



Original Article

Role of Emotional Intelligence in Life Satisfaction among Hospital Nurses in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence is a skill involving understanding, perceiving, managing, and utilizing information. Nurses with high emotional intelligence may have high life satisfaction which can enhance their productivity in the workplace by effectively managing emotions. **Objective:** To explore the role of emotional intelligence in life satisfaction among hospital nurses in Pakistan.

Methods: A correlational study was conducted involving purposive sampling of 511 registered female nurses, aged 20 to 45 in Karachi and Hyderabad, Pakistan. Life satisfaction was assessed using a subset of the ICP-Subjective Wellbeing Scale while for Emotional Intelligence, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF) was used. Ethical considerations were stringently adhered to throughout the study, maintaining participant confidentiality and ensuring adherence to research norms. **Results:** The results revealed a significant predictive relationship between EI and life satisfaction in female hospital nurses [$r = .199$; $R^2 = .040$, $F(510) = 20.994$, $p < .000$]. **Conclusions:** Globally, Nurses are considered vital to healthcare system, including in Pakistan where mental health issues among them are notable. The study concluded that emotional intelligence predicts higher life satisfaction among hospital nurses.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) by Goleman in 1995 as a vital skill set that is crucial for recognition, comprehension, control, and regulation of emotions in oneself and in others. The idea of regulating others' emotions by getting control over one's own emotion condition is the soul of emotional intelligence [1]. Emotional intelligence (EI) helps in enhancement of job performance and ensures the mental wellbeing of nurses in the nursing industry where a number of times emotional and physical challenges overlap each other. The role that emotional intelligence (EI) plays in raising the job happiness of healthcare professionals—including those in Asian countries like Pakistan—has received a lot of attention lately. Recent literature is full of researches among healthcare workers

with prime focus of impact of high emotional intelligence on job performance and satisfaction. Nurses have a tough job. They not only take care of patients and talk to their families but also work in a challenging environment. They have to stay calm even when things are hard, deal with sad situations, and show care to everyone. Emotional intelligence helps them handle stress, feel happier at work, and support their mental health [2]. It's important for nurses to stay emotionally healthy and manage stress well because they are always with patients and their families [3]. Nurses and nursing profession faces a number of socio-economic, cultural and professional challenges in Pakistani healthcare setup. The difficult circumstances arise from the socioeconomic status of nurses, the nature

of their work environment, and how the public views nursing. These factors have a big effect on nurses' overall happiness and mental health [4]. People all over the world are interested in how happy healthcare workers are and how well they understand their emotions. Studies have shown over and over again that when healthcare workers are good at understanding emotions, they tend to have better mental health, feel happier with their lives, and generally feel better. Nurses with higher emotional intelligence also seem to have lower stress levels and better mental health. Additionally, emotional intelligence acts like a shield in really stressful situations, helping healthcare workers avoid burnout and feel more satisfied with their lives [5-7]. In Pakistan, nurses deal with many challenges that hurt their mental health and overall happiness because of the country's special social and cultural setup, its money situation, and the way healthcare works there. According to Rehman and Kamal (2020), female nurses in Pakistan have to face discrimination because they're women, troubles at work, and how people see nursing as a job. All these problems really affect both their personal and professional lives. Female nurses in Pakistan face additional challenges because of the traditional social norms and expectations that favor men. They have to juggle their job duties with what society expects from them as women. The complicated mix of gender roles, cultural norms, and job pressures makes it hard to understand how satisfied female nurses are with their lives in the country [8]. Understanding how Emotional Intelligence (EI) affects mental health is really important, especially in healthcare. Research showed that EI is super important for reducing stress, making you mentally strong, and keeping your mental health in good shape. Nurses with higher EI can deal with tough emotional situations better, handle stress well, and usually feel happier with their lives [5]. Looking at how emotional intelligence (EI) and mental health are connected in healthcare workers, especially nurses, gives us some cool findings. Lots of studies have shown how important EI is for reducing stress, making you mentally strong, and keeping your mental health good [9]. Nurses with higher EI can handle tough emotional situations and stress better, which usually makes them feel more satisfied with their lives [5]. So, this study wanted to see how happy and emotionally smart nurses are in Pakistan.

METHODS

A correlational study was conducted from January 2019 to August 2019, upon registered female nurses with aged 20 to 45, working and living in Karachi and Hyderabad, Pakistan were included in this study via purposive sampling technique. Only full-time female hospital nurses, working in registered hospital with one and more than one year of experience were included in the study while those who had

