



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & RESILIENCE AMONG NURSING STUDENTS IN A SELECTED UNIVERSITY, UAE

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Abstract

Introduction

Nursing is a demanding profession that offers unique challenges. Research studies suggest that Nursing students' emotional intelligence changes over time with years of education and age, suggesting that emotional intelligence skills can be improved. Resilience helps nursing students handle challenges, such as changing learning styles and experiencing their first clinical practice. There seems to be a need to identify support strategies for developing resilience among nursing students in order to strengthen their professional practice.

Objectives of the study

1. To compare emotional Intelligence and resilience among Nursing students across the Academic Years
2. To correlate emotional intelligence and resilience among nursing students
3. To associate emotional intelligence and resilience with selected baseline variables

Methods

A quantitative approach using a descriptive cross-sectional design was used for this study among 100 nursing students who satisfied the inclusion criteria and were selected by stratified random sampling. The tools used were the Schutte's Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test and Connor Davidson Resilience scale

Results

The Mean \pm SD of Emotional Intelligence is 122.41 \pm 26.94 and resilience was 72.98 \pm 17.85. There is no significant association of Emotional Intelligence & resilience across the years. However, the 2nd year students had the highest Emotional Intelligence score and resilience scores when compared to other batches of students. As the years increased Emotional Intelligence scores increased and Resilience scores decreased. There is a significant strong positive correlation ($r=0.643$, $p=0.001$) between emotional intelligence and resilience. This means that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to also exhibit higher levels of resilience. There is no significant relation between Emotional



Intelligence & resilience with demographic variables, however older participants (24 years and above) tend to have slightly higher emotional intelligence scores compared to younger age groups.

Conclusion

The present study findings have revealed that overall impression the nursing students, in general, demonstrates a good level of emotional intelligence and resilience, with variations based on demographic factors. These findings suggest that efforts to enhance emotional intelligence could potentially contribute to building resilience, which is beneficial for coping with life's challenges effectively.

Key words – Emotional Intelligence, Resilience, Nursing students

Introduction

Nursing is a demanding profession that offers unique challenges. Research studies suggest that Nursing students' emotional intelligence changes over time with years of education and age, suggesting that emotional intelligence skills can be improved. Until recently, in many environments, the golden standard for student's success was the intelligence quotient (IQ), which was also frequently used for entry tests in higher education. However, among these intelligent people, many do not face stressful situations and do not socialize with people. The consequence is that many of them fail in personal and professional life.¹ Therefore, emotional intelligence (EI) was proposed as one of the measures that envision an individual's all-around development and success. The IQ contributes only 20% to lifetime success, the rest is the result of EI, including motivation, perseverance, impulse control, empathy, and hope. Emotional intelligence and resilience are traits that can allow nursing students to effectively respond to challenges in clinical placements, improve their leadership skills, performance in practice, and to enhance patient safety.² Emotional intelligence (EI) reflects the general capacity to comprehend emotions (in ourselves and in others), to regulate emotions, and to cope effectively with emotional situations.³ Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and deal with personal and other individuals' emotions and feelings.⁴ Emotional intelligence (EI) has been associated with positive outcomes for nursing students. Higher EI is associated with personal wellbeing and stress management, higher academic performance, stronger nursing leadership and practice performance, and greater patient safety.⁵

Resilience is the ability to quickly bounce back after an adversity. Developing skills, such as resilience, as part of nursing programs allows students to be better prepared to deal with the unique challenges in nursing practice. Resilience is a term commonly used to describe the ability to turn adversity into opportunities and learn from demanding situations. Resilience helps nursing students handle challenges, such as changing learning styles and experiencing their first clinical practice.⁶ There seems to be a need to identify support strategies for



developing resilience among nursing students in order to strengthen their professional practice.⁷

Emotional intelligence is an important factor for nursing students' success and work performance. Although the level of emotional intelligence increases with age and tends to be higher in women, results of different studies on emotional intelligence in nursing students vary regarding age, study year, and gender.¹ Emotional intelligence and resilience are traits that can allow nursing students to effectively respond to challenges in professional placements and future practice.² The study program in nursing is varied, and includes theoretical and practical aspects, but teaching EI is not part of the core curriculum. We argue that teaching EI should not only be included in the curriculum, but that EI tests should be included in the admissions process.³ Although the role of emotions in student engagement has been studied, little is known about how emotional intelligence is related to engagement and other key learning outcomes in higher education.⁴ While there is an increasing body of evidence on nursing students' EI, there is minimal evidence on EI over time during pre-registration programs.⁵ Resilience among nursing students plays a vital role in helping them to overcome adversities during their nursing education. Additionally, after graduation, nursing students can continue contributing to society as resilient Registered Nurses in the future.⁶ There seems to be a need to identify support strategies for developing resilience among nursing students in order to strengthen their professional practice⁷

