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The Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Proposed Strategy at Conflicts: The Case Study of TOMY of the 3rd Health District, Greece

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Abstract
Aim of current study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and behavior in conflicts between employees and coordinators at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District. A primary, quantitative, cross-sectional comparative research, between participants was accomplished. The valid and reliable ($a \geqslant 0.781$) WLEIS questionnaire was used to measure emotional intelligence. The sample was conducted by 143 employees, mainly women, married, 26-45 years old, doctors, nurses or administrative staff, holders of bachelor's degrees with more than 3 years of work, who do not hold a coordinator position and have not been informed never about conflict management issues during their studies. Half of employees use the strategies of claim (25.53%) and cooperation (25.53%) to resolve conflicts. TOMY coordinator to resolve conflicts prefers to use problem solving (52.48%) or approach compliant with current legislation (24.82%). Different levels of emotional intelligence across employee behavior at conflict were observed in factors "Expressing Personal Feelings" ($p=.028$) and "Emotional control" ($p=.005$). Different levels of emotional intelligence across the coordinator approach at conflict, were observed in factor "Emotional regulation" ($p=.008$), and "Emotional control" ($p=.010$). Employees at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District presented high levels of emotional intelligence and used cooperation and claim, to resolve conflicts, avoiding the beneficial mediation strategy. TOMY coordinator uses problem-solving or is compliant with the current legislation strategy. Higher levels of expressing personal feelings and emotional control were related to the cooperation or mediation strategies to resolve conflicts.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Conflicts, Coordinator, Strategy, 3rd Health District

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It is an essential skill in conflict resolution as it enables individuals to navigate complex social interactions and build strong relationships (Başoğul & Özgür, 2016). The key components of emotional intelligence include self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Nurul et al., 2017). Assessing emotional intelligence among healthcare employees can have significant implications for communication, patient care, and job performance. This is especially important in healthcare environments where high-stress levels are common (Psilopanagioti et al., 2012).

The root of almost all conflicts can be traced back to emotions, as conflicts arise from the beliefs of individuals or organizations regarding threats to their interests. Conflict resolution is an essential concern in the global healthcare sector. According to Pitsilidou et al. (2018), the most frequently suggested courses of action for conflict resolution in the hospital setting of Cyprus were the establishment of effective communication and collaboration, recognition and respect for individual rights, and the clear demarcation of responsibilities among all parties involved. Moreover, employees tend to favor mediation and arbitration for resolving healthcare disputes, as these processes can cater to their particular requirements (Thrope, 2011). Loke (2013) also asserts that professionals prefer mediation for resolving disputes since it reduces the risk of undesirable publicity.

Emotional intelligence has been considered an important factor in conflict management and customer relationship management, while emotional intelligence may also play a significant role in conflict resolution between employees (Aseery et al., 2023). A meta-analysis of emotional intelligence and conflict management showed that emotional intelligence plays a moderating role in conflict resolution strategies and organizational citizenship behavior, and that it may also be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior in workplace conflicts (Zia, Saeed & Khan, 2018). It has been observed that individuals possessing high emotional intelligence are not only cognizant of their limits and obligations, but they are adept at regulating their emotions as well (Latsou et al., 2022). Moreover, in Lee's (2018) study, it was found that employees who possess a higher level of emotional intelligence tend to perform their job responsibilities with greater efficiency. Additionally, these employees actively seek out conflict resolution by utilizing methods such as cooperation and mediation.

Furthermore, the importance of emotional intelligence in effective leadership cannot be overstated, as it has become one of the most crucial qualities a leader can possess. Coordinators in the health sector who possess emotional intelligence can motivate and inspire their colleagues to achieve objectives that may have otherwise been unattainable (Kemerer & Cwiekala-Lewis, 2017). However, high-emotional intelligence coordinators can utilize this ability to comprehend and regulate their emotions in a way that benefits themselves and others. Kemerer and Cwiekala-Lewis (2017) showed that the ability of a nurse leader to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a therapeutic manner is positively correlated with emotional intelligence According to Muhurji & Yussef (2017) the majority of nurse leaders and coordinators could identify their emotions as they occurred, were aware of these emotions, and understood why their emotions changed. However, a smaller proportion of nursing leaders believed that they had control over their emotions. Belasen and Belasen's (2016) research also underscores the crucial role played by coordinators in healthcare service delivery. Coordinators achieve this by ensuring compliance with laws and regulations and by removing any hindrances that may impede problem-solving and the effective implementation of strategic changes. Also, based on Assery et al.'s (2023) research, it seems that emotional intelligence could potentially have an impact on how personnel interpret the conflict resolution techniques employed by coordinators.