any physical disability or had reported having psychiatric condition, were excluded from the study. The study was ethically approved from Institute of Clinical Psychology, University of Karachi vide Letter No. ICP-1(101)/5471. Sample size was calculated via Open epi sample size calculator by taking prevalence of life satisfaction among nurses in Karachi as 33.2% [3] with margin of error 5% and confidence interval of 95% the sample size came to be 341 for Karachi. Keeping in the population difference half (170) additional nurses data were added to be taken from Hyderabad, hence the total sample size become 511. Life satisfaction was assessed using a subset of the ICP-Subjective Wellbeing Scale. The ICP-Subjective Wellbeing Scale, as developed by Moghal and Khanam (2012) [10], encompasses three subscales: Positive Affect (PA) consisting of 12 items, Negative Affect (NA) with 12 items, and Life Satisfaction (LS) comprising 5 items. Life Satisfaction subscale employs a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5), to assess respondents' perceptions. The Urdu translation and adaptation of the ICP-Subjective Wellbeing Scale demonstrated good reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.824 for Life Satisfaction. For Emotional Intelligence, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF) was used, which was developed by Petrides and Furnham (2009) [11] and consists of 30 items measuring Global Trait EI, with each item rated on a 7-point Likert scale. Translated into Urdu by Shahzad et al. (2014) [12], it shows good reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .889) and validity (.683 with Rosenberg's Self-esteem scale, .556 with Satisfaction with Life Scale, .602 with Subjective-Happiness scale). Throughout the study, strict ethical guidelines were followed to ensure the confidentiality of participants and compliance with established research standards. Data were carefully analyzed using SPSS version 23.0, with statistical methods like Linear Regression applied to identify the correlations between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and life satisfaction among nursing professionals.

RESULTS

As shown in table 1, there were 49.49% female and 50.51% from the total of 196 participants. 43.62% female were married and 68.09% were un-married while 56.38% male were married and 31.91% were unmarried. Total 76.02% were married and 23.97% were unmarried participant.

Table 1: Demographic and socioeconomic variables

Variable	Description	Total Number/Percentage
Total Sample Size	Female Nurses	511
Age	Mean (SD)	29.35 (6.30)
Religion	Muslims	73.6%
	Christians	24.7%
	Hindus	1.8%
Type of Hospital	Government Hospitals	42.5%
	Private Hospitals	57.5%
Marital Status	Unmarried	41.1%
	Married	56.2%
	Divorced	1.8%
	Widow	1%
Family System	Nuclear	45.5%
	Joint	54.6%
Socio-Economic Status	Lower SES	16.6%
	Middle SES	83.8%

The results indicate that there is a predictive association between EI and life satisfaction in female hospital nurses [$r = .199$; $R^2 = .040$, $F(510) = 20.994$, $p < .000$] shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation of EI with Life satisfaction

Predictor	R ²	B	F	Sig.
EI	.040	.038	20.994	.000*

Note: $p < .001^*$ (1 tailed); Emotional Intelligence = EI (Predictor); Life Satisfaction (Dependant Variable)

DISCUSSION

The demanding nature of nursing underscores the importance of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a crucial skill for navigating interactions, making decisions, and implementing coping strategies within healthcare settings. Gharetepeh (2015) pointed out how important emotional intelligence (EI) is for nurses because their job is emotionally demanding. They need skills like knowing themselves, controlling their emotions, staying motivated, understanding others, and being good at socializing [13]. This matches what other studies have found, which is that having higher emotional intelligence is linked to feeling more satisfied with life. This means that nurses who are good at EI are better at dealing with challenges at work and usually feel happier overall [14]. Pakistan's healthcare system has its own set of tough problems, especially for female nurses. They have to handle complicated sociocultural issues, gender-related challenges, and pressures from their job [15]. These challenges, like expectations about gender and biases from society, as well as balancing work and personal life, might affect how emotional intelligence (EI) is linked to feeling happy with life [16]. Empathy, which is a big part of emotional intelligence (EI), is super important for making patients happy and giving good care. But it can also make nurses feel really stressed out and emotionally drained [17]. Being empathetic in a job that's already tough, especially in places

like Pakistan where there aren't a lot of resources, can make nurses feel even more worn out [18]. Even though nurses in Pakistan may have high emotional intelligence, they often feel emotionally drained because of the tough situations they face at work, like dealing with pain and death every day. This shows how important it is for organizations to help nurses with their emotions, which can make their lives better [19]. Our research shows that emotional intelligence (EI) is really important for nurses to handle their job's emotional challenges. But just being emotionally smart isn't enough to deal with all the problems in their workplace. Even though having high EI can help reduce stress and make nurses happier, organizations still need to have good policies, supportive workplaces, and special programs to protect nurses' mental health [20-22]. We found out how crucial it is to help nurses develop emotional intelligence, which matches what other research has shown around the world. But to make nurses happier, strategies to improve EI and life satisfaction need to consider the specific challenges nurses face at work and in their environment, without forgetting about the unique culture of each area [23].

CONCLUSIONS

In Pakistan, where many people struggle with mental health problems, nurses are seen as really important in the world of healthcare. Our study looked at how happy female nurses in Pakistan are and how good they are at understanding emotions. We found that nurses who are better at understanding emotions tend to feel happier with their lives, especially those working in hospitals. This shows how tough their job can be, with lots of different challenges from society, money, and their job itself.

Authors Contribution

Conceptualization: A, RA,

Methodology: A, RA, UA

Formal analysis: A, RA,

Writing-review and editing: A, RA, UZ

All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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