

# Emotion Management Among Career Women from Hadith Perspective: The Nominal Group Technique Approach

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**Abstract:** *Career women face emotional challenges due to their professional and personal responsibilities. Therefore, this article aims to examine the emotion management of career women from the perspective of hadith. This study employs the Nominal Group Technique (NGT), a structured method for group decision-making, to identify strategies for managing emotions. Findings showed that most of the experts involved in this study agreed with the technique of emotion management proposed by the hadith. It is strongly recommended to conduct further research on emotion management from the perspective of hadith, as this may offer valuable insights to enhance emotional intelligence among career women.*

**Keywords:** Emotion management, career women, perspective of hadith, Nominal Group Technique

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## 1. Introduction

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, society is more open to accepting and acknowledging the capabilities of women in the field of work. Despite educating their kids and managing the household, women stand at the same level as men in the professional area and are together in pursuing their careers. It is proven since more women are in high positions and involved in decision-making in order to determine the direction and success of an organisation (Jaga, 2014; Sembien, 2016; Thuaibah@Suaibah Abu Bakar et al., 2020). Based on the report by the Department of Statistics Malaysia in 2018, of the 22.8 million workers, 22.2 million were women who worked in the professional field as lawmakers, senior officials, and managers; 44.7% engaged in the professional and technical sectors; 8.6% consulted ministries (out of 37 positions); and 11% of Malaysian parliamentary seats were dominated by women.

However, the relentless pursuit of career advancement amid personal responsibilities often renders career women emotionally unstable, impacting both their professional performance and personal lives. Moreover, conflicts at work and family issues contribute to the mental health problems of career women (Thuaibah@Suaibah Abu Bakar et al., 2020). In fact, research shows that career women in Malaysia have depression problems due to the stress of the workplace and their homes (Ruhaya, 2014, Amin, et al.2016). Stress and depression lead to the mental health issues and the deterioration of psychological well-being (Ibrahim & Zaimah, 2021). Furthermore, 2% of Malaysians suffer from mental health issues, and women are two times more likely to be affected compared to men. (Konflik, 2023).

Considering the serious impact of emotional instability upon career women, this research aims to propose emotion management from hadith perspectives. Effective emotion management is crucial for maintaining good mental health, as it helps individuals cope with stress and emotional challenges (Sakinah Salleh, Alwi Mohd Yunus, 2023). Most of the recent studies focus on the factors and challenges embraced by career women besides the impact of unstable emotions that they were dealing with. Therefore, it is hoped that this research will help career women manage their emotions wisely and lead to a more stable life.

## 2. Literature Review

Human beings are created with three elements; spiritual, physical and emotional. Emotion is regarded as an internal reaction that has an expressive quality which can influence one's thinking, feeling and behaviour (Idris, K. A., 2014). Emotion is derived from the word *emovere*; the Latin word which is a combination of two words; *ex* and *movere* meaning 'out' and 'move'. The behaviour of a person can be affected by the emotions that he has, but he also has the power to control his emotions (Nurul Nabihah binti Abdul Latif, et al, 2023). Other than being acknowledged as a psychological response system, emotion plays a vital role in human well-being and survival (C.E. Izard, 2010). However, despite its vital role in human life, the physical and psychological health of human beings can be in danger due to excessive emotion (Ulya et al., 2021). Therefore, emotion needs to be controlled and managed appropriately to avoid any regretful circumstances as well as consequences.

Due to the crucial role of controlling emotions, humans are naturally inclined to find the best technique and method for managing their emotions. Emotion management is defined as the capability and ability of someone to observe his emotion, interact with it and eventually change the reactions toward the emotion for their well-being (JuStyna Mojsa-Kaja, Zorana Ivcevic, 2023). Other than remaining calm in stressful situations (Nurul Juhida Ahmad et al, 2022), through emotion management, a person can avoid any physical and psychological harm which can lead to worse situations such as depression and suicide. Additionally, everyone needs to have a proper method of managing their emotion though there are differences between males and females in managing their emotions, including career women.

Meanwhile, the term 'career woman' refers to a woman with a professional life and work, while simultaneously loving her family and doing her role as a mother as well as a wife. Some definitions are biased. Oxford Learners Dictionaries (2024) for example, defines a 'career woman' as a woman whose career is important to her, often more important than getting married or having children. Cambridge Dictionary (2024), meanwhile, defines it as a woman who considers her job very important (Cambridge Dictionary, 2024). However, the accurate meaning of the term 'career woman' can be concluded as a woman who has a profession and is involved in a career (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2024) without neglecting her personal life.

