The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence with Job and Individual Characteristics of Nursing Staff

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A b s t r a c t

Introduction: Nursing Known as a stressful and overwhelming profession. Due to the stressful nature of the nursing job, nurses experience burnout more than any other occupation, which may affect the quality of health care. Emotional intelligence is one of the important predictors of psychological well-being and it plays an important role as a distinguishing factor for organizational performance and achievement of job success. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and nurses' personal and occupational characteristics.

Material and method: In this cross-sectional analytical study, 135 nursing staff working in Gonabad hospitals was selected through a census sampling method. Written informed consent of nurses and working in hospitals of Gonabad city were the inclusion criteria and Failure to complete the questionnaires or the questionnaire being confounded or withdrawal from the study was considered as the exclusion criteria. They were evaluated by Shirring Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and Demographic Information Form. The research data were analyzed using SPSS software version 16, Chi-square test, one-way ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient. The significance level was less than 0.05.

Results: In this study72.6% of participants were women. The majority of nurses were married (81.5%) and 87.4% of nursing staff had high emotional intelligence. In this study, there was no significant relationship between individual characteristics and emotional intelligence, but there was a significant association between job characteristics, job shift (P = 0.03) and employment status (P = 0.03) with total emotional intelligence. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between social consciousness with education level (p = 0.019) and employment status (p = 0.001) and there was a significant relationship between social skills with work shift (p = 0.003) and nurses' marital status (p = 0.007)

Conclusion: According to the findings, considering the appropriate job shifts for nurses and formalizing them to create a strong organizational commitment to take benefit of nurses with higher emotional intelligence and this leads to improved performance of nurses.

Keywords:

Emotional Intelligence, Nurses, Job Satisfaction

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1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence has a significant role in people's success and career as one of the important predictors of psychological health (1). Nursing has been recognized as a stressful profession, and this can reduce the quality of health cares. Meanwhile, researchers have found that emotional intelligence has a significant role in establishing rapport with the patient, better decision-making, and problem-solving, which will ultimately improve the performance of nurses (2). Considering that emotional intelligence has a substantia role in career success and satisfaction, it was decided to investigate emotional intelligence and its components in nurses, and identify each component's relationship with their demographic and career characteristics, so that appropriate plans and measures can be adopted to promote emotional intelligence and improve nurses' performance.

2. Material and Methods

The present cross-sectional analytical study was conducted on 135 nurses working in 22 Bahman and 15 Khordad Hospitals in the city of Gonabad, selected by census method. The study inclusion criteria were: written informed consent of nurses working in Gonabad city hospitals. Incomplete or distorted questionnaires and withdrawing from participation were taken as exclusion criteria. The study tools included demographic and career details form, and the standard Schering's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire. This questionnaire was introduced by Schering in 1996, and contains 33 items that score 1 to 5 points based on a five-point Likert scale. This questionnaire was translated and standardized by Mansouri et al. in 2001, and its reliability was reported with Cronbach's alpha of 0.86, which was reported 0.84 by kia et al. (3). After obtaining a letter of introduction from Student Research Committee, permission from Gonabad hospital heads and internal managers, necessary arrangements were made for completion of questionnaires in hospital setting. The principles of confidentiality were observed during completion of questionnaires and analysis of data, and all subjects entered the study with their written informed consents. Data were analyzed in SPSS-16 using descriptive (tables of frequency, mean and standard deviation) and analytical statistical tests at a significant level<0.05.

3. Results and Discussion

The nurses' mean age was 30.68±6.50 years, of whom, 72.6% were female. Mean emotional intelligence in nurses was 115.78±12.06, indicating a high level of emotional intelligence in participating nurses. The results of one-way variance analysis and independent T-test showed that of all demographic and career details, emotional intelligence had a significant relationship with only employment status (P=0.03) and working shift (P=0.03) (Table 1).

In terms of a relationship between components of emotional intelligence and demographic and career details, the test results showed that social intelligence component had a significant relationship with education level (P=0.019) and employment status (P=0.001), and social skills component had a significant relationship with working shift (P=0.003) and marital status (P=0.007). The Pearson test results showed that emotional intelligence and its components had no significant relationship with such details as: age, work history, overtime, or number of children.

In the present study, no significant relationship was found between total emotional intelligence and nurses' demographic details (age, gender, marital status, and number of children). In a study conducted by Raeisi et al. on the managers of teaching hospitals in the city of Qazvin, no significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence and any of the manages' demographic details like age and gender (4). The results of other studies have also shown no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and gender (5 and 6), which agrees with the present study results.

In his study, Molaei (7) showed that girls

have higher levels of self-awareness, social intelligence, and self-management than boys. Yet, Ahmad et al (8) reported higher levels of emotional intelligence components, especially self-awareness in men than in women. This difference in the emotional intelligence and its components relationship with gender can be explained by the difference in the type of tool and how it was used (self-reporting and functional), as well as cultural differences in terms of gender-based values and upbringing, and inherent differences between men and women in some components of emotional intelligence.

4. Conclusions

Despite a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and employment status, it can be said that formally employed nursing personnel with job security can have greater organizational commitment toward nursing profession. It is recommended that nursing organizations should facilitate appropriate and stable employment conditions in order to enhance the organizational commitment and career prospects of nurses, and thus pave the way for raising emotional intelligence that is a factor for their improved performance.

5. Acknowledgment

Table 1. The relationship between emotional intelligence and demographic and career details of nurses

Variable		Emotional intelligence Mean ± SD	Statistical test results
Gender	Male	115.38±14.47	P=0.81*
	Female	115.94±11.55	
Education	Advanced diploma	116.17±12.02	P=0.48+
	Bachelor's degree	116.35±22.47	
	Master's degree	120.50±13.43	
Marital status	Married	116.35±11.15	P=0.13^
	Single	112.25±16.25	
	Divorced	130.0±1.41	
	Widowed	109.44±7.23	
Employment status	Formal	119.22±8.94	P=0.03+
	Project	113.37±15.74	
	Other	108.00±14.78	
Working shift	Fixed	120.67±7.94	P=0.03*
	Rotating	105.39±10.80	
Economic status	Good	115.90±10.46	P=0.31+
	Moderate	117.29±10.36	
	Poor	114.24±13.76	

*Independent T-Test   +One-way variance analysis   ^ Wilcoxon test

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