

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG NURSES IN A HOSPITAL, KATHMANDU

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be aware of, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships thoughtfully and compassionately. Emotional intelligence greatly impacts the nurses' work. Thus the study aimed to assess the nurses' emotional intelligence and association with their socio-demographic and work related characteristics.

**Method:** Descriptive cross-sectional study design was used. Nurses of Manmohan Memorial Teaching Hospitals were the study population. Probability stratified proportionate sampling technique was used with sample size 114. Statistical Package for the Social Science was used for data processing and analysis. Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test was used to identify emotional intelligence. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used for the analysis. Ethical approval was taken from NEHCO IRC.

**Results:** Out of 114 participants, 55.3% were of aged 25 years. Nurses with high level of emotional intelligence were 57.9%. The highest mean percentage of 29.57% was in perception of emotion followed by managing own emotion with the mean percentage of 27.82%. The each subscales of emotional intelligence scale had moderate positive correlation with other subscales. There was no any significant association of emotional intelligence with socio-demographic and work related characteristics of nurses.

**Conclusion:** More than half of the nurses had high level intelligence, the highest man percentage was on perception of emotion. No any nurses' characteristic under study was associated with their emotional intelligence.

**Key words:** Emotional Intelligence, Kathmandu, Nurses

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## INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence includes the ability to perceive emotions, use of emotions to facilitate thought, understand emotional information and regulate emotions. Emotional abilities are of particular relevance to mental health and wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, it can predict mental health of students and correlates with the negative symptoms of mental health. Moreover, emotional intelligence might be helpful as the means in dealing with mental health of students.<sup>2</sup> It consists of self-awareness, self-management, motivation, social awareness and relationship management that influence the student's achievement.<sup>3</sup> Higher emotional intelligence in nurses is associated with the lower levels of work-related stress and burnout.<sup>4</sup> High emotional intelligence gives nurses an optimistic perspective on frustration and boosts their confidence in overcoming obstacles. These traits help them cope better under pressure, bounce back more quickly from challenges, and ultimately lead happier and more satisfying lives.<sup>5</sup> Hence the study aimed to identify the level of emotional intelligence and its association with participants' characteristics.

## METHODS

Descriptive cross-sectional research design was used to assess emotional intelligence among the nurses of Manmohan Memorial Medical College and Teaching Hospital (MMTH), Swayambhu, Kathmandu. It is a 300 bedded hospital, where more than 150 nurses were working at the time of data collection. The registered nurses who were working in MMTH at different department in the post of Staff Nurse, Nursing Officer and Senior Nursing Officer were included. Sample size was calculated taking 54% population proportion using Cochran's formula. The total sample size was 114. Probability stratified proportionate sampling was used to select participants from ten different wards of MMTH. Emotional Intelligence was measured using Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test which is 33 items scale categorized under 4 sub-scales in terms of 5-point Likert Scale. Four subscale includes perception of emotion, managing own emotion, managing others emotion and utilization of emotion. Total scale scores were

calculated by reverse coding items 5, 28 and 33, and then summing up all items. The total score was 165. The Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) is a method of measuring general Emotional Intelligence (EI). It was created in 1998 by Dr. Nicola Schutte and her colleagues and is widely used.<sup>6</sup> For this study, SSEIT was pretested among 11 nurses of Green City Hospital, Basundhara, Kathmandu. Ethical approval was taken from NEHCO IRC (Ref. NEHCO/IRC/080/198) Written informed consent was taken from the participants. National ethical guideline was followed throughout the study.<sup>7</sup> The collected data were coded, entered and analyzed in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS IBM version 25). Descriptive and inferential statistics was used for analysis of data. Data of emotional intelligence score was normally distributed as indicated by Shapiro Wilk test for the normality (P-value was more than 0.05). The level of emotional intelligence was classified as: High emotional intelligence:  $\geq$  mean score ( $115 \pm 20.12$ ) and low emotional intelligence:  $<$  mean score

## RESULTS

Out of 114 participants, 55.3% were of aged 25 years and above and 44.7% were younger than 25 years. Most (83.3%) of the participants were Hindu, whereas 13.2% were Buddhist. Christian and Muslim were 2.6% and 0.9% respectively. More than half (51.8%) of the participants

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were Brahmin/Chhetri and 0.9% of participants were Muslim. Most of the participants (78.9%) were originally from Bagmati Province with lowest (0.9%) of participants were from Sudurpaschim Province. Majority (71.1%) of participants were married, whereas 28.9% of them were married/living together. Among the participants 73.7% belonged to nuclear family, and remaining lived in joint/extended family. Majority (64.9%) of participants were certificate level nurses, 34.2% were graduate nurses and 0.9% were post graduate nurses.

#### Work related Characteristics of the Participants

Almost all (96.5%) of the participants were working as staff nurse. Nursing officer and senior nursing officer were of the same numbers i.e. 1.8%. More than half (52.6%) of participants had more than or equal to 3 years and 47.4% had less than 3 years' work experience.

**Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Subscales of Emotional Intelligence of Participants**

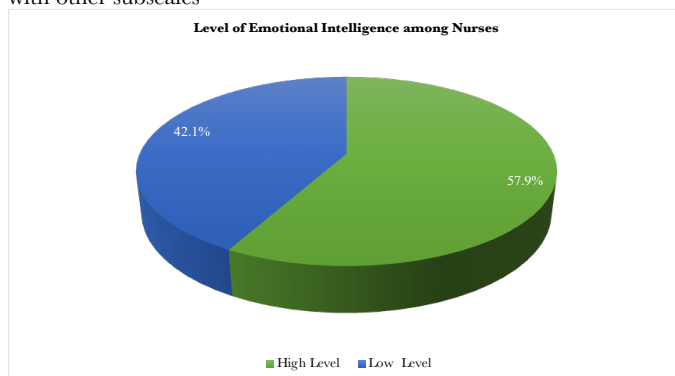
Subscales	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Percentage (%)
Perception of Emotion	10	34	5.18	29.57
Managing Own Emotion	9	32	6.67	27.82
Managing Others Emotion	8	28	5.44	24.34
Utilization of Emotion	6	21	4.81	18.27
Emotional Intelligence	33	115	20.12	100

Table 1 shows that participants mean score of emotional intelligence was  $115 \pm 20.12$ . They had the highest mean percentage (29.57%) in perception of emotion followed by managing own emotion with the mean percentage of 27.82%. Participants had lowest mean percentage in utilization of emotion with mean percentage of 18.27%.

**Table 2: Co-relation between Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) Subscales among the Participants**

Subscales	Percep-tion of Emotion	Manag-ing Own Emotion	Managing Others Emotion	Utiliza-tion of Emotion
Perception of Emotion	1			
Managing Own Emotion	<0.001 (0.511)	1		
Managing Others Emotion	<0.001 (0.526)	<0.001 (0.561)	1	
Utilization of Emotion	<0.001 (0.455)	<0.001 (0.596)	<0.001 (0.543)	1

Table 2 shows that each subscales had moderate positive correlation with other subscales



**Figure 1: Level of Emotional Intelligence among Nurses**

Fig 1: shows that more than half (57.9%) of participants had high level of emotional intelligence whereas 42.1% of them had low level of emotional intelligence.

**Table 3: Association between Emotional Intelligence and Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

Variables	Level of Emotional Intelligence		$\chi^2$	p-value
	Low (%)	High (%)		
Age group				
<25 years	23 (45.1)	28 (54.9)	0.339	0.560
≥25 years	25 (39.7)	38 (60.3)		
Religion				
Hindu	41(43.2)	54 (56.8)	0.180	0.672
(Christian/Buddhist/Muslim)	6(37.5)	10(62.5)		
Ethnicity				
Brahmin/Chhetri	27(45.8)	32 (54.2)	0.671	0.413
(Janajati/Madhesi/Dalit/Muslim)	21(38.2)	34(61.8)		
Permanent Address				
Bagmati	40(44.4)	50(55.6)	0.960	0.327
Others	8(33.3)	16(66.7)		
Marital Status				
Never Married	37(45.7)	47(54.3)	0.494	0.482
Married	11(33.3)	19(66.7)		
Family Type				
Nuclear	37 (44)	47 (56)	0.492	0.484
Joint/extended	11(36.7)	19(63.3)		
Level of education				
Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL)	35(47.3)	39(52.7)	2.332	0.127
Bachelors/Masters of Nursing	13(32.5)	27(67.5)		
Graduated University				
Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (CTEVT)	29(47.5)	32(52.5)	2.758	0.430
Purbanchal University/ Kathmandu University	6(27.3)	16(72.7)		
Tribhuvan University	9(40.9)	13(59.1)		
India	4(44.4)	5(55.6)		

Significant at  $p$  value < 0.05, Permanent address others: (Gandaki, Koshi, Madhesh, Lumbini, Karnali, Sudurpaschim)

Table 3 illustrates that there was no statistically significant association between respondent's level of emotional intelligence with age group, religion, ethnicity, permanent address, marital status, family type, level of education and graduated university.

**Table 3: Association between Emotional Intelligence and Work-related Characteristics of the Participants**

Variables	Level of Emotional Intelligence		$\chi^2$	p-value
	Low (%)	High (%)		
<b>Designation</b>				
Staff Nurse	47(42.7)	63(57.3)	0.498	0.481 <sup>f</sup>
Nursing Officer	1(25.0)	3(75.0)		
<b>Work Experience</b>				
<3	25(46.3)	29(53.7)	0.739	0.390
≥3	23(38.3)	37(61.7)		
<b>Working Department</b>				
Critical area	12(32.4)	25(67.6)	2.103	0.147
Non-critical area	36(46.8)	41(53.2)		

Significant at  $p$  value <0.05,  $f$ : Fisher Exact Test

Table 4 illustrates that there was no statistically significant association between respondent's level of emotional intelligence with designation, work experience and working department.

## DISCUSSION

Current study showed that 57.9% of the nurses had high level of emotional intelligence. Study conducted in Kerala India showed 12% of the participants had above average, and 84% had moderate levels of emotional intelligence.<sup>8</sup> Another study from Baghdad city showed that 58.3% of nurses had moderate level and 41% had the high level of emotional intelligence.<sup>9</sup> A study from Ghana showed 76.5% of the participants had a high level of emotional intelligence and 12.9% had a very high level of emotional intelligence.<sup>10</sup>

The findings of the study revealed that there was no statistically significant association of nurses' level of emotional intelligence with their age, marital status, family type, level of education, working area and years of working experience. However, a study from India showed that the duration of service was one of the influencing factor for emotional intelligence.<sup>11</sup>

## CONCLUSION

More than half of the nurses of MMTH had high level of emotional intelligence, still the significant numbers of nurses had low level of emotional intelligence. The highest mean percentage was in perception of emotion followed by managing own emotion. No any socio-demographic and work related variable were associated with their level of emotional intelligence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Nursing profession itself a stressful profession, thus they are required to have a high level of emotional intelligence to deal with the physical and mental stress. It would be better if the hospital authority focus on activities that boosts up the emotional intelligence among nurses.

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## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Both the authors worked parallel from conception of research idea to the completion of the project. The first author led the manuscript writing with significant contribution from the second author.

## COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare no competing interest.