



RESEARCH ARTICLE

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG NURSING STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

In the modern world students feel difficult to control their emotions in order to face various situations in their academic as well as personal life. Success in academics can be predicted more by emotional measures. A student must be emotionally intelligent and mentally healthy so that he can achieve good academic results also. The study was descriptive in nature and purposive sampling technique was used. Three hundred 4th year BSc nursing students from selected government and private nursing colleges in Kerala were included in this study. Socio-personal data sheet, Mangal's emotional intelligence inventory and observation record were used to assess the demographic data, emotional intelligence and academic performance of nursing students respectively. The findings revealed that emotional intelligence and academic performance were correlated ($\rho = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$). And no difference was found in the emotional intelligence of nursing students between government and private nursing colleges. Also there was significant difference in the academic performance of nursing students between government and private nursing colleges ($t = 4.69$, $p < 0.001$). Majority of the students had average emotional intelligence and found that emotional intelligence increases with academic performance. Integration of emotional intelligence in to the nursing curriculum provides nurses to enhance the quality of their clinical practice and thereby overall professional development.

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INTRODUCTION

As far as nursing students are considered they are expected to display emotions that convey caring, understanding and compassion towards patients while regulating their own feelings. Only emotionally competent nurses can withstand the current health care demands. The present research is an endeavour to study the emotional intelligence and academic performance among nursing students.

Statement of the problem: A study to assess the emotional intelligence and academic performance among nursing students in selected government and private nursing colleges in Kerala. The phrase Emotional intelligence has been derived from the term Social Intelligence which was first coined by E L Thorndike in 1920. In 1989, John D Mayer and Peter Salovey first coined the phrase Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, acknowledge, manage and handle your emotions in such a way that promotes personal growth. Five components of Emotional intelligence are self-awareness, self regulation, motivating self, empathy and interpersonal skills.

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Emotionally intelligent people know the real reason for their emotions and thus they don't confuse them with other factors nor do they get their past involved in the decisions they take. Goleman points out emotional intelligence skills are synergistic with cognitive ones; top performers have both. The more complex the job, the more emotional labour for the nurse. If the emotional expressions required by patients and the organization are not innate in the nurses personality or the nurse is overwhelmed by the suffering of patients and is not able to manage generated emotions, then he or she risks suffering the detrimental effects of emotional labour burn out, psychosomatic illnesses, increased absenteeism, drug and alcohol abuse, withdrawal and depression. The shortage of the nurses and increased demands on their emotional labor create for more psychological problems. To overcome these difficulties the nurse should have an emotional awareness of self and others. Graduating nursing students lack many of the emotional and social competencies needed for success and effective performance in the current chaotic and demanding work environment. Academic performance is the outcome of education. School preparedness helps students adjust to academic expectancies and to achieve their educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment but there is no general agreement on how it is best tested. A recent meta-analysis suggested that mental curiosity has an important influence on

academic achievement in addition to intelligence and conscientiousness. A descriptive study on emotional intelligence and academic achievement motivation among adolescents conducted in Patna. The present study was an attempt to examine relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement motivation. It also studied the emotional intelligence of students with high, average and low academic achievement motivation. Sample for the study includes 105 students (48 boys and 57 girls) of 12th class. The findings of the study revealed positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement motivation. The study also revealed that students with high, average and low academic achievement motivation differ from one another in emotional intelligence. And the study recommended that students need activities and advice sessions that helps in establishing proactive patterns to increase awareness about emotional intelligence. A descriptive correlational study conducted among high school students in Kanyakumari, reported that only 55% had average emotional intelligence. So all those involved in the process of education of the child including parents, teachers, educators and administrators should create conducive conditions for the development of emotional intelligence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample consists of three hundred 4th year BSc nursing students, 150 each from three government and three private nursing colleges respectively. Mangal's emotional intelligence questionnaire was filled in by the nursing students which was used to assess emotional intelligence. Observation record was filled in by the researcher by observing university marks entry register which gave information regarding academic performance.

Design – Comparative survey research design.

Sampling – Purposive sampling

RESULTS

The socio-personal profile of the nursing students shows that majority (99%) of the nursing students were females, most (94.7%) of the students belonged to nuclear family, 40% of them met the educational expenses from the family income, 32% from bank loan and 25.3% from scholarship.. With regard to reason for choosing nursing profession, 49.7% of the nursing students choose the profession as it gives higher job opportunity and 32.7% because of self interest.