Empirical evidence suggests that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies in healthcare professionals (Kitsios et al., 2022; Lee, 2018; Latsou et al., 2022; Zia, Saeed & Khan, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to understand the importance of emotional intelligence in conflict resolution to improve outcomes in the health sector. Emotional intelligence skills can lead to improved conflict resolution and overall job performance in healthcare professionals. By utilizing methods such as cooperation and mediation and incorporating emotional intelligence into performance management systems (Lee et al., 2018; Pitsilidou et al.,

2018), healthcare professionals can develop the necessary skills to effectively manage conflicts and improve their overall emotional intelligence (Tyczkowski et al., 2015). The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and behavior in conflicts between employees and coordinators at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District. This study contributes to the ongoing advancement of knowledge in the field of emotional intelligence and conflict management strategies.

It is the first time to conduct research in TOMY in the field of Human Resources Management and specifically in the emotional intelligence of healthcare professionals in relation to conflict resolution strategies. The emergence of the concept of mediation in the field of health in relation to emotional intelligence is also original in the research. The strategy of mediation helps the individual to satisfactorily join the organization and contributes to his healthy relationship with the organization and the working environment (Triantari, 2018). This research will form a basis for future research contributing to the enhancement of knowledge.

The aim of the current study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the behavior in conflicts of employees and coordinators at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District. The research questions are formulated below:
1) Does the emotional intelligence of employees affect their behavior in conflicts at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District?
2) Does the emotional intelligence of employees affect the way they perceive the coordinator's behavior in conflicts at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District?

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

A primary, quantitative, cross-sectional comparative research between participants was accomplished. The cross-sectional primary research is considered appropriate to investigate directly the levels of emotional intelligence of employees at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District in a particular period (Creswell, 2013). According to previous studies, emotional intelligence is a concept that can be measured accurately (Wong & Law, 2002), thus quantitative research via Likert-type questions is the appropriate research design(DeVellis, 2016). The comparative between participants design was chosen to compare the different levels of emotional intelligence across the behaviors in conflicts as well as according to the coordinator different strategies to solve conflicts, using statistical methods in numerical data (Coolican, 2014). The dependent variables of study are the behavior in conflicts of employees and coordinator and the independent variable the emotional intelligence. Great advantage of quantitative design is that results can be generalized for the study population, due to the inductive approach (Cohen, Manion& Morrison, 2007).

2.2 Procedure

At the 16/02-09-2021 meeting of the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Western Macedonia in Greece, the approval to conduct the research with protocol number 5/2022 was recommended. The research procedure begun after this approval. Current subject was considered interesting, useful and be beneficial for the scientific community. The research gap that this study aims to fulfill is that no previous study has examined the way that employees perceive the coordinator's strategy to resolve issues, based on their emotional intelligence. Researcher asked for the permission of administrations at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District to share questionnaires with corresponding employees and the data collection began after the permission was given. Employees were informed about the general framework of the research; the research aim and that their answers will be used only for research purposes. Confidentiality of personal data was reassured. Participation in the current study was anonymous, voluntary and with the written consent of participants, confirming the necessary ethical issues that are related with the psychology of participants and the nature of a scientific research (BPS, 2014). The right to withdraw from the research was clarified at any reason, without explaining the reason or having any

consequences. Data were selected in hard-copy questionnaires and then answers were coded in Microsoft Office Excel 2016. The research was conducted from 2021 to 2022.

2.3 Questionnaire

Questionnaire of current study involves 3 sections which are: 1) Demographic and job characteristics, 2) Behavior at conflict, 3) Emotional intelligence. Regarding the 1st section of demographic and hob characteristics, totally 8 closed-type questions were used which refer to gender, age, marital status, working experience, level of education, the coordinator position, the information about conflict management issues during the studies and the specialty. The 2ndsection involves 2 closed type questions regarding the kind of approach-behavior-strategy that employees and the coordinator use to resolve conflicts.