An integrative review aimed to examine empirical research on resilience among nursing students in the context of nursing education. Resilience helps nursing students handle challenges, such as changing learning styles and experiencing their first clinical practice. The search terms focused on resilience and health in nursing students and nursing education. The database used in this review were CINAHL Plus, PubMed and MEDLINE. The Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool appraised the studies' quality. This study explored 52 records and revealed three current research focuses related to nursing students' resilience: (1) the concept and description of resilience, (2) the characteristics affecting resilience and (3) the mediating role of resilience in maintaining holistic health. Recommendations include adding a resilience topic to the nursing curriculum, providing resilience enhancement programs, examining the relationship between resilience and holistic health and exploring the influence of resilience about global health crises.⁶

A study was conducted at Princess Nourah Bin Abdulrahman University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the second study explored the correlation between emotional intelligence (EI) and academic achievement among 204 undergraduate nursing students Through the use of a quantitative descriptive correlational design, the researchers discovered a positive statistically significant correlation between academic success and emotional intelligence. The study's results, based on data from different academic levels, indicated that higher EI levels were associated with better academic outcomes among nursing students. Despite its promising findings, the study recognized limitations such as focusing on a specific nursing program at one university and overlooking potential influencing factors like stress perception or cultural differences.⁹



A prestigious hospital in Shanghai, China conducted research on nursing interns' clinical aptitude and emotional intelligence (EI). In this cross-sectional observational study, 310 hospital intern nursing students participated. In order to better understand how emotional intelligence (EI) affects clinical proficiency, the researchers found a strong positive association between EI and clinical skill. The study highlighted a significance of cognitive processes and emotional regulation, notably in the areas of "facilitating thought" and "managing emotions." It also highlighted indirect pathways through which factors like school type, family financial status, and EI knowledge influenced clinical ability. The implications for nursing education included integrating EI training into curricula and tailoring interventions based on contextual factors. The study's location in Shanghai provided insights into the specific challenges and opportunities in nursing education within the Chinese healthcare context.¹⁰

Hence it is important to assess Emotional intelligence & Resilience among Nursing students in a selected University, UAE

Objectives of the study

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Results

Description of selected Demographic Variables

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution selected demographic variables

(n=100)

Personal characteristics	Number (n)	Percent (%)
Age		
• 17-20 years	55	55.0
• 21-23 years	38	38.0
• 24 years and more	7	7.0
Mean ± SD	20±2.321	
Year of study		



• 1 st year	39	39.0
• 2 nd year	22	22.0
• 3 rd year	21	21.0
• 4 th year	18	18.0
Nationality		
• UAE	15	15.0
• African	14	14.0
• Asian	68	68.0
• Canadian – Comoros	3	3.0
Are you currently staying in Dorms		
• No	88	88.0
• Yes	12	12.0
Type of family		
• Blended	13	13.0
• Extended	13	13.0
• Nuclear	61	61.0
• Single parent	13	13.0
What is your birth order among your siblings		
• Middle born	29	29.0
• No, I'm the only child	5	5.0
• Oldest	36	36.0
• Youngest	30	30.0

Table 1 shows that 55% came under age 17-20 years, 39% were 1st years, 68% were Asians, 12% were staying in dorms, 61% were from nuclear families, 36% were oldest among siblings.

Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the years.

Objective: To compare Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among Nursing students across the Academic Years

Table 2a: Mean & Standard Deviation of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among the studied group.

Variables	Mean	SD
Emotional Intelligence	122.41	26.944
Resilience	72.98	17.858

Table 2a shows that the Mean \pm SD of Emotional Intelligence is 122.41 \pm 26.94 and resilience was 72.98 \pm 17.85



Table 2b: Association of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the years

Objective: To correlate Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the years

H01: There will no significant change in Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year Nursing students at 0.05 level of significance

Table 2b: ANOVA and p value of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the years

Parameter	Emotional Intelligence	F\ (p)	Resilience	F\ (p)
Year of study				
• 1st year	116.48±30.9	1.383 (0.253)	72.43±17.9	0.589 (0.624)
• 2nd year	130.77±22.6		77.04±16.3	
• 3rd year	123.04±22.5		72.52±17.9	
• 4th year	124.27±26.1		69.72±19.9	

*Significant (P<0.05).

