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COMPARING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SENSE OF SELF-EFFICACY, AND JOB
SATISFACTION AMONG NURSE EDUCATORS
A CASE OF NATIONAL UNIVERSITY AND ISLAMIC AZAD
UNIVERSITY OF ARDABIL

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ABSTRACT

Background and Objectives: Human resources is considered one of the valuable assets in management. This force also forms the powerful basis and foundation of the health care systems; in this regard, nurses can be regarded as the largest group of the health care workforce worldwide. They play an important role in changing the health care system, policy-making, planning, and implementation of health care services. This study aimed at comparing emotional intelligence, sense of self-efficacy, and job satisfaction among nurse educators at the National University of Ardabil and Azad University of Ardabil.

Materials and Methods: This is a descriptive-comparative research and its statistical population includes all the nurse educators at National University and the Islamic Azad University of Ardabil. Among whom, 72 participants were selected by convenience sampling method. For data collection, Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, Bradbury-Graves's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, and Sherer's General Self-Efficacy Scale were used. The data were analyzed through chi-square and independent t-test in SPSS/20.

Results: The results of data analysis showed that there is no significant difference among nurse educators of Ardabil National University and Azad University in terms of emotional intelligence and the sense of self-efficacy; however, there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of job satisfaction (P = 0.001).

Conclusion: The results of this research showed that the nurse educators at Azad University experienced higher degrees of emotional intelligence and sense of self-efficacy than their counterparts at the National University, but this difference was not significantly observable. There was a desirable rate of emotional intelligence in both groups; however, the sense of self-efficacy in both groups was low.

Introduction

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Emotional intelligence is "something" inside each human being that is somewhat subtle and intangible. Emotional intelligence determines how one should handle his/her behavior, how to cope with social problems, and how to take decisions that lead to positive results. Emotional intelligence is associated with one's understanding of the self and others, connection with others, adjustment and adaptation to the surrounding environment that are necessary for success in meeting social demands; indeed, emotional intelligence is considered as a tactical capability in individual performance [1]. The term Emotional Intelligence was introduced for the first time in 1990 by John Mayer from Yale University; the term emphasized one's ability to control the emotions and feelings of the self and others, accept other people's views, and control social relationships and interactions. Daniel Goleman in 1995 introduced the concept of emotional intelligence in a particular form in the scientific communities. In 2004, Goleman revised the areas of emotional intelligence [2]. With a review of previous literature and research on emotional intelligence, one may realize that researchers have divided emotional intelligence to three different models, namely the ability model (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 1990), mixed model (Goleman, 1995), and the mixed emotional-social model (Bar-On, Hicks & Dalviks, 1997 to 1999) [3]. With regard to the concept of emotional intelligence, Mayer & Salovey suggest that emotional intelligence consists of two areas, including experimental and strategic areas, and each area is divided into four branches: 1- perception of emotion, 2- emotional facilitation, 3- understanding emotions, and 4- management of emotions. In the following years, the levels and structure of emotional intelligence in the experimental and strategic areas were developed [4]. From the perspective of Goleman's mixed model, emotional intelligence is one of the capabilities that is associated with success in life. Emotional intelligence involves the ability to monitor one's emotions and feelings and those of others, to differentiate between them, and to use these assumptions to guide the individuals' thoughts and actions. He has subdivided the elements of emotional intelligence into individual and social classes. The individual elements include self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation; and the social elements entail empathy and social skills [5]. From Goleman's perspective, emotional intelligence components can be divided into the four skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. From Goleman's perspective, EI components are divided into four skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Self-awareness: knowing one's weaknesses, strengths, and limitations and the recognition of the effect of one's feelings. Self-management: demonstrating and showing one's maturity and flexibility, control of emotions. Social awareness: making sense of and understanding the feelings of others, having a sense of empathy and concern for others. Relationship management: others' development and progress through guidance and feedback, communication with others, and collaboration [6]. From the perspective of Bar-On's social model, emotional intelligence is recognized as a set of non-cognitive capacities, capabilities, and skills that increase one's ability in successfully coping with environmental demands and pressures and result in the emergence of adaptive and humanitarian behaviors by the individual. Emotional intelligence includes the recognition and control of one's emotions and affects. The person who enjoys a high level of emotional intelligence successfully integrates three components of cognitive, physiological, and emotional behaviors with each other [7]. From Bar-On's perspective, the components of emotional intelligence can be divided into five components and fifteen indexes as follows: 1- Intrapersonal EQ: self-regard, assertiveness, self-esteem, self-actualization, and independence. 2- Interpersonal EQ: empathy, interpersonal relationships, and social responsibility. 3- Adaptability EQ: flexibility, reality-testing, and problem-solving. 4- Stress Management EQ: stress tolerance and impulse control. 5- General Mood EQ: optimism and happiness [4].