The 3rd section measures the emotional intelligence with 16 Likert type questions from 1-7 (1=Disagree strongly, 2=Disagree much, 3=Disagree, 4=Neutral, 5=Agree, 6=Agree much, 7=Agree strongly), from the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) (Wong & Law, 2002). Questionnaire involves 4 factors (4 questions each) which are a) "Expressing Personal Feelings", with questions such as "I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time", b) "Understanding of others' emotions", including items e.g. "I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others", c) "Emotional regulation", involving questions such as "I would always encourage myself to try my best" and d) "Emotional control", with questions such as "I have good control of my own emotions".

The factors of emotional intelligence were tested for their reliability, using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient which measures the reliability of internal consistency with satisfactory values to be those greater than 0.7 (Nunnaly & Bernstein, 1994). Reliability analysis presented satisfactory results *(Table 1).* "Expressing personal feelings" indicated reliability a=0.877, "Understanding of others' emotions" a=0.781, "Emotional regulation" a=0.835 and "Emotional control" a=0.838. The validity of questionnaire on emotional intelligence is guaranteed by manufacturers via construct validity, using factor analysis which indicates specific factors (McLeod, 2013). Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used in current research which confirms the factor construct. KMO coefficient was high (0.886) (Kline, 2014) and the CFA indicated 4 factors which explain the 71.31% of the total variance *(Table 2).*

Table 1: Reliability analysis of factors

Factor	**Questions**	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**Reliability**
Expressing personal feelings	1,5,9,13	0.877	High
Understanding of others' emotions	2,6,10,14	0.781	Satisfactory
Emotional regulation	3,7,11,15	0.835	High
Emotional control	4,8,12,16	0.838	High

Table 2: Factor Analysis for WLEIS, using varimax rotation

	Factors (KMO=0.886)			
Items	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
SEA_9	0.835			
SEA_1	0.733			
SEA_5	0.718			
SEA_13	0.685			
ROE_4		0.814		
ROE_8		0.719		
ROE_12		0.686		
ROE_16		0.633		
UOE_11			0.769	
UOE_3			0.739	
UOE_15			0.671	
UOE_7			0.424	

OAE_2				0.845
OAE_6				0.845
OAE_14				0.825
OAE_10				0.186
Eigen value	3.170	2.850	2.741	2.650
Variance (%)	19.81%	17.81%	17.13%	16.52%

2.4 Population-Sample

The employees of the TOMY of the 3rd Health District are considered the population of study. Sample was conducted by 143 employees using convenient sampling, as researcher gathered data from employees she knows personally (Creswell, 2013). Considering demographic characteristics, most of participants are females (79.02%), 18-45 years old (84.50%), of a bachelor educational level (63.64%, N=91), while more than half are married (57.34%). Regarding job characteristics, the main specialties that were observed are general doctors (25.17%), nurses (25.17%) and administrative staff (22.38%). In addition, the vast majority have more than 3 years of work experience (82.52%), are not coordinators (90.85%) and during their studies have not ever learned about conflict management issues (60.14%) *(Table 3).*

Table 3: Demographic and job characteristics

Demographics	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	30	20.98%
	Female	113	79.02%
Age	18-35	49	34.50%
	36-45	71	50.00%
	46-67	22	15.50%
Marital Status	Unmarried	47	32.87%
	Married	82	57.34%
	Divorced-Separated-Widower	14	9.79%
Duration of work	0-3	25	17.48%
	4-6	36	25.17%
	7-10	37	25.87%
	>10	45	31.47%
Educational level	Bachelor	91	63.64%
	Master	46	32.17%
	PhD	6	4.20%
Do you hold a Coordinator Position?	No	129	90.85%
	Yes	13	9.15%
Have you ever learned about conflict management issues during your studies?	No	86	60.14%
	Yes	57	39.86%
What specialty do you have in TOMY?	Pediatrician	7	4.90%
	General doctor	36	25.17%
	Social Worker	18	12.59%
	Nurse	36	25.17%
	Visitor	14	9.79%
	Administrative	32	22.38%

2.5 Data analysis

Statistical program SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 26 of IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) was used for the analysis of data. In the descriptive statistics, mean, standard deviation and percentages were used. Inferential statistics was performed with significance 5%. Factors were tested for normality using the most accurate Shapiro Wilk test (Razali & Wah, 2011). Parametric test one-way ANOVA was used to compare mean differences between 4 or 5 independent samples that are normally distributed, and values were presented with mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). Non-parametric test Kruskal Wallis was used to compare

median differences between 4 or 5 independent samples that are not normally distributed, and values were presented with median (Mdn) and interquartile range (IR), using Post Hoc Analysis Bonferonniin case of statistically significant median differences (Field, 2017).

