

ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STYLES AMONG NURSES

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence is an essential factor that may measure individual's performance in their professional lives beyond their daily lives, increase or decrease their success, contribute to the measurement of managerial qualities, and improve organizational communication and interaction. The present study aimed to identify the role of emotional intelligence on conflict management styles among nurses. The sample consisted of 400 nurses, and the model was taken from four public and four private hospitals located in Multan city. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data, and the age range was between 25 to 45 years. Two research instruments were used to collect the data. The emotional intelligence scale developed by Schutte et al. (2018) was used and consisted of 33 items. The interpersonal conflict inventory developed by Rahim (1983) was used and consisted of 28 items. This study showed the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles; integration, obliging, dominating, and compromising are positively correlated with the score of emotional intelligence, and avoiding was negatively correlated with emotional intelligence. The results further showed a significant difference in age on emotional intelligence among nurses, and there is also a significant difference in age on conflict management styles among nurses. Moreover, the results revealed a significant difference on emotional intelligence and conflict management styles among the nurses of public and private hospitals.

Keywords: conflict management, emotional intelligence, nurses, Multan

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is the potential to understand, be given and recognize our very own emotions and feelings, consisting of their impact on ourselves and unique people, and to use this information to enhance us from stress and fitness hassle owing to the characteristics of their work and their contact with patients and death (Stein & Book, 2011). The main area of application of emotional intelligence has focus within the clinical, academic and activity domains (MacCann et al., 2011). Additionally, emotional intelligence plays a vital role within the effective management of conflicts and also the selection of strategies wants to accommodate conflicts in a career (Batool, 2013). Further, emotional intelligence is a vital concept for nurses in healthcare to know the views and demands of patients and for manager nurses to develop relations that promote successful management (Smith, Profetto-McGrath, & Cummings, 2009).

According to Kilduff, Chiaburu, and Menges (2010), emotional intelligence involves controlling both sentiments and expressions. Organizationally desired feelings are considered standards of behaviour that show which feelings fit in each relationship and how these feelings ought to be freely communicated or shown. Bar-On (1997) defined emotional intelligence as a multifactorial array of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilities that influence one's ability to acknowledge, understand and manage emotions to relate with others, to adapt to alter and solve problems of a private and interpersonal nature, and to address daily demands, challenges, and pressures efficiently.

The need for emotional intelligence is one of the driving causes of conflict (Thomas & Allen, 2021). Analysts in emotional intelligence express that shortage of emotional intelligence is one of the driving causes of struggle in our society (Murphy, 2014). At the foundation of all, conflict may need sensitivity on a portion of one or both parties. Sensitivity is related explicitly to one's emotional intelligence (Grewal & Salovey, 2005). However, numerous workers nowadays are familiar with workplace stress and workplace conflict. Further, the results of an empirical study conducted by Zia et al. (2020) on the mediating role of social support on the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health among university students showed that emotional intelligence, social support and mental health are significantly correlated positively. In addition, this study revealed that emotional intelligence has a significant effect on student's mental health.

In healthcare organizations, incapable conflict management causes undesirable working conditions, control recreations, constant disappointment, a rebate inside the quality of care, and a rise in healthcare costs (Piryani, & Piryani, 2018). All clashes, whether or not they are utilitarian or not, are emotional since conflicts emerge from an individual's or group's perception of danger to their motivation. However, the conflict between nurses is considered a dreadfully imperative issue inside the healthcare environment all over the world (Silén et al., 2008). The first imperative causes of conflict among medical attendants are contrasts in management methodologies, the perceptions of workers, staff deficiencies, contrasts in goals, and competition between working groups (Christopher et al., 2020). Furthermore, many of the first vital sources of struggle in nursing settings are constrained staff assets inside the unit, driving to higher levels of stress, contrasts in objectives among workgroups, and the difference between the leaders or head nurses' requests (Cricco-Lizza, 2014). Additionally, the subordinates or staff nurses claim orientation and staff points of view.

There are essentially five strategies; integrating, dominating, avoiding, obliging, and compromising that people utilize in conflict management (Başoğlu & Özgür, 2016). The organizational conflict hypothesis looks at conflict as a strategic action that moves a company to more outstanding efficiency and imagination. This vital movement can upgrade decision-making, adjustment, participation and communication inside the work environment (Moore et al., 2006). However, workers need to handle the situation with agreeable objectives and great communication aptitudes. The characteristic of human behaviour in conflict situations is integrated into conflict management (McKibben, 2017). Nurse's emotions must be handled effectively, and appropriate conflict skills must be developed, or health care institutions must be strengthening the healthcare system (Morrison, 2008; Stoller, Taylor, & Farver, 2013).