In addition to emotional intelligence, the concept of occupational self-efficacy is widely applied in educational, social, and organizational areas. Efficacy beliefs affect performance through cognitive, motivational, efficiency, and selection processes. Self-efficacy refers to a person's beliefs about his/her ability to learn or perform activities at the required levels [1]. Albert Bandura- the Canadian psychologist- entered the self-efficacy construct into the psychology literature in 1977, and defined it as one's perceived ability to adapt to certain situations. The concept of self-efficacy has been derived from his social cognitive theory, which is considered one of the most influential theories in the perception of human behavior and motivational factors of behavior [8]. Resnick defined self-efficacy as "the individual's judgment of his/her ability to organize and practice performance". For example, an experienced nurse in surgical nursing may have a high level of the sense of self-efficacy in that scope; however, s/he may have a very scant level of self-efficacy when s/he is to function in the emergency department [9]. The sense of self-efficacy begins from infancy and grows with different experiences and explorations. Experiences within the areas of family, peers, school, and adolescent and adult life result in the reformation of self-efficacy. Family and classroom interactions can provide the necessary conditions to take most advantage of the resources for the growth of self-efficacy and, conversely, they can play a preventive role in this regard [10]. From the perspective of different scholars, such as Bandura, Pastorelli, Barbaranelli, and Caprara, self-efficacy is a multidimensional construct that should be evaluated in various fields, including:

1- Academic self-efficacy, which refers to (one's perception of his/her ability to perform pre-assigned academic tasks), as well as the ability to manage specific learning activities.

2- Social self-efficacy, which refers to a person's capabilities in dealing with social challenges and the feeling of competence in interpersonal relationships with peers and the management of interpersonal conflicts.

4- Physical self-efficacy, which refers to the sense of self-efficacy among athletes during sports' activities and competition.

5- Emotional self-efficacy, which refers to one's perceived ability to overcome negative emotions, and the ability to regulate emotions and adjust to appropriate emotions and avoid negative emotions in certain situations [10].

Self-efficacy beliefs can be created or strengthened by four main sources: 1- Mastery experiences, 2- Vicarious experiences, 3- Social persuasion, and 4-Physiological states [11].

The sense of self-efficacy leads to the generation of the most important growth potential and to the improvement of the academic level of the health system. In addition to self-efficacy, it can be argued that job satisfaction is also a very effective factor in the ultimate performance in this system [8]. Job satisfaction has received attention since 1920 and the formal research on it commenced with Hawthorne's studies in the early 1930s and from that time, job satisfaction was extensively studied and evaluated. In fact, job satisfaction assumed importance because it convinced the original fans of human relations approach, experts, and managers that a happy worker is a profitable one. Then, the classic attempt for presenting the definition of job satisfaction was made by Hapak Robert in 1935. He argues that job satisfaction is a complex and multidimensional concept

that is associated with psychological, social, and physical factors. These studies went on by George Elton Mayo in the same year [12]. Job satisfaction is an extent of positive emotions and attitudes that people hold towards their job. Indeed, job satisfaction has a variety of positive individual and organizational outcomes and has a significant influence on the amount of effort and commitment of individuals on the effectiveness of organizations [13]. The important theories proposed on job satisfaction include:

1- Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory: this is the most common and functional theory cited in the survey of job satisfaction. On the basis of this theory, job satisfaction contains two dimensions, i.e. motivation and hygiene. The motivational or internal dimension includes the achievement of success, promotion, responsibility, nature of work, personal advancement, and recognition. The hygienic or external dimension includes job security, status, personal life, supervision, salary, organizational regulations, and interpersonal relationships with subordinates, colleagues, and supervisors [14].

2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory: this is the theory of the hierarchy of needs, understanding, and recognition of human needs and refers to the way these needs are created in response to motivation. Psychological needs, health, and attachment constitute the foundation of these needs, and the satisfaction of each of these needs helps with the supply of the other one. Minimal needs are food and security and more important needs include self-worth and self-transcendence [15].

3- Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristics Model: Hackman and Oldham have proposed five dimensions for job satisfaction: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. These dimensions impact the psychological states in three ways, i.e. experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of the actual results, and finally lead to the generation of high intrinsic motivation, executive power, and job satisfaction [16].