In Malaysia, 22 millions of 22.8 million workers are females who are involved in various fields and sectors including lawmakers, senior officials, and managers, along with consulted ministries and the parliamentary seats (Department of Statistics, 2018). These numbers prove the important role of woman in the career world and their contribution to the nation and society. Due to juggling multiple roles in society, career women are more susceptible to mental health issues caused by the immense pressure to succeed both at home and work (Viktoriya et al, 2024). This can significantly impact their physical and mental health, potentially leading to psychological distress, occupational burnout, depression, anxiety, high turnover rates, or even suicidal thoughts (Borgler T et al, 2018). Unfortunately, the responsibilities that they carry

burden them with other side issues such as conflict at work and problems at home which then affects their mental health (Thuaibah@Suaibah Abu Bakar et al., 2020). Stress at work affects a person's emotions (Priyanka Pandita, Bhushan Pednekar, 2024) which can be caused by occupational stress when job requirements do not meet employees' abilities, resources or needs (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Other reasons may include high workloads, time constraints, job insecurity and interpersonal problems (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Quick et al., 2017), all of which can negatively impact their mental health. People who have good mental health are those with emotional balance, and resilience along with psychological and social well-being (Priyanka Pandita, Bhushan Pednekar, 2024). Therefore, emotional intelligence and positive management of emotion are closely linked to mental health well-being (Sakinah Salleh, Alwi Mohd Yunus, 2023). In other words, to achieve good mental health, emotion management is necessary.

In terms of emotion management methods and techniques, several ways have been introduced and applied. Among those methods is reappraisal and suppression initiated by Gross (Gross, 1998). According to Gross, reappraisal is the situation in which the emotional response is changed by reinterpreting the meaning of the emotional stimulus. Meanwhile, suppression refers to the process of restraining the visible expression of emotion. Through his model, Gross believed that emotion management can be conducted using a dynamic nature, whereby in the process of generating emotion, an individual can intervene at various points (Gross, 1998). On the other hand, Goleman was considered among the pioneers of emotional intelligence which applied the concept of a person's ability to recognise his emotion, understand it, manage it well and eventually be capable of utilising the emotions effectively (Goleman, 1995). Goleman listed self-awareness and self-regulation of a person's emotion as parts of five key components in emotional intelligence. This indicates that those who are able to recognise their emotions along with the capability of managing it is considered to have emotional intelligence. Besides that, Western scholars suggested other methods for managing emotions such as getting involved in physical activities like hiking and diving, changing their way of thinking as well as exploring the forest (Salye, 1993).

Despite the existing emotion management methods and techniques, the issue of unstable emotions still occurs including among career women. It is unfair to reason that the existing technique is a failure, yet the situation might require other alternatives and options in dealing with managing a person's emotions. In particular, the existing emotion management methods put less focus on the spiritual part (Rezki Perdani Sawa et al, 2020), whereas for Muslims, it is considered one of the most important factors in life. For Muslims to gain peace and tranquillity in life, it is a must for them to have strong faith in Allah and be connected with Him at all times. This is in line with the Quranic verse "Surely in the *remembrance* of *Allah* do *hearts* find comfort (ar-Ra'd:28). Therefore, the spiritual element which makes people closer to Allah is among the best methods that can be applied in order to have a peaceful mind and stable emotion.

In fact, due to the loophole of existing emotion management methods towards spiritual aspects of human life, it is believed that a module of emotion management from an Islamic perspective should be proposed (Rezki Perdani Sawa, et al, 2020). As such, there have been researches found regarding emotion management from Islamic perspectives, such as emotional intelligence based on the life story of Prophet Muhammad PBUH as a figure with multiple roles including as a leader, father and businessman (Hanisah Abdul Rahman, 2022). Moreover, there are methods found through the hadiths of Prophet Muhammad for managing emotions such as anger and fear (Suhailiza Md. Hamdani, 2020). In addition to that, it is proven that some of the methods taught by Prophet Muhammad PBUH for managing emotions are relevant

and have a positive impact on people's lives such as reducing the crime rate through anger management methods based on Islamic principles (Maleeha Iqbal, 2023). This proves that emotion management based on hadiths is effective and should be applied by career women to help them handle their emotions well.

