

RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Is there any relationship
between emotional intelligence
and general health? A cross
sectional study in Zahedan 2016**

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ABSTRACT

Some professions have critical situations that may threaten their workers' health. Emotional intelligence is a factor which can reduce the psychological pressures. So this study aimed to investigate that is there any relationship between emotional intelligence and general health? This cross sectional study was conducted on 45 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 the second part was The Bradbury-Graves emotional intelligence questionnaire. The third part was GHQ-28 (General Health Questionnaire) standard questionnaire. Data were analyzed through SPSS v.19 by descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and T test. The mean of age was 29.93 ± 5.22 . 35 females and 10 males took part in this study which 32 of them were married and 13 were single. The mean score of emotional intelligence was 108.11 ± 12.23 that means a good emotional intelligence. The mean score of general health was 75.00 ± 8.91 . There wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health ($p=0.005$). The results of this study didn't show a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health but most of respondents who had a good emotional intelligence had a high general health score. Due to this it seems necessary to improve the emotional intelligence for improving the general health.

INTRODUCTION

Health is human right and a social aim to achieve in the world. It is necessary for improving the quality of life among human beings (1). Some professions have critical situations that may threaten their workers' health. Nursing is one of them. The American association of occupational safety introduced nursing as the profession that has the most stress-related diseases among other dangerous careers. They believe that nursing is the first stressful job among all healthcare professions (2). Hospitals are full of stress and critical situations which can effect on nurses mental health and distract their performance (3, 4). Night shifts, emergency situations, environmental stresses, facing patient's problems and facing patient's death all are factors which can threaten nurse's health and make irreparable psychological problems for them (5). The world health organization (WHO) defines health as the complete physical, mental and social welfare. These three dimensions directly affect each other (6). So health doesn't mean just physical wellbeing but mental and social conditions are involved too (7). Researchers and scientist proved that bad events in life can distract individual's health and lead to depression and stress (8). Emotional intelligence is a factor which can prevent these bad events (9). Stough defined emotional intelligence as a self-motivator, a defender against failures, an ability of having control of yourself in critical situations and being optimistic in early 1990s (10). Emotional intelligence includes cognitive and non-cognitive skills in comparison with general intelligence. This intelligence leads to success and happiness (11, 12). This skill would help the individual to have compatibility in facing different critical situations. A person who have a high emotional intelligence makes order and stability in his life. Due to this he does less high risk behaviors and makes less mistakes (13). The effect and role of emotions in management is less considered because researchers thoughts that emotions would reduce proper

organizational behaviors. But today they proved that modern management needs the skill of understanding your own and others emotions and analyze the (14). Just knowledge and techniques are not enough for a nurse. They have to learn how they should behave different people. Emotional intelligence is really important for this manner. This skill would help nurses to have better thinking and decisions making abilities in critical situations (15, 16). As mentioned emotional intelligence can effect on general health so this study aimed to investigate that is there any relationship between emotional intelligence and general health?

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

This cross sectional study was conducted on 45 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 (17).

The third part was GHQ-28 (General Health Questionnaire) standard questionnaire which had 28 questions. This questionnaire was founded by Goldberg and Hiller and had 4 scales. Each scale includes 7 questions. The scales assess physical, stress, depression and

social communication distractions signs in the individual. The reliability coefficient was calculated for the Persian versions of GHQ-28 by re test method in 7 and 10 days on 80 respondents and it was 0.91 that was significant for 0.001 error level. And the validity was proved by Cronbach's alpha and it was 0.85 (4). Data were analyzed through SPSS v.19 by descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation and T test.

EVALUATION PARAMETERS^{10, 11}

The mean of age was 29.93 ± 5.22 . 35 (77.8 %) females and 10 (22.2 %) males took part in this study which 32 (71.1 %) of them were married and 13 (28.9 %) were single. The mean score of emotional intelligence was 108.11 ± 12.23 that means a good emotional intelligence. The mean score of general health was 75.00 ± 8.91 . There wasn't any significant relationship between demographic information and total score of emotional intelligence and total score of general health ($p > 0.05$). There wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health ($p = 0.005$). But most of those who had a high emotional intelligence had a high score of General health questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study proved that there wasn't any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health. But respondents who had a high emotional intelligence had a high general health. Fata and colleagues study had shown that social emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of general health. He believes that improving emotional intelligence can help individual's general health (18). WHO proves that there a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health (4). One of the reasons of this approval for example can be this that nurses who have a high emotional intelligence can face the critical situations properly and they have more control on themselves in such conditions. They are flexible in these conditions and have control on their

emotions. Due to this they have a high confidence. Emotional intelligence is a dynamic skill and can be earned and improved by teaching and practice. In other hand general health is not like this (19-21). General health is a triangle of physical, mental and social factors. In mental and social angles general health is related with some factors of emotional intelligence such as Self-awareness, Self-regulation, self-esteem, intrapersonal relations, responsibility and sympathy (22). An important part of mental health is the reaction which individual shows in a critical situation. Researches had shown that different dimensions of emotional intelligence and general health are in close significant relationships. These relationships are for both intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects of emotional intelligence. Intrapersonal dimensions of emotional intelligence would lead to better social communication and interpersonal dimensions regulate individual's behaviors. Both of these are important for individual's health (23).

The results of this study didn't show a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and general health but most of respondents who had a good emotional intelligence had a high general health score. Due to this it seems necessary to improve the emotional intelligence for improving the general health. These programs must be made in early childhood and primary schools. So then the students can have a good emotional intelligence in their young hood.

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