Considering the above-mentioned points, it seems necessary to pay attention to and conduct research on emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction in organizations. For this purpose, this study aims at comparing emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction among nurse educators of Azad University and National University in the city of Ardabil.

Materials and Methods

This is a descriptive-comparative research and its statistical population includes all the nurse educators at the National University and the Islamic Azad University of Ardabil. To this end, 72 participants were selected by convenience sampling method where 40 participants were nurse educators at the National University of Ardabil and 32 participants were nurse educators at the Azad University of Ardabil. Then, they responded to the research questionnaires, which included the following.

Bradbury-Graves's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire: This test has been developed by Dr. Travis Bradberry and Dr. Jean Greaves in 2004 and contains 28 questions and measures the parameters of general emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. This test is scored based on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 to 6 (never, rarely, sometimes, usually, almost always, and always); thus, the scale score can range from 50 to 100 [17]. The validity has been calculated through convergent correlation with Bar-On Emotional Intelligence Test by Mirhashemi & Ganji ($P < 0.01$; $r = 0.67$). The reliability of Bradbury-Graves's Questionnaire has been reported in the study to be equal to 0.89 via Cronbach's alpha coefficient method [18].

SHerer's Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SES): This scale has been constructed by Sherer, Maddux, Mercadante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs & Rogers (1982). The original version of this test consisted of 36 questions and its designers kept 17 questions that are affected by general social factors based on their analyses. The items of the scale are scored based on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree [1] to strongly agree [19]. The construct validity method was used to evaluate the validity and reliability of the scale [20]. In a study, entitled psychometric properties of the self-efficacy scale, Asgharnejad reported the reliability of the sale to be equal to 0.83. In addition, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient obtained in the current study was obtained equal to 0.86 [21].

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ): This questionnaire consists of 19 questions and 6 subscales, namely payment system (3 questions), kind of work [4], opportunities for advancement (3 items), organizational climate (2 items), leadership style (4 questions), and physical work conditions (3 questions) that measure job satisfaction. The scale is scored based on a Likert scale wherein the alternatives "very dissatisfied", "dissatisfied", "can't decide if I'm satisfied or dissatisfied", "satisfied", and "very satisfied" are assigned 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 points, respectively. [17]. For the validation of MSQ, it was distributed among ten faculty members with relative expertise in this field and their suggestions were included in the questionnaire. The reliability of MSQ was assessed via test-retest method on 10 sample units and the correlation coefficient of 0.78 was obtained [22].

The data were analyzed in software SPSS/20 by using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Chi-square and independent T-test) to estimate the comparison between the variables.

Results

The results presented in Table 1 based on chi-square inferential statistics indicate that the highest percentages of the National University educators in terms of gender, income, employment status, marital status, work experience, and education were as follows: female (55%), less than 600 dollars (52.5%), contractual (32.5%), married (80%), no work experience (60%), and bachelor's degree (62.5%). In addition, the lowest percentages of the National University educators in terms of gender, income, employment status, marital status, work experience, and education were as follows: male (45%), more than 900 dollars (12.5%), part time (20%), unmarried (20%), with work experience (40%), and Ph.D. degree (2.5%). For the Azad University group, the descriptive statistics were as follows: male (18.8%), more than 900 dollars (3.1%), official (9.4%), married (46.9%), with work experience (34.4%), and Ph.D. degree (0%). Statistically, there is a significant relationship between the groups in terms of age ($P = 0.005$), income ($P = 0.000$), married ($P = 0.01$), work experience ($P = 0.034$), and education ($P = 0.000$).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of nurse educators at the National and Azad Universities of Ardabil

Group / Demographic characteristics	Nurse educators of National University				Nurse educators of Azad University				Chi-square test result
	Max.	**Percentage**	**Min.**	**Percentage**	**Max.**	**Percentage**	**Min.**	**Percentage**	
Gender	Female	55	Male	45	Female	81.3	Male	18.8	P = 0.005
Income	Less than $ 600	52.5	Above $ 900	5	Less than $ 600	53.1	Above $ 900	3.1	P = 0.000
Employment status	Contractual	32.5	Part time	12.5	Contractual	43.8	Contractual	9.4	P = 0.059
Marital status	Married	80	Unmarried	20	Unmarried	53.1	Married	46.9	P = 0.010
Work experience	No	60	Yes	40	No	65.6	Yes	34.4	P = 0.034
Education	Bachelor	62.5	Ph.D.	2.5	Bachelor	75	Ph.D.	0	P = 0.000

Table 2 shows that the self-management subscale has the highest mean score from among the subscales of emotional intelligence in both groups, i.e. nurse educators of the National University and Azad University. The mean scores of this subscale for the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University are equal to (38.50 ± 5.12) and (39.21 ± 4.57), respectively. On the other hand, the lowest mean score in both groups pertained to the subscale of social intelligence whose mean values for the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University are equal to (23.65 ± 3.57) and (24.12 ± 3.07), respectively. In total, the mean value of emotional intelligence for the nurse educators of Azad University equaled (129.46 ± 12.65) and that for the nurse educators of National University equaled (128.02 ± 14.62). The results of the independent t-test showed that there is no significant difference in any of emotional intelligence subscales and the total emotional intelligence among the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University.