F=ANOVA test.

Table 2b shows that there is no significant association of EI & resilience across the years. However, the 2nd years had a highest EI scores and resilience scores when compared to other batches. As the years increased EI scores increased and Resilience scores decreased.

Table 3: Pearson’s Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among nursing students.

Variable	Resilience
Emotional Intelligence	r=0.643 p=0.001**

r for Pearson correlation ** high Significant correlation (P<0.001).

Table 3 shows that there is a high and significant positive correlation (r=0.643, p=0.001) between emotional intelligence and resilience. This means that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to also exhibit higher levels of resilience.

Association of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among nursing students

Objective: To determine the association between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience

H03: There will be no significant association between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience with selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance

Table 4: ANOVA and p value of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience with demographic Variables (n=100)

Personal characteristics	Emotional Intelligence	F(p)	Resilience	F(p)
Age				
• 17-20 years	121.94±25.5	0.025 (0.975)	72.61±17.3	0.075 (0.928)
• 21-23 years	122.76±30.1		73.78±18.2	
• 24 years and more	124.14±22.9		71.42±21.8	
Year of study				
• 1 st year	116.48±30.9	1.383 (0.253)	72.43±17.9	0.589 (0.624)
• 2 nd year	130.77±22.6		77.04±16.3	
• 3 rd year	123.04±22.5		72.52±17.9	
• 4 th year	124.27±26.1		69.72±19.9	
Nationality				
• UAE	119.42±33.8	0.782 (0.507)	78.26±16.3	1.417 (0.243)
• African	114.33±38.3		65.66±22.9	
• Asian	125.56±21.3		73.01±16.8	
• Canadian – Comoros	122.22±20.9		73.77±16.4	
Are you currently staying in Dorms				
• No	121.84±26.7	0.325 (0.570)	72.57±17.0	0.366 (0.546)
• Yes	126.58±29.1		75.91±23.7	
Type of family				
• Blended	114.92±37.3	1.651 (0.183)	69.76±21.1	2.408 (0.072)
• Extended	117.00±36.2		80.23±16.4	
• Nuclear	127.09±22.5		74.24±17.2	
• Single parent	113.30±20.9		63.00±15.5	
What is your birth order among your siblings				
• Middle born	120.48±23.1	1.034 (0.381)	70.10±16.1	0.492 (0.688)
• No, I'm the only child	142.40±24.4		70.20±26.9	
• Oldest	122.94±21.1		73.61±17.1	
• Youngest	120.30±35.4		75.46±19.3	

*Significant (P<0.05).

F=ANOVA test.

Table 4 shows that there is no significant relation between EI & resilience with demographic variables, however older participants (24 years and above) tend to have slightly higher



emotional intelligence scores compared to younger age groups. Similarly, nationality and staying in dorms also show some influence on emotional intelligence and resilience scores.

Discussion

Demographic Variables

In the present study age, majority of the group falls between 17-20 years old (55%), followed by 21-23 years (38%). There are fewer participants aged 24 years and above (7%). Year of Study, the distribution is fairly even across different study years. Nationality, Asian participants make up the largest group (68%), followed by UAE (15%), African (14%), and Canadian-Comoros (3%). Dorm Staying, most are not staying in dorms (88%). Type of Family, nuclear family is the most common (61%). Birth Order, Participants are fairly evenly distributed across middle-born, oldest, and youngest categories, with a smaller percentage being the only child.

Emotional Intelligence and Resilience across the years

The Mean \pm SD of Emotional Intelligence is 122.41 \pm 26.94 and resilience was 72.98 \pm 17.85. There is no significant association of Emotional Intelligence & resilience across the years. However, the 2nd years had a highest Emotional Intelligence score and resilience scores when compared to other batches. As the years increased Emotional Intelligence scores increased and Resilience scores decreased.