### 3. Research Aims

This study aims to generate a concrete solution for emotion management among career women. Specifically, this study has 2 main objectives:

- To explore the views of career women regarding emotion management from hadith perspectives
- To analyse the proposed solutions based on the consensus and opinion of career women

### 4. Methodology

This study uses the NGT method as the main method of the study. The study involved 5 career women from different job fields. All of the respondents were gathered in one place and brainstormed together on the methods used for managing emotions among career women. The items listed in this research were taken from the selected hadith of Prophet Muhammad PBUH regarding anger, sadness and anxiety. A 2-hour session was performed to gather ideas and solutions based on expert opinion. At the end of the session, the researcher made a specific calculation using the NGT method to obtain the results and answer the objectives of this study.

#### Sampling

In this study, the researcher included a total of five careerwomen from various fields, ages, and backgrounds. This sample size is sufficient to ensure adequacy without necessitating a large group. The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) can be implemented with either a single cohort or a large group (Lomax & McLeman, 1984; Dobbie et al., 2004; Mustapha et al., 2022). Additionally, the group can be divided into smaller units to facilitate effective communication according to the specific needs of the study. Horton (1980) suggests a sample size of 7-10 people, while Harvey & Holmes (2012) recommend 6-12 participants as sufficient for applying the NGT procedure.

#### NGT techniques step

The Nominal Group Technique (NGT) is a methodological procedure used to determine consensus among a group of people regarding a specific issue. Initially conceptualised as a "participation technique for social planning circumstances" (Delbecq, Van De Ven, & Gustafson, 1975), it encompasses exploratory research, public engagement, the use of interdisciplinary specialists, and the examination of proposals. Over time, NGT has been employed in various group settings, including social science empirical research. Researchers such as O'Neil and Jackson (1983), Lomax and McLeman (1984), and MacPhail (2001) have applied it in educational contexts, though it is more frequently used in health research.

NGT is a highly structured process that involves four distinct phases: (1) Independent generation of ideas in response to a stimulus question, (2) Sharing and listing these ideas in a round-robin format without discussion, (3) Clarification of each idea and grouping of similar ideas, and (4) Individual voting to prioritise ideas. To encourage honest feedback and participation, voting should be anonymous and adhere to the guidelines mentioned. NGT also provides a permanent record of the group's process and outcomes by documenting all suggestions and approved changes on flipchart pages. Displaying these pages is an effective

way to inform those who missed part or all of a meeting and allows groups to resume their discussion seamlessly from where they left off (Fox, 1989; Mustapha et al., 2022).

## 5. Findings

Items / Elements	Voter1	Voter2	Voter3	Voter4	Voter5	Total item score	Percentage	Rank Priority	Voter Consensus
TAKING ABLUTION	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
RECITE TAAWUZ	3	3	3	2	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
REMAIN SILENT	3	3	2	1	2	11	73.33	4	Suitable
CHANGING POSITION	2	3	1	3	3	12	80	3	Suitable
CRYING	3	3	2	3	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
BE PATIENT	3	3	2	3	3	14	93.33	2	Suitable
PRAYER	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable
FULL ACCEPTANCE	3	3	3	3	3	15	100	1	Suitable

Findings show the aggregate agreement and assessment ratings for the list of emotion management based on hadith perception. There are three emotions involved in this research, which are anger, sadness and anxiety. For anger, the experts list out four items in managing it, which are taking ablution, reciting *taawuz*, remaining silent and changing the position. On the other hand, there are two items listed by the experts for managing sadness, which are crying and being patient. Finally, the experts list two items in managing anxiety that occurs among career women which are prayer and applying full acceptance for everything that happens in their lives. All of the methods of managing emotion based on hadith are within the optimal range, as determined by this analysis. Given the findings of these studies, the highest percentage goes to three items: “taking ablution”, “prayer” and “full acceptance”, all of which have the score of 100%. The second highest listed by the experts are “recite *taawuz*”, “crying” and “be patient” where the percentage is 93.33%. Meanwhile, the experts agreed to list “changing position” as the third method in managing emotion with a score of 80%. Finally, the last method chosen by the experts for managing emotion is “remain silent” which has a score of 73.33%. This allows the researchers to conclude that the core features of the model are workable and well-received by the target population. The modified NGT technique is a time-saving alternative to the lengthy rounds of expert judgment required by the Delphi method.