Table 2: Comparison of emotional intelligence among nurse educators at the National University and Azad University of Ardabil							
Group	Nurse educators of National University		Nurse educators of Azad University		**t**	**Df**	**P-value**
Subscale	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Self-awareness	28.75	3.91	28.96	4.29	0.226	70	0.822
Self-management	38.50	5.12	39.21	4.57	0.620	70	0.537
Social awareness	23.65	3.57	24.12	3.07	0.595	70	0.554
Relationship management	37.12	5.19	37.15	4.53	0.037	70	0.979
Emotional intelligence (total)	128.02	14.62	129.46	12.65	0.442	70	0.660

Table 3 suggests that the mean values of the sense of self-efficacy in the nurse educators of Azad University and National University are equal to (37.56 ± 6.30) and (36.12 ± 5.51), respectively. The results of the independent t-test showed that there is no significant difference among the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University in terms of the sense of emotional intelligence.

Table 3: Comparison of the sense of emotional intelligence among nurse educators at the National University and Azad University of Ardabil

Index	Group	Mean	SD	T	Df	p-value
Self-efficacy	National University Educators	36.12	5.51	0.23	70	0.832

	Azad University Educators	37.56	6.30			

Table 4 shows that the subscale kind of work has taken the highest mean score among the subscales of job satisfaction in both groups, i.e. the nurse educators of National University and Azad University of Ardabil; the mean values of this subscale are equal to (14.17 ± 2.57) and (14.62 ± 2.47) for the National University and Azad University groups, respectively. On the other hand, the lowest mean score in the nurse educators of the National University (6.37 ± 1.68) belonged to the subscale of organizational climate while this value in the nurse educators of the Azad University (8.06 ± 1.94) belonged to the subscale of payment system from among the subscales of job satisfaction. On the whole, there was a higher degree of job satisfaction in the nurse educators of the Azad University with the mean value of (61.65 ± 8.20) than that in the nurse educators of the National University (54.85 ± 8.56). The results of the independent t-test suggested that there is a significant difference between the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University in terms of the subscales of payment system (P = 0.042), opportunities for advancement (P = 0.035), and organizational climate (P = 0.041). Similarly, there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of total job satisfaction (P = 0.001).

Table 4: Comparison of job satisfaction among nurse educators of the National and Azad Universities of Ardabil						
Group	Nurse educators of National University		Nurse educators of Azad University		t	Df Subscale	p-value Mean
Subscale	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Payment system	6.60	1.93	8.06	1.94	2.2	70	0.042
Kind of work	14.17	2.57	14.62	2.47	1.18	70	0.098
Opportunities for advancement	7.70	2.52	9.31	2.30	2.14	70	0.035
Organizational climate	6.37	1.68	8.12	1.62	2.14	70	0.041
Leadership style	11.50	2.47	11.56	2.47	1.15	70	0.111
Physical conditions	8.50	3.19	9.96	2.32	2.05	70	0.065
Job Satisfaction (Total)	54.85	8.56	61.65	8.20	3.41	70	0.001

Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed at comparing emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction among nurse educators of the National University of Ardabil and Azad University of Ardabil. Based on the obtained results on demographic characteristics, there was a significant difference between the two groups of nurse educators in terms of age (P = 0.005), income (P = 0.000), marital status (P = 0.01), work experience (P = 0.034), and education (P = 0.000). In a study, Rezea et al., showed that 91% of the samples were women and 9% of them were men, 65.1% of the participants were contractual employees, 48.8% of them were unmarried, and 9.1% of them had no work experience [23]. In another study, Sadat Mousavi and Movahedi showed that the majority of sample units were women (67%) with low work experience (34%) and bachelor's degree (28%) while the rest held associate's degree [14].