A similar study was conducted in Slovenia among 111 undergraduate nursing students from 1st & 3rd year to explore whether emotional intelligence changes over time, showed that there was a significant difference in emotional intelligence between students in their first (M = 154.40; 95% CI: 101.85–193.05) and third year (M = 162.01; 95% CI: 118.65–196.00) of study.¹

The present study showed a good level of self-awareness regarding emotions, with mean scores ranging from 3.44 to 4.0 on a scale of 1-5. They also exhibit self-control, empathy, and positive outlooks to varying degrees. The highest Mean \pm SD was for 'I am aware of my own emotions as I experience them' 4.0 \pm 1.06. Participants generally believe in their ability to adapt to changes and deal with challenges. They express confidence in achieving goals and have support systems in place. Mean scores range from 2.60 to 3.32 on a scale of 1-5. The highest Mean \pm SD was for 'Sometimes fate or God helps me' 3.32 \pm 0.94

Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among nursing students

There is a high and significant positive correlation ($r=0.643$, $p=0.001$) between emotional intelligence and resilience. This means that individuals with higher emotional intelligence tend to also exhibit higher levels of resilience. A strong positive correlation exists between emotional intelligence and resilience, indicating that individuals who are more aware of their emotions tend to be more resilient in dealing with challenges. Emotional intelligence (EI) and resilience are critical traits for nursing students, given the demanding nature of their



training and future professional responsibilities. Present study suggests that students who are better at understanding and managing their emotions are also more likely to exhibit resilience in the face of adversity. This finding aligns with previous research, which has demonstrated that high EI can enhance an individual's ability to cope with stress and bounce back from difficult situations.¹⁸

A similar study showed a weak correlation ($r = 0.170$) between emotional intelligence and age, and no significant correlation when measured using SSEIT ($r = 0.34$). It was found that nursing students' emotional intelligence changes over time with years of education and age, suggesting that emotional intelligence skills can be improved. Further research is needed to determine the gendered nature of emotional intelligence in nursing students.¹ A similar study also found a positive relationship between EI and resilience among nursing students, indicating that those with higher emotional intelligence tend to have better stress management skills and a more robust ability to recover from setbacks. This relationship underscores the potential benefits of integrating EI training into nursing curricula to foster resilience.¹⁵

Another similar study found a weak negative association between stress and resilience, emphasizing the need for resilience-building interventions to help students navigate stress effectively.¹² Similarly, a study reported that nursing students with higher levels of emotional intelligence showed greater resilience and were better able to manage the emotional demands of their training.¹⁸ Moreover, the integrative review conducted supports the notion that resilience is enhanced by emotional intelligence, as nursing students with high EI are more adept at emotional regulation and maintaining a positive outlook, which are essential components of resilience. This suggests that interventions aimed at improving EI could have a dual benefit, enhancing both emotional skills and resilience.¹⁴

Association of Emotional Intelligence and Resilience among nursing students

There is no significant relation between Emotional Intelligence & resilience with demographic variables, however older participants (24 years and above) tend to have slightly higher emotional intelligence scores compared to younger age groups. Similarly, nationality and staying in dorms also show some influence on emotional intelligence and resilience scores. The analysis shows some significant differences based on age, nationality, and dorm staying status regarding emotional intelligence and resilience. For example, older participants (24 years and above) tend to have slightly higher emotional intelligence scores compared to younger age groups. Similarly, nationality and staying in dorms also show some influence on emotional intelligence and resilience scores.

The similar study's results, based on data from different academic levels, indicated that higher EI levels were associated with better academic outcomes among nursing students. Despite its promising findings, the study recognized limitations such as focusing on a specific nursing program at one university and overlooking potential influencing factors like stress perception or cultural differences.⁹ Another similar study while examining



demographic variables such age, gender, and academic year, it was found that while stress levels varied significantly throughout student groups, resilience needs remained constant. The study's overall findings stressed the value of resilience in reducing the negative effects of stress and suggested specific resilience training for nursing programs.¹²

A study while examining the data from just graduate level nurses, significant relationships were found between total emotional intelligence with academic success, resilience with academic success, and psychological empowerment with academic success.¹⁵ Similarly, a study conducted among nursing students in Hong Kong, indicated that while both groups reported comparable levels of well-being, postgraduates were shown to have better resilience than undergraduates. Notably, among senior students in particular, more resilience was linked to improved well-being. These findings underline the critical role of resilience in nursing education and suggest that tailored resilience strategies, especially for senior students, can significantly contribute to their overall well-being and readiness for professional practice. Together, these studies provide valuable insights into the relationship between stress, resilience, and well-being among nursing students, emphasizing the importance of resilience-building interventions in nursing education to support students' academic and professional success.¹³

Conclusion

The present study findings have revealed that overall impression the nursing students, in general, demonstrates a good level of emotional intelligence and resilience, with variations based on demographic factors. These findings suggest that efforts to enhance emotional intelligence could potentially contribute to building resilience, which is beneficial for coping with life's challenges effectively.

Ethical Considerations

The study proceeded after permission form Institution Review Board, consent was obtained and confidentiality maintained

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest

Contribution of Authors

All authors have contributed to this research



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