3. Results

Half of employees use the strategies of claim (25.53%) and cooperation (25.53%) to resolve conflicts while the minority uses the mediation strategy (13.48%). TOMY coordinator to resolve conflicts prefers to use problem solving (52.48%) or approach compliant with current legislation (24.82%) (*Table 4*).

Table 4: Behavior in conflict

Question	Category	N	%
What kind of behavior do you exhibit when you are in conflict?	Claim	36	25.53%
	Compromise	22	15.60%
	Avoidance	23	16.31%
	Acceptance	5	3.55%
	Cooperation	36	25.53%
	Mediation	19	13.48%
What kind of approach does the TOMY coordinator use to resolve conflicts on a personal or group level?	Authoritarian	9	6.38%
	Liberal	14	9.93%
	Problem-solving	74	52.48%
	Compliant with current legislation	35	24.82%
	He stands for the majority	9	6.38%

Considering emotional intelligence, employees presented high levels of expressing personal feelings (M=5.54, SD=0.98) as they agree that they have a good sense of why they have certain feelings most of the time (86.1%), always know whether they are or not happy (85.4%), have good understanding of their own emotions (79.8%) and really understand what they feel (79.1%). Similarly, high were the levels for the emotional regulation (M=5.30, SD=1.01) as participants agreed that they would always encourage themselves to try the best (83.3%), set goals for themselves and then try their best to achieve them (78.4%), are self-motivated persons (72.8%) and always tell themselves that they are competent persons (68.6%). In addition, others emotional appraisal was rated high (M=4.99, SD=0.93), with employees agreeing that they are sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others (70.7%), have good understanding of the emotions of people around me (69%), are a good observer of others' emotions (65.8%) and always know their friends' emotions from their behavior (65.8%). Emotional control was rated moderate to high (M=4.83, SD=1.10). Participants agreed clearly, only in the statement that they have good control of their own emotions (70%) *(Table 5).*

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for emotional intelligence

Statement	M	SD	DS	DM	D	N	A	AM	AS
I have a good sense of why I have certain feelings most of the time.	5.73	1.11	0%	1.4%	2.1%	10.5%	19.6%	40.6%	25.9 %
I always know whether or not I am happy.	5.71	1.07	0%	0%	3.5%	11.2%	21.0%	39.2%	25.2 %
I have good understanding of my own emotions.	5.40	1.21	0%	1.4%	7.7%	11.2%	27.3%	34.3%	18.2 %
I really understand what I feel.	5.30	1.18	0%	1.4%	7.7%	11.9%	32.9%	30.8%	15.4 %
Expressing personal feelings	**5.54**	**0.98**							
I am sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others.	5.14	1.35	1.4%	1.4%	10.5%	16.1%	23.8%	32.9%	14.0 %
I have good understanding of the emotions of people around me.	4.97	1.18	0.7%	2.1%	7.7%	20.4%	34.5%	26.8%	7.7%

I am a good observer of others' emotions.	4.93	1.18	0%	4.2%	5.6%	24.5%	30.8%	28.7%	6.3%
I always know my friends' emotions from their behaviour.	4.92	1.16	0.7%	2.1%	5.6%	25.9%	36.4%	20.3%	9.1%
Understanding of others emotions	**4.99**	**0.93**							
I would always encourage myself to try my best.	5.59	1.14	0%	0.7%	4.2%	11.9%	25.2%	34.3%	23.8 %
I always set goals for myself and then try my best to achieve them.	5.37	1.27	0.7%	2.1%	4.9%	14.0%	28.7%	29.4%	20.3 %
I am a self-motivated person.	5.17	1.22	0.7%	1.4%	6.3%	18.9%	30.8%	28.0%	14.0 %
I always tell myself I am a competent person.	5.05	1.31	0.7%	4.2%	6.3%	20.3%	26.6%	30.8%	11.2 %
Emotional regulation	**5.30**	**1.01**							
I have good control of my own emotions.	5.00	1.33	1.4%	4.2%	6.3%	18.2%	32.9%	25.2%	11.9 %
I can always calm down quickly when I am very angry.	4.85	1.42	1.4%	4.9%	9.9%	23.9%	22.5%	25.4%	12.0 %
I am able to control my temper and handle difficulties rationally.	4.80	1.31	0.7%	5.6%	7.7%	25.2%	29.4%	23.1%	8.4%
I am quite capable of controlling my own emotions.	4.65	1.30	1.4%	5.7%	7.1%	29.1%	34.0%	14.2%	8.5%
Emotional control	**4.83**	**1.10**							

