

RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Investigating the relationship  
between emotional intelligence  
and job burnout among  
operating room staff in Zahedan  
2016**

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**ABSTRACT**

Nurses are highly exposed to burnout due to their job conditions. But in same environment individuals get different levels of burnout in job. In other words burnout is a result of environmental factors, personal communications and personal characteristics. Emotional intelligence is a personal factor which can be related to job burnout. So this study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout among operating room staff in Zahedan 2016. 48 operating room staff participated this study. The Bradbury-Graves emotional intelligence questionnaire and Maslach's job burnout questionnaire was used for data collection. After that data were analyzed through SPSS v.19 by descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and T test. 11 males and 37 females participated this study which 14 of them were single and 34 were married. The mean of age was  $30.12 \pm 5.56$ . The mean score of emotional intelligence was  $108.66 \pm 12.04$  which means a high emotional intelligence and the mean score of job burnout was  $63.08 \pm 9.01$ . There wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. Despite this that there wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout but most of those who had a high emotional intelligence had lower job burnout.

## INTRODUCTION

Healthcare providers are always exposed to stress and anxiety because they are responsible for people who are dealing with death. So they are more sensitive toward burnout than other groups (1). Nurses experience more burnout than other healthcare providers (2-4). Burnout is a syndrome including chronic exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced efficiency in an individual (5). This syndrome have physical and mental signs such as energy reduction, chronic exhaustion, more likely for getting sick, chronic headaches, repetitive physical complaining, sleeping disorders, and some emotional signs such as Helplessness, frustration, tension and conflict, increased negative neurological conditions such as restlessness, irritability and finally escaping from the job (6, 7). Maslach believes that job burnout can reduce the quality of services provided to patients and it's a good reason for leaving a job. Job burnout expands during a time period . it can be a mental disfunction in high levels (8, 9). The signs of job burnout are seen when the skills of the individual would not answer the demands of the organizations (10). Researches had shown that in same environment individuals get different levels of job burnout. In other words burnout is a result of environmental factors, personal communications and personal characteristics (11). Personal characteristics are

more involved in job burnout (12). Emotional intelligence is a personal factor which can be related to job burnout (13). Dong and Howard defined emotional intelligence as workers ability to response the stress in workplace and recognize their own and their colleagues emotions. They believe that these abilities highly lead to job satisfaction (14). In general, emotional intelligence is an ability of the adaptability, understanding and management of emotions, self-esteem, communication skills, stress management, joy and optimism and having sympathy with others (15, 16). These skills are results of interactions between Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Social skills and Relationship management (17). Many researchers stated that emotional intelligence is the ability of recognizing self and other's emotions and having a good control on them (18, 19). This skill would lead to worker's more responsibility, motivation in them, efficiency and more benefits for the organization (20). People who have low emotional intelligence don't have confidence and self-esteem so they can't deal with mental pressures (21).

Nowadays emotional is considered in so many fields such as education, management, psychology, art, health and nursing (22). The main reason of considering emotional intelligence is to improve the quality of services provided to the customer (23). Due to the effect of emotional intelligence on reducing job

burnout this study aimed to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout among operating room staff in Zahedan 2016.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODLOGY**

This cross sectional study was conducted on 48 operating room staff in Ali-ebne-Abitaleb hospital of Zahedan. A three part questionnaire was used for data collection in this study. First part collected demographic information (age and sex). The second part was The Bradbury-Graves emotional intelligence questionnaire. This questionnaire has 28 questions and is categorized into 4 dimensions including Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Social skills and Relationship management. The questionnaire was answered through a 6 point Likert scale from 1 to 6 (Never, rarely, usually, almost always, and always). According to the key of this questionnaire scores above 80 meant a high emotional intelligence, scores 60 to 80 showed a moderate emotional intelligence and under 60 meant that the emotional intelligence is poor. The validity of this questionnaire was proved by Ghaderi and Colleagues. The reliability coefficient was calculated and it was 0.90 for Self-awareness, 0.87 for Self-regulation, 0.80 for Social skills, 0.78 for Relationship management and 0.84 for emotional intelligence total score (24). The third part was Maslach's job burnout questionnaire. This

questionnaire included 22 questions. It was answered through a 5 point Likert scale from 1 to 5. The minimum score was 22 and the maximum was 110. The validity and reliability of this questionnaire was proved by Beyrami and colleagues and were satisfactory (25). After that data were analyzed through SPSS v.19 by descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and T test.

## **EVALUATION PARAMETERS**<sup>10, 11</sup>

11 (22.9 %) males and 37 (77.1 %) females participated this study which 14 (29.2 %) of them were single and 34 (70.8 %) were married. The mean of age was  $30.12 \pm 5.56$ . The mean score of emotional intelligence was  $108.66 \pm 12.04$  which means a high emotional intelligence and the mean score of job burnout was  $63.08 \pm 9.01$ . There wasn't any significant relationship between age and emotional intelligence ( $p=0.17$ ). But there was significant relationship between age and job burnout ( $p=0.04$ ). There wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout ( $p=0.93$ ). But most of those who had a high emotional intelligence had lower job burnout.

The relationships between gender with emotional intelligence and job burnout have been provided in table (1).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study had shown that there wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout. But most of those who had a high emotional intelligence had lower job burnout. This result was consistent with some other studies (26-29). Mohammadi far and colleagues also stated in their study that teachers with high emotional intelligence had less job burnout (30).

There was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout in Delpasand and colleagues study (13). Down believes that the reason and treatment of job burnout are all related to emotional intelligence and teaching emotional intelligence to individuals can help preventing the job burnout (31). As mentioned previously individuals with high emotional intelligence have more flexibility in critical situations and can manage the crisis easier (25). Job burnout would lead to negative emotions such as anxiety and disappointment. These negative emotions would lead to emotional exhaustion. Job burnout is usually expandable and goes from one worker to another and causes mental and physical problems for the system just like a virus (32). According to Downs study individuals who have the ability of emotional intelligence won't get infected with this virus. They usually won't think to these negative emotions. Teaching emotional intelligence can prevent job burnout in

individuals who don't have emotional intelligence abilities (33). In nursing educational programs nurses are not getting trained for dynamic environments. So many nursing students who graduate from nursing school doesn't have the ability of emotional intelligence. The ability which is highly needed for getting coordinated with the workplace. If the patient's satisfaction is important to healthcare system so it should work on its staff's emotional intelligence (34).

Despite this that there wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout but most of those who had a high emotional intelligence had lower job burnout. So this study suggests the authorities to make a great change in educational programs for improving the emotional intelligence among nurses and nursing students.

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Table 1: the relationship between gender and emotional intelligence and job burnout

	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation	P-value
Job burnout	Woman	63.48	9.19	0.57
	Man	61.72	8.69	
Emotional intelligence	Woman	108.81	13.02	0.88
	man	108.18	8.44	