Accepted
Hypothesis 3	EI -> TRUST -> PW	-0.129	2.600	1.00	0.010		Has a negative effect and significant influence	H3: Accepted

The second hypothesis was confirmed. Indeed, the trust towards charity foundations has a significant relationship with psychological well-being in mothers of autistic children. However, trust does not have a significant positive effect but negative effect on psychological well-being. Hypothesis 2 (H₂) proved a significant negative relationship between TRUST and PW with the standardised path coefficient at $\beta=-0.339$ and *p*-value at 0.001. The *t*-statistic of H₂ is 3.362. This outcome is contrary to Helliwell and Wang (2010), who found trust is built on a base of shared positive experience and is nurtured by continued connections. The study showed that reducing trust in charity foundations can lead to greater psychological well-being for mothers of autistic children.

For the third hypothesis, the relationship has been tested with a mediating effect of TRUST. The hypothesis mentioned that the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being will be stronger with the impact of trust. However, the result showed the opposite way, which emphasises that trust mediates the negative relationship between EI and PW with the significant value of $\beta=0.129$ (*p*-value below 0.05, which is 0.01). The *t*-value for Hypothesis 3 (H₃) is 2.600. This means that, despite their trust in charity foundations, mothers believe that they need to reduce their trust in these institutions to have a better ability to manage their emotions, understand the emotions of those around them, and have a healthier state of psychological well-being. This conclusion contradicts earlier studies while contributing new findings to the field of study.

Conclusion

This study has a valuable contribution to the growing body of research on the factors that influence psychological well-being in mothers of autistic children. Specifically, it investigates the potential mediating role of trust in charity foundations in the relationship between emotional intelligence and the psychological well-being of mothers with autistic children. 105 mothers of children with autism participated in the study. Among households, unemployment was an ongoing trend among mothers of children with ASD. For single mothers in particular, unemployment will result in financial difficulty and destitution. According to Dillenburger et al. (2015), the explanation for the unemployment is that people are too busy caring for ASD children. Between the ages of 30 and 39, young, educated mothers made up most of the respondents. 13 respondents to this survey had earned degrees, 16 had graduated from high school, and 70 had finished undergraduate coursework. Regarding marital status, there were seven respondents who were single, married, and two who were either divorced or widowed.

The findings indicated that a decrease in trust towards charity foundations is necessary to establish a strong association between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Nevertheless, despite the mothers' trust in charity foundations, they believe that they need to reduce their trust to have a better ability to manage their emotions and have a healthier state of psychological well-being. This is due to mothers facing different kinds of uncertain and challenging situations and anxiety provoking by their children. This uncertainty has an impact on mothers' psychological wellbeing.

Trust in charity foundations is believed to be part of the uncertainty condition that mothers must avoid to live a better life. It is because, despite this foundation's assistance to many other communities, the organisation's mission of supporting the community with ASD still needs more development. Hence, rather than solely focusing on enhancing emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among mothers, it is important for the government to prioritise the enhancement of charity foundations dedicated to providing services for individuals with ASD. This would enable mothers to rely more heavily on such foundations to assist in the care and support of their autistic children.

While several centres have been established to offer information, education, training, and counselling to mothers with autistic children, it is necessary to examine the efficacy of this foundation. Hence, it is important to promote ongoing research aimed at identifying efficacious strategies for ASD organisations in assisting mothers with autistic children who struggle with psychological issues.

The findings of this study have the potential to provide vital knowledge that can aid mothers of children with autism in improving their psychological well-being, thus promoting a more pleasant family life. This is due to the reality that families with children that have autism face both substantial financial hardships and psychological distress as they navigate the distinctive difficulties associated with their child's specific demands. In addition, family members, particularly mothers who typically assume a greater share of parenthood responsibilities, experience higher levels of stress (Zhou et al., 2019; Jani et al., 2023). This is evident since numerous studies have indicated that mothers who have children with autism are at an elevated risk for experiencing physical and psychological problems.

This study was undertaken to investigate measures aimed at enhancing the well-being of mothers with autistic children or lessening their psychological suffering. The primary constraints of this study encompass the potential influence of socio-economic status that may be peculiar to certain countries, as well as the omission of trust, emotional intelligence, and psychological well-being components due to the limits inherent in the available data.

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