DS: Disagree strongly, DM: Disagree much, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, AM: Agree much, AS: Agree strongly

Normality of factors was accepted only for "Understanding of others emotions" (p=0.057) *(Table 6).*

Table 6: Normality test

Factor	W (143)	p-value
Expressing personal feelings	0.950	**<0.001**
Understanding of others' emotions	0.982	0.057
Emotional regulation	0.959	**<0.001**
Emotional control	0.975	**0.009**

Different levels of emotional intelligence across employee behavior at conflict were observed in factor "Expressing personal feelings" (p=.028), with the median value of employees who use cooperation or mediation to resolve conflicts (Mdn=6, IR=0.75) to be higher than the median value of employees who use compromise (Mdn=5.38, IR=1.13, p=.006) and claim (Mdn=5.50, IR=1.25, p=.035). In addition, different levels of emotional intelligence across employee behavior at conflict were observed in factor "Emotional control" (p=.005), with the median value of employees who use cooperation or mediation to resolve conflicts (Mdn=5.25, IR=1.25) to be higher than the median value of employees who use claim (Mdn=4.50, IR=1.25, p=.002), compromise (Mdn=4.88, IR=1.56, p=.035) and avoidance or acceptance (Mdn=4.50, IR=1.25, p=.011) *(Table 7, Figure 1).*

Table 7: Emotional intelligence across personal behavior in conflict

Factor	Claim	Compromise	Avoidance-Acceptance	Cooperation-Mediation	p-value
Expressing personal feelings	5.50 (1.25)	5.38 (1.13)	5.75 (1.38)	6.00 (0.75)	**0.028**
Understanding of others' emotions	5.09 (1.09)	4.84 (0.96)	4.76 (0.69)	5.10 (0.93)	0.336
Emotional regulation	5.63 (0.94)	5.25 (1.38)	5.00 (1.94)	5.75 (1.25)	0.075