Table 1. Frequency distribution and percentage of nursing students based on their emotional intelligence and academic performance

Variables	(n=300)	
	f	%
Emotional intelligence		
Very Good (88 and above)	2	0.7
Good (75-87)	47	15.6
Average (61-74)	158	52.7
Poor (47-60)	93	31.0
Academic performance		
Very Good (75% and above)	17	5.7
Good (60-74%)	190	63.3
Average (50-59%)	88	29.3
Poor (<50%)	5	1.7

Table 1 shows that 52.7 % of students had average emotional intelligence, 31% had poor and 15.6 % had good emotional intelligence. Majority (63.3 %) of students had good academic performance, 29.3% had average, 5.7% had very good and 1.7% had poor academic performance.

Table 2. Relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of nursing students

Variables	(n=300)	
	Mean	ρ
Emotional intelligence	65.48	0.71**
Academic performance	64.27	

**significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 depicts that there was statistically significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance of nursing students. It implied that academic performance is related to emotional intelligence. While analyzing it was found that there was no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of nursing students between government and private nursing colleges. But in case of academic performance it was found that there was significant difference among nursing students between government and private nursing colleges.

DISCUSSION

In the present study it was found that 94.7% of nursing students belonged to nuclear family and 5.3% belonged to joint family. It was found that family structure and setting plays a vital role in strengthening student's academic performance. A study conducted in Turkey on emotional intelligence and family environment also signifies the importance of family cooperation. Majority (40%) of nursing students meet educational expenses from family income, 32 % from bank loan and 25.3% from scholarship. It was found that low socio-economic status of students badly affects student's educational attainments and those who belonged to high socio-economic status showed better performance. Also pupil of upper class status are not very good at recognizing the emotions of others. With regard to reason for choosing nursing profession, majority (49.7%) of nursing students choose the nursing profession as it gives higher job opportunity, 32% because of self interest and 17.6 % due to pressure from parents. The results were consistent with a study on attitudes and perceptions towards nursing profession among nursing students revealed, 34.1% of the subjects agreed that they were enrolled the nursing profession by their own interest, 33.3% of them reported that they enrolled in nursing out of their own interest and also to improve their financial situations. Only 3.1% stated that they have to protect the rights and dignity of the patients and 34.9% of the subjects indicated that the nurse-patient relationship should be both professional and a relation of sympathy.

Upon graduation 53.5% of the subjects preferred to pursue the nursing career, 27.9% in academics, 9.3% wanted to change the profession. Nearly 48.8% of the subjects agreed that social prejudice has a great influence on nursing students in choosing nursing profession as their career. An urgent need is seen in the area of educating nursing students regarding patient's rights. There is also a need to improve the image of nurses in the society to attract more number of students into this noble profession. Counseling and introduction to nursing course

should be introduced by all the universities, to develop positive attitudes towards nursing profession. The findings depict that among the study participants, 52.7% of nursing students had average, 31% had poor and 15.6% had good emotional intelligence. This findings reflects that graduating nursing students lack emotional competencies that are needed for success and effective performance in current chaotic and demanding work environment. Results were consistent with a descriptive correlational study conducted among high school students in Kanyakumari, only 55% had average emotional intelligence. So all those involved in the process of education of the child including parents, teachers, educators and administrators should create conducive conditions for the development of emotional intelligence.

Another objective of the study was to assess the level of academic performance among nursing students. It was found that majority (63.3%) of the nursing students had good academic performance, 29.3% had average and 5.7 % had very good academic performance. Similar finding was reported among high school students in which average academic performance was found. The study also revealed that there was a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic performance among nursing students ($\rho=0.71$, $p<0.01$). That is academic performance increases with emotional intelligence. The present study was supported by a descriptive correlational study conducted in United States entitled factors related to academic success among nursing students which showed that significant relationship was found between emotional intelligence, psychological empowerment, resilience, spiritual well-being and academic success.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that emotional intelligence influences academic success and it may contribute to the development of strategies to recruit and retain promising students in the nursing profession. Having a better understanding of the role of emotional intelligence and psychological empowerment in student's success may be helpful in developing curriculum and teaching/learning practices that promote retention in nursing programs. It is therefore essential that these skills need to be developed among student nurses to enhance the quality of their clinical practice and there by overall professional development.

Recommendation

In current system of nursing education, integrating emotional intelligence into the curriculum provides nurses with a greater opportunity to understand themselves and the way in which they create relationships with others.

In recruitment and selection procedures also it is needed to consider emotional intelligence as a legitimate additional entrance criterion for student nurses. Nurse educators should take initiative in assessing the emotional intelligence of the students from first year onwards and should make frequent evaluation on that. Nurse educators should make necessary arrangements in organizing emotional intelligence training programmes for all nursing students. Workshops on emotional intelligence could be organized.

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