The study conducted by Lopes, Salovey, and Straus (2003) have found the quality of emotional intelligence as a crucial construct associated with positive outcomes, like pro-social behaviour, parental heat, and cheerful family and peer relationship. Thus, lack of emotional intelligence is one of the leading causes of conflict. Moreover, the studies conducted on emotional intelligence have revealed that an absence of emotional intelligence is one of the leading causes of conflict in our society. It is tough to argue with this logic (Aqqad et al., 2019; Mohamed & Yousef, 2014). At the foundation of all conflict could be a lack of sensitivity on the part of one or each party. Sensitivity is directly associated with one's emotional intelligence (Bacon & Corr, 2017; Li et al., 2020). However, several staff nowadays are acquainted with workplace stress and workplace conflict.

The research conducted by Gönül Özgür (2016) focused on the role of emotional intelligence in conflict management of nurses and the association among them. This cross-sectional study was carried out on a sample of 277 nurses of a university hospital in Turkey. The findings of this study showed that most issues aroused being a nurse were among colleagues, along with that conflicts arises due to working conditions, imbalance alignment of forces by authority, a lack of communication. It also showed that nurses most usually utilized avoiding, dominating, and obliging

strategies at a moderate level, whereas they used compromising and integrating strategies at a gentle level. This examination likewise discovered that these methodologies were influenced by the nurses' level of education, duration of employment, and units or departments. The study identified a significant but weak correlation between conflict management strategies and emotional intelligence scores. At the same time, there was a negative and significant but weak correlation between the avoiding strategy and emotional intelligence score. The results also revealed that emotional intelligence is essential for conflict management among nurses. However, nurses should enhance their level of emotional intelligence through training programs for skills enhancement of conflict management and emotional intelligence level.

Al-Hamdane et al. (2019) conducted a study on the impact of emotional intelligence on conflict management styles used by Jordanian nurse managers. This study was used a descriptive correlation research design and taken a sample of 248 nurses. The results of this study revealed that integrating style was utilized more efficiently. In contrast, the dominating style was practised least frequently rather conflict management styles significantly contrasted according to hospitals and experience level of nurses. Studies further showed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles.

Another research was conducted by Mohamed and Yousef (2014) on emotional intelligence and conflict management styles among nurse managers at Assiut University Hospitals. The sample of this study were nurse managers working in different departments at the time of the research study conducted at Assiut University Hospitals. The descriptive research design was utilized for the research purpose. However, the outcomes of this research demonstrated the highest mean scores of conflict management styles used by nurse managers. Furthermore, more than half of the nurses at Assiut University Hospital exhibited a moderate level of emotional intelligence, and there was a negative association between emotional intelligence and conflict avoidance style. The study concluded that nursing managers usually use two conflict management styles to manage conflicts with their subordinates. Among the nurses surveyed, the level of emotional intelligence was deficient, and the emotional intelligence had a positive connection with improving and weakening their conflict management style. In last, this study recommended the use of conflict management training programs to teach people to withdraw and showed the results in terms of team goals, including emotional intelligence

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This research employed a quantitative research technique to conduct this study.

Study Sample

The sample consisted of 400 nurses from the 12 hospitals located in Multan city (six public and six private hospitals). The purposive sampling technique was used to collect the data from the nurses. The detail of selected hospitals (both public and private) of this study are as follows:

Table 1: List of Hospitals

S. N.	Public Hospitals	Private Hospitals
1.	Ch Pervaiz Elahi Institute of Cardiology Multan	Medicare Hospital Multan
2.	Govt. Shahbaz Sharif District Headquarter Hospital Multan	Fatima Hospital Multan
3.	Nishtar Hospital Multan	City Hospital Multan
4.	Nishtar Institute of Dentistry, Dental Hospital Multan	Bakhtawar Amin Memorial Hospital Multan
5.	Pak Italian Modern Burn Centre Nishtar Hospital Multan	Ibn e Sina Hospital Multan
6.	Children Hospital and The Institute of Child Health, Multan	Mukhtar A Shaikh Hospital Multan

INSTRUMENTS

Along with instruments, a demographical variable sheet was being attached to measure the demographical variables (age, experience, income, private/public hospitals).

1. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

The scale of emotional intelligence was developed the Schutte et al. (2018), and it can be identified as the instruments used by the researchers. This scale consists of 33 items, three of which are reversed score (3, 28 and 33). Participants reply on the Likert scale, and the total score can be derived by summing up the item’s responses. The Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.87 ensures the internal consistency of this scale. There are seven possible responses to each statement ranging from “Completely Disagree” (1) to “Completely Agree” (7).