Emotional control	4.50 (1.25)	4.88 (1.56)	4.50 (1.25)	5.25 (1.25)	**0.005**

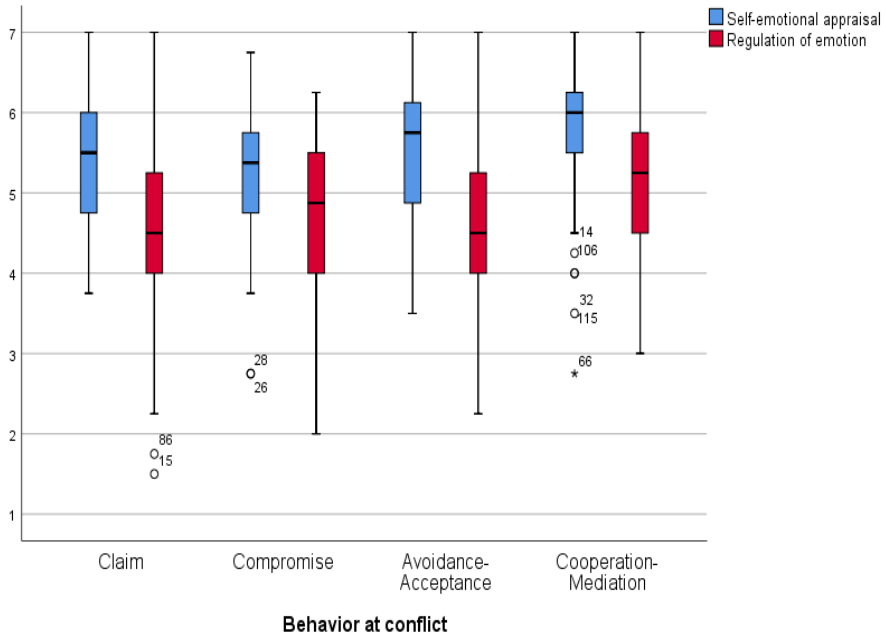

Figure 1: Emotional intelligence across personal behavior in conflict

Different levels of emotional intelligence across the coordinator approach at conflict, were observed in factor "Emotional regulation" (p=.008), with the median value of employees who think that coordinator uses problem-solving to resolve conflicts (Mdn=5.75, IR=1.25) to be higher than the median value of employees who think that coordinator uses liberal approach (Mdn=4.25, IR=2.19, adj. p=.001), or majority (Mdn=5.25, IR=1.50, p=.049). In addition, in the factor "Emotional regulation", median value of employees who think that coordinator uses legislation strategy (Mdn=5.50, IR=1.25) is higher than median value of those think that coordinator uses liberal approach (Mdn=4.25, IR=2.19, p=.011). Furthermore, different levels of emotional intelligence across the coordinator approach at conflict were observed in factor "Emotional control" (p=.010), with the median value of employees who think that coordinator uses problem solving (Mdn=5.00, IR=1.50) to be higher than the median value of employees who believe that coordinator uses liberal (Mdn=4.13, IR=2.13, p=.036) and majority approach (Mdn=4.00, IR=1.75, p=.008). Moreover, in factor "Emotional control" the median value of employees who believe that coordinator uses legislation approach to resolve conflicts (Mdn=5.00, IR=1.50) was higher than the median value of employees who think that coordinator uses liberal (Mdn=4.13, IR=2.13, p=.031) and majority approach (Mdn=4.00, IR=1.75, p=.007) *(Table 8, Figure 2).*

Table 8: Emotional intelligence across the coordinator approach to conflict

Factor	Authoritarian	Liberal	Problem solving	Legislation	Majority	p-value
Expressing personal feelings	5.50 (1.38)	5.25 (2.06)	5.75 (1.06)	5.75 (1.00)	4.75 (2.38)	0.076
Understanding of others' emotions	4.81 (1.19)	4.54 (1.07)	4.96 (0.87)	5.26 (0.89)	4.92 (0.92)	0.140
Emotional regulation	5.25 (1.13)	4.25 (2.19)	5.75 (1.06)	5.50 (1.25)	5.25 (1.50)	**0.008**
Emotional control	4.25 (1.67)	4.13 (2.13)	5.00 (1.50)	5.00 (1.50)	4.00 (1.75)	**0.010**