## 6. Discussion

Based on the results shown, the experts put the priorities for managing emotion by starting with the first three choices: “taking ablution”, “prayer” and “full acceptance”. These three items were the methods chosen for managing anger and anxiety, as “taking ablution” is the method prioritised by the experts in managing anger. This method is taken from the hadith narrated by Atiyyah that reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace be, and blessings be upon him, said, “Verily, anger comes from Satan, and Satan was created from fire. Fire is extinguished with water, so if you become angry, perform ablution with water.” (Abi Dawud, 4784).

Scientifically, this method is acknowledged and renowned as one of the techniques used in cooling down an angry person. Taking ablution is considered part of psychotherapy in dealing with anger and has been proven through research (Iredho Fani Reza, 2024). Furthermore,



research showed that taking ablution has been found significant to reduce stress levels, induce relaxation, and lower emotional distress as well as anger (Dita Kurnia, 2017). Although it seems that taking ablution involves the physical part of a person, it also impacts the spiritual side by promoting self-control and mindfulness through the ritual's purifying actions on the body and soul (Ety Nurhayati, 2023).

Other than prioritising “taking ablution” for managing anger, the research signified “prayer” as the first choice for managing anxiety. Anxiety is an uncomfortable feeling of nervousness or worry about something that is happening or might happen in the future (Cambridge, 2024). The “prayer” method is taken from the hadith of Prophet Muhammad PBUH regarding ways of avoiding anxiety, as narrated by Anas ibn Malik: The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety, sorrow, disability, laziness, cowardice, miserliness, the burdens of debt, and the repression of men” (Bukhari, 6369). This prayer or supplication is taught by Prophet Muhammad PBUH to prevent a person from having difficulties and hardships in life where anxiety is also part of it.

Compared to men, studies found that anxiety is highly prevalent in women (Amaury Cantilino, 2020). There are various factors that could lead women to have anxiety such as genetic vulnerability and environmental exposures (Kathleen, 2013). To make it worse, anxiety does not only affect a woman's own well-being, but also influences the relationship between mother and baby, and the emotional development of the children, and subsequently also causes intergenerational effects (Gunilla, 2018).

Anxiety as part of difficult situations in life can be handled well through religious strategy by turning to faith, forgiveness, Quranic recitation also prayers or supplication (Anchour, 2016). Another method initiated according to hadith for dealing with anxiety is “full acceptance”. Full acceptance refers to the word *redha* in Arabic. This “full acceptance” concept can be related to one of the Pillars of Iman, which is belief in *Qada'* and *Qadr*. Believing in *Qada'* and *Qadr* means believing in what Allah has destined and planned in life. By practising “full acceptance” in dealing with anxiety, it involves seeking peace through trusting the divine wisdom and outcomes, practising resilience as well as accepting that embracing challenges is parts of Allah's plan (Batriisyia, 2024). Furthermore, previous studies have proven that anxiety can be handled well by utilising Quranic verses, Sunnah of the Prophet, the teachings of the scholar along with promoting the concept of *redha* or full acceptance for positive outcomes (Che Haslina, 2013).

The second choice made by the experts is “reciting *taawuz*” for dealing with anger, and “crying” and “being patient” for managing sadness. The method of “reciting *taawuz*” is based on the hadith narrated by Muadz bin Jabal, “two men cursed each other in the presence of Prophet Muhammad PBUH until anger could be seen in the face of one of them. So Prophet Muhammad said: “Verily, I know a statement, that if he were to say it, his anger would vanish. The statement is:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

‘I seek refuge in Allah from *Shaitan*, the rejected” (Al-Tirmidhi, 3452).

While taking ablution involves the physical part of a person in handling his anger, “reciting *taawuz*” is related to his spiritual part. This recitation protects a person from the influence of

*Shaitan* (devil) while he is angry (Faizah, 2021; Anma, 2023). The devil can easily influence a person through his whispering which can cause him to do and say harm to himself or to people around him. The only power that can protect a man from any harm is Allah the Most Powerful. Despite that, in Islamic communication psychology, reciting *taawuz* is considered a way in controlling anger, along with instilling forgiveness and doing good to those who have done you harm (Benny, 2023).