2. Conflict Management Styles:

Conflict management styles are assessed by 28 items which were developed by Rahim (1983). This scale measures how organizational members handle their interpersonal conflict with superiors, subordinates, and peers. The inventory contains five sub-scales; integrating (7 items), obliging (6 items), dominating (5 items), avoiding (6 items), and compromising (4) items. An organizational member responds to each statement on a 5-point scale; (1=N) Never or Almost Never True of You, (2=R) Rarely or Seldom True of You, (3=S) Sometimes True of You, (4=O) Often True of You, (5=A) Always or Almost True of You. A higher score represents greater use of conflict style.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS DISCUSSION

Table 2: Pearson Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Styles among Nurses (N=400)

	EI	Int	Obl	Dom	Avo	Com
Emotional Intelligence	1	0.447**	0.376**	0.280**	0.312**	0.298**
Integrating		1	0.582**	0.263**	0.399**	0.377**
Obliging			1	0.348**	0.394**	0.381**
Dominating				1	0.166**	0.340**
Avoiding					1	0.240**
Compromising						1

Note: N=400, **p < 0.01.

Table 3: Mean, S.D, t and P-value to measure the Ages Difference of Nurses on Emotional Intelligence

Scale	Age	N	Mean	t	df	P	Cohen’s d
Emotional Intelligence	25 to 35	250	130.21	3.969	398	0.000	0.397
	36 to 45	150	120.57				

Note: *p < 0.05.

Table 4: Mean, S.D, t and P-value for Conflict Management Styles on the basis of Ages of Nurses

	Age	M	S. D	t	P	Cohen's d
Integrating	25-35	25.24	5.72	2.31	0.021	0.329
	36-45	23.85	5.84			
Obliging	25-35	20.44	4.32	2.90	0.003	
	36-45	19.13	4.41			
Dominating	25-35	15.71	4.09	1.18	0.238	
	36-45	15.23	3.91			
Avoiding	25-35	19.60	4.92	0.61	0.539	
	36-45	19.29	4.67			
Compromising	25-35	12.42	3.09	1.79	0.073	
	36-45	11.89	2.64			

Note: * $p < 0.05$.

Table 5: Mean, S.D, t and P-value to measure the Differences in Private/Public hospitals of Nurses on Emotional Intelligence

Scale	Sector	M	S. D	t	P	Cohen's d
Emotional Intelligence	Public	130.84	23.029	3.595	0.000*	0.360
	Private	122.35	24.150			

Note: $p < 0.05$.

Table 6: Mean, S.D, t and P-value to measure the Differences in Private and Public Sector Hospitals on Conflict Management Styles

	Sector	M	S. D	t	P	Cohen's d
Integrating	Public	26.36	5.63	5.890	0.000	0.590
	Private	23.08	5.51			
Obliging	Public	20.56	4.30	2.810	0.005	0.281
	Private	19.34	4.41			
Dominating	Public	15.49	4.75	-0.223	0.823	0.353
	Private	15.58	3.30			
Avoiding	Public	20.32	4.87	3.522	0.000	
	Private	18.65	4.63			
Compromising	Public	12.40	2.90	1.192	0.234	
	Private	12.05	2.97			

According to results, emotional intelligence is positively and significantly correlated with conflict management styles and all the conflict management styles; avoiding, compromising, dominating, interpreting and obliging has been supported in the present study. The findings of this study are according to previous studies conducted by Ceyda Basogul and GonulOzgur(2016), who reported that there is a positive correlation found between emotional intelligence and all the conflict management styles, and emotional intelligence has a direct influence on integrating style and integrating is also positively and significantly correlated with obliging, dominating, avoiding and compromising.

According to the present study, the emotional intelligence of young nurses is greater than the emotional intelligence of old age nurses. Hence it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the ages of nurses of two groups based on emotional intelligence. Furthermore, there is no significant difference among conflict management styles based on the ages group of nurses because interpreting, obliging and compromising of young nurses are greater than old ages nurses. So that, there is significantly different integrating and obliging age groups of nurses.

Dominating and avoiding among young and old age nurses are the same, and there is no significant difference among them based on age groups of nurses. Further, the emotional intelligence of public hospital nurses is greater than private sectors nurses that why the emotional intelligence of private and public sectors nurses are different. However, there is a significant difference between the private and public hospitals nurses on conflict

management styles; integrating, obliging and avoiding because the interpreting, obliging and avoiding of public sector nurses are greater than private-sector nurses.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence has a significant difference in the ages of nurses of two groups that the hypothesis is accepted. A conflict management style has no significant disparity based on age's group of nurses. Emotional intelligence has a significant difference in public and private hospital nurses, so that the hypothesis is accepted. Moreover, conflict management styles; integrating, obliging, and avoiding has a significant difference among the nurses of both public and private hospitals. However, the differences are not significant for the nurses of both public and private hospitals on dominating and compromising. Furthermore, it can be concluded that educating nursing managers about emotional intelligence may improve their ability to manage workplace conflicts. However, cultural factors might have a role in determining the conflict management style used by managers. Thus, an analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and conflict management styles can assist management in initiating a tailor-training program to improve abilities to manage conflict among the nurses and the administrative healthcare staff of both public and private hospitals.

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