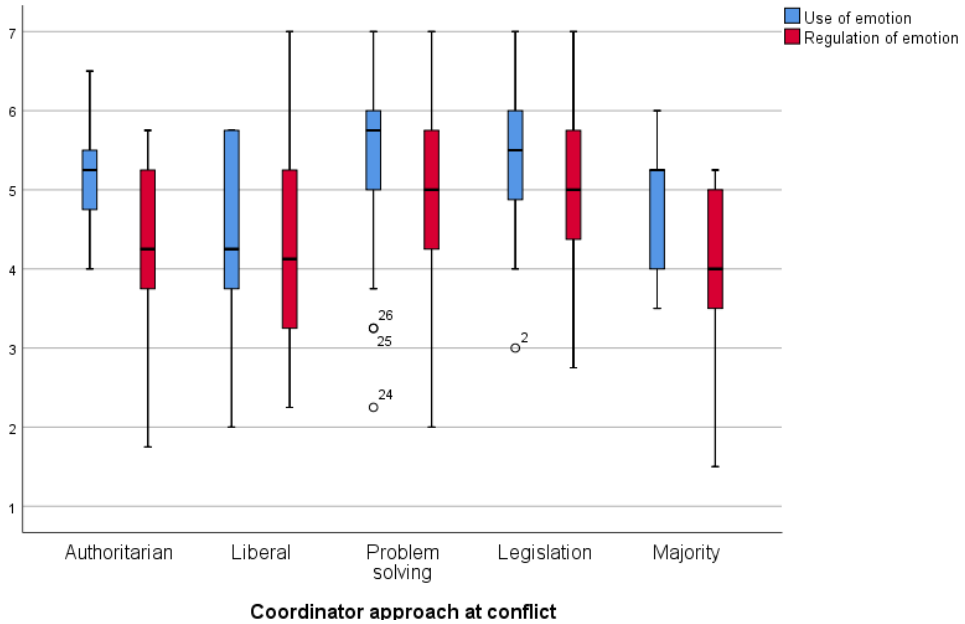

Figure 2: Emotional intelligence across the coordinator approach in conflict

4. Discussion

Aim of current study was to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and behavior in conflicts between employees and coordinators at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District. Sample was conducted by 143 employees, mainly women, married, 26-45 years old, doctors, nurses or administrative staff, holders of bachelor degrees with more than 3 years of work, who do not hold a coordinator position and have not been informed never about conflict management issues during their studies.

The most frequent strategies that employees use to resolve conflicts are cooperation and claim. Pitsilidou et al. (2018), in their study, also indicate that the participants frequently suggested collaboration as the most popular method for resolving conflicts within the hospital environment in Cyprus. Although mediation strategy is beneficial (Loke, 2013; Trope, 2011), the minority of employees choose this approach to resolve conflicts. Regarding TOMY coordinators the most frequent strategies are problem solving or approach compliant with current legislation. Also, in the research conducted by Belasen and Belasen (2016), it is emphasized that coordinators play a significant role in enhancing the quality and efficiency of healthcare service delivery. They achieve this by adhering to the laws and regulations to ensure compliance and by eliminating obstacles in the way of problem-solving and the implementation of strategic changes.

Employees at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District presented high levels of emotional intelligence considering self and others emotional appraisal, as well as the emotional regulation and medium to high levels of emotional control. According to Tyczkowski et al. (2015), the emotional intelligence levels of employees in the healthcare sector are considerably high. Moreover, it has been noted that employees with high emotional intelligence are not only aware of their limits and responsibilities, but also possess the ability to regulate their emotions effectively and are more flexible and adaptable to changes and demands (Latsou et al., 2022). One the other hand, according to Muhurji & Yussef (2017) the majority of health professionals are aware of these emotions, but a smaller proportion of them believe that they control over their emotions.

As far as the relationship between emotional intelligence and behavior in conflict is concerned, employees with higher emotional intelligence regarding expressing personal feelings and emotional control choose cooperation or mediation strategies to resolve conflicts. According to Lee (2018), employees who possess a greater amount of emotional intelligence are prone to performing their duties more efficiently. Furthermore, they often attempt to seek conflict resolution through the means of cooperation and mediation.

Regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and the perceived strategy that coordinator uses to resolve conflicts, employees with higher emotional intelligence, considering use and emotional control, believe that the coordinator uses the strategies of problem-solving and compliant with current legislation to resolve conflicts. The study of Assery et al. (2023) suggests that emotional intelligence may play a role in how employees perceive the conflict resolution strategies used by coordinators.

5. Conclusion

Employees at the TOMY of the 3rd Health District presented high levels of emotional intelligence and use cooperation and claim, to resolve conflicts, avoiding the beneficial mediation strategy. TOMY coordinator uses problem-solving or compliant with current legislation strategy. Higher levels of expressing personal feelings and emotional control were related with the cooperation or mediation strategies to resolve conflicts. Employees with higher use and emotional control believe that coordinator uses the strategies of problem-solving and compliant with current legislation to resolve conflicts.

Results refer to employees of the TOMY of the 3rd Health District, mainly general doctors, nurses or administrative staff, women, aged 26-45 years, with more than 3 years of work, who do not hold a coordinator position and they have never been informed about conflict management issues during their studies. Sample size was not large enough to use parametric tests and to ensure the sufficient statistical power (Cohen, 1988). Another limitation is that current study was performed during the pandemic period and this possibly affected the answers as different kinds of conflicts possibly occurred, comparing pandemic and normal periods, taking into account and the increasing workload those employees faced.

Future research could examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflicts strategies, in different health centers and hospitals, using stratified sampling to achieve high representativeness and a sample size of 300-400 employees (Creswell, 2013). Moreover, future research can compare the results between health centers of private and public sectors or between employees and supervisors.

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