Independent t-test revealed that the two groups of nursing educators of the National University and Azad University were not significantly different in any of the subscales of emotional intelligence and total emotional intelligence. Ghaderi et al. and Shahhosseini & Silong (2015) have argued that although there is a higher rate of emotional intelligence in the government than that in the private sector, there is no significant difference between them (P > 0.05; t = 0.311) [24, 25]. Fakhra Batool conducted a study on the nurses in governmental hospitals and private hospitals and concluded that there is no significant difference between the two groups in terms of emotional intelligence; however, the nurses in governmental centers control emotions more appropriately and lead the emotions in carrying out their duties in the right way [26]. On the other hand, in another study conducted by Gharaea et al., a moderate mean score of emotional intelligence was reported to prevail the nurses under study and it was also revealed that there is a significant difference between the nurses in governmental and private hospitals regarding emotional intelligence (P = 0.01).

The degrees of emotional intelligence were obtained in governmental hospitals (69.70 ± 4.5) and private hospitals (66.1 ± 4.1) [27] and this finding contrasts with the current results. At present, the tendency and training of emotional have extensively entered into the organizations of developed countries, but this needs more explanation and description in the developing countries [28]. On the other hand, they are obliged to establish an effective relationship with patients so that they can review the patients' medical history by this means. Accordingly, they can feel empathy with patients in addition to getting aware of the different aspects of diseases and can provide patients with their support. In terms of the extra-organizational and inter-firm relationship, emotional intelligence is viewed as a factor that has a direct impact on people's interaction with each other [29]. Independent t-test showed that there is no statistically significant difference between the nurse educators at the National University and Azad University in terms of self-efficacy. Iqbal et al. suggested that there is no significant difference between

the governmental and private sectors in terms of self-efficacy. However, various factors have an effect on employees' self-efficacy. For example, it can be influenced by organizational commitment, sensitivity over the working outcome, personal skills, and favorable economic results [30]. This finding is consistent with that of the present study. Asadi Tehrani et al. compared self-efficacy between the students of Azad University and State University and reported that the mean values of self-efficacy score of Azad University and State University students are equal to 61.3 and 43.3, respectively and the difference between them is significant (P =0.01) [31]. The findings of that study are inconsistent with the results of the present study. The results of this study can be reviewed and explained considering the organizational climate dominant over the two universities under study because the academic atmosphere and organizational climate can influence the employees' self-efficacy. Therefore, the absence of any significant difference between the two groups of nurse educators at Azad University and National University is expectable since the organizational climates of the two universities are not very different from each other due to the same location and environment of the two universities; thus, no significant difference was observed in self-efficacy between the two groups. The innovative organizational climate can extend creative self-efficacy and innovative behavior and bring up a creative and innovative and critical generation despite all educational obstacles and limitations (32).

The results of the independent t-test suggested that there is a significant difference between the nurse educators of the National University and Azad University in terms of the subscales of payment system (P = 0.042), opportunities for advancement (P = 0.035), and organizational climate (P = 0.041). Similarly, there was a significant difference between the two groups in terms of total job satisfaction (P = 0.001). This means that there is a higher rate of job satisfaction among the nurse educators of Azad University than that of the National University educators. In a study carried out by Deeba et al., it was found that there is a significant difference between the healthcare workers in the private sector and the governmental sector in terms of the level of job satisfaction (P = 0.000) and there is a higher level of job satisfaction among the personnel of private healthcare centers than the personnel of governmental centers due to job security, optimal working environment, the correct division of work share, and work adjustment [33]. However, the findings reported by Chin Aveh & Nadi are not consistent with those of the current study. In that study, it was shown that the level of job satisfaction among members of Azad University is lower than that in public universities due to the high level of job stress among faculty members of Azad University [34]. In recent decades, nurses' job satisfaction has received the attention of nursing researchers. Job satisfaction is a very important part of nurses' life that can affect patient safety, employee morale, performance and productivity, quality, early retirement, turnover, commitment to the organization, and, above all, patient satisfaction. In hospitals where nurses enjoy a high rate of job satisfaction, nursing care will be of more favorable quality, and patient satisfaction will be also provided [22].

As per the results of this study, it can be concluded that the staff and educational assistants in both public and private universities can embark on holding educational courses, seminars, and congresses to make people aware and increase their emotional intelligence by using appropriate techniques due to the important role of emotional intelligence, sense of self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. This important task can be fulfilled after the employment and recruitment of the nursing professors and educators. In this way, the professors and educators are greatly helped to increase self-efficacy and job satisfaction and, finally, the productivity and satisfaction of nursing students will increase. Therefore, it is possible to incorporate the latest content and methods of enhancing emotional intelligence in a series of regular training programs. The development of training programs towards the improvement of emotional intelligence in university instructors as well as the students who will be the future nurses should be put on the agenda by authorities.

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