Crying as an approach for dealing with sadness is taken from the hadith when Prophet Muhammad was crying due to the death of his son. The hadith is narrated by Bukhari, "Anas ibn Malik reported: We entered the house of Abu Sayf along with the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, who was the husband of Ibrahim's wet-nurse, upon him be peace. The Prophet took hold of Ibrahim, kissed him, and smelled him. Then, we entered after that as Ibrahim was breathing his last breaths. It made the eyes of the Prophet shed tears. Abdur Rahman ibn Awf said, "Even you, O Messenger of Allah?" The Prophet said, "O Ibn Awf, this is mercy." Then, the Prophet wept some more and he said, "Verily, the eyes shed tears and the heart is grieved, but we will not say anything except what is pleasing to our Lord. We are saddened by your departure, O Ibrahim." (Bukhari, 1241). It is clear here that Prophet Muhammad was crying due to the sadness that he felt when losing his son.

Through this method, it can be concluded that in dealing with sadness, Muslims can express it through crying and they neither have to hide or suppress it. The reason for this is that in Islamic ethical philosophy, crying is seen as a way to manage sadness by acknowledging the pain of sadness and promoting emotional release by aligning it with the strategy advocated by Islamic philosophers (Bilimname, 2023). By crying, an individual is allowed to release the emotion well and find peace in seeking comfort through tears. Besides, the Islamic teachings highlight that emotion management including sadness is essential in maintaining harmony and balance within oneself and in relationships (Aziz, 2019). Crying, therefore, is one of the ways to control sadness. Prophet Ya'qub also cried when he lost Prophet Yusuf (Andika, 2023).

Other than crying, the expert also listed "being patient" as one of the methods in dealing with sadness. Being patient through sadness is taken from the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah, "The Prophet said, "No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that." (Bukhari, 545). This hadith indicates the significance of being patient in all uncomfortable situations and feelings that happen in a person's life, including sadness. The reward that awaits a Muslim by being patient in all suffering is high and valuable. In overcoming the challenges in life and maintaining spiritual and mental health, Islamic teaching emphasises that Muslims be patient (Bilimname, 2023). Research indicates that by applying patience in life, a person is able to prevent mental health issues as by being patient, he is implementing persistence and contentment in life (Mansoorah, 2017). Moreover, apart from being a coping strategy, by being patient, an individual is able to handle the hard situation while also changing the negative experiences to be more manageable which is in line with the Islamic principles of perseverance and self-control (Zulmi, 2018).

The final choice made by the expert in emotion management is to "remain silent" for dealing with anger. Remaining silent here means restraining and holding himself from saying anything while he is in anger. This approach is taken from the hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas RA: "The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Teach others, make things easy, and do not make things difficult. When one of you is angry, he should remain silent" (Ahmad, 2137). Harmful reactions due to anger can be prevented by remaining silent when dealing with anger

(Yogi Prayoko, 2022). This method has proven to be effective since Islamic School Counselling regarded it as one of the approaches to emotional regulation (Happy Karlina Marjo, 2022). In fact, by remaining silent during anger, a person can promote reflection, and self-control together with practising patience as demonstrated in the Islamic approach (Esa, 2015). Furthermore, self-restraint and balance between falsehood and truth are parts of the example shown by Prophet Muhammad through this method (Anma, 2023). It should be understood that keeping silent and restraining from saying anything during anger does not resemble the action of a coward. Instead, it helps a person avoid any regretful words or actions later on. Inner peace can be achieved and conflicts can be avoided.

## 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of emotion management among career women through the lens of Hadith reveals the depth and relevance of Islamic teachings in addressing modern challenges. The Prophet Muhammad's PBUH guidance on emotional regulation offers valuable lessons for women balancing professional responsibilities with personal well-being.

Incorporating Hadith-based principles into daily practices offers career women a comprehensive approach to managing emotions. By aligning their professional activities with spiritual values, they can achieve a balanced and fulfilling life grounded in faith and emotional resilience. This integration not only enhances individual well-being but also fosters a harmonious and productive work environment. Embracing these teachings enables women to excel both personally and professionally, navigating their careers with confidence and grace while maintaining a spiritually enriched life.

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