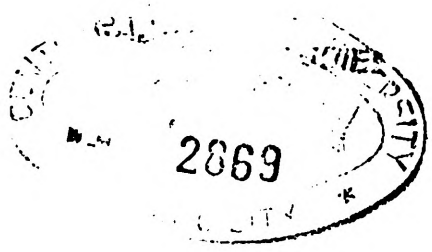
Emotional Intelligence and Academic Performance of First Year Nursing Students of St. Paul College of Iloilo for AY 2003-2004



Presented to

The Faculty
School of Graduate Studies
Central Philippine University
Iloilo City

In Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree Master of Arts in Nursing (M.A.N.)

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March 2004

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the level of emotional intelligence of the first year nursing students of St. Paul College of Iloilo for academic year 2003-2004, and whether it is related to academic performance. Furthermore, the study aimed to determine whether emotional intelligence and academic performance vary according to sex, number of siblings and birth order.

Specifically, the study aimed to: 1) describe the level of emotional intelligence of the first year nursing students of first year nursing students of St. Paul College of Iloilo and find out whether it varies according to sex, number of siblings and rank in the family; 2) describe the academic performance of the students and find out whether it varies according to sex, number of siblings and birth order; and 3) Determine whether there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and the intrapersonal, interpersonal, stress management and adaptability subskills and academic performance.

The study participants were 213 randomly chosen first year nursing students of St. Paul College of Iloilo. The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory Youth Version was used to determine the students' emotional intelligence level, while the general average of their academic grades for the first semester classes was used as indicator of their academic performance. The relationship between emotional intelligence and academic performance was determined using the Pearson Product Moment Coefficient. To

determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and the selected variables the ANOVA and Z test were used.

Major Findings

Most of the first year nursing students of St Paul Iloilo were female and had two to three siblings. Nearly half of them were the eldest in the family, slightly more of them were middle children, while nearly one-third were the youngest in the family.

Level of Emotional Intelligence of the Students

The students had an "average" emotional intelligence, their average emotional intelligence score was 98.72. Among the sub-skills of emotional intelligence the students obtained the highest mean score for stress management skills, and the lowest in interpersonal skills. For intrapersonal skills and adaptability, the students obtained mean scores, categorized as average.

Variation in Level of EQ according to Sex, Number of Siblings and Birth Order

The female students obtained a slightly higher emotional intelligence scores than the male students. The female students registered a slight advantage over the male students in intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management skills, and adaptability skills. The differences between means, however, were not significant at 5 percent level. This means that there is no significant sex variation in the emotional intelligence of the nursing students.

The students' emotional intelligence did not also vary according to number of siblings. The variations in their mean scores for emotional intelligence are not

significant, which means that number of children does not have a significant bearing on the students' emotional intelligence.

The students obtained the highest mean score in stress management skills, but got the lowest mean scores in interpersonal skills. The differences among their mean scores across the different categories of number of sibling is not significant, as indicated by the result of the ANOVA test. Likewise the students' mean scores in intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management and adaptability skills did not vary significantly according to number of siblings.

In relation to birth order, the middle children got the highest mean emotional intelligence score, while the eldest obtained the lowest average. The ANOVA test results, however show no significant variation in the students' emotional intelligence mean score according to birth order. The same findings was noted when variations in emotional intelligence sub-skills according to birth order was tested.

Although the middle children obtained higher mean scores than the youngest and eldest children, for intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills and adaptability skills, the score advantage of the middle children over the youngest and the eldest group in the three subskills did not reach a significant level.

In stress management, the youngest children obtained higher mean scores than the middle children and the eldest children, but again, the differences among the means were not statistically significant. This means that among the nursing students of St. Paul Iloilo, birth order does not have significant bearing on emotional intelligence.

Variation in Academic Performance according to Sex, Number of Siblings and Birth Order

The academic performance of the nursing students did not vary according to sex. The mean scores of the male student is slightly higher than that of the female students, but the difference is not statistically significant. The data also show no significant variation in academic performance according to number of sibling and birth order.

Correlation Between Academic Performance and Emotional Intelligence

No significant correlation was also found between emotional intelligence and academic performance of the nursing students. In relation to each of the four subskills, academic performance was found to be significantly correlated only with adaptability skills, but not with interpersonal, intrapersonal, and stress management subskills.

Correlation Between Emotional Intelligence and the Subskills

Significant high positive correlations were noted between the students' emotional intelligence scores and their scores in interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills, stress management skills, and adaptability skills. The pattern shows that the higher the subject's sub-skill scores the higher his/her emotional intelligence level.

A significant positive correlation was also found between intrapersonal skills and interpersonal skills and adaptability, which suggests that higher the interpersonal skills score and adaptability scores the higher the intrapersonal skills. Interpersonal skill was also positively correlated with stress management skills, and between adaptability skills and stress management. This means that a good score in one subskill indicate a good score in another. Intrapersonal skills and stress management subskills, however, do not seem to affect each other.

Conclusions

Females outnumbered the males 5:1 among the first year nursing students of St. Paul College of Iloilo, which imply that nursing is still female-dominated. Though there has been an increase in the number of male student-nurses at St. Paul College of Iloilo, the number of males has not yet even with that of the females.

The first year nursing students of St. Paul College of Iloilo have an average level of emotional intelligence. On the contrary, more than one-fourth of the first year students had "low" to "markedly low" emotional intelligence scores. The same could be said for the sub-skills of emotional intelligence.

Sex, number of siblings and birth order have no significant bearing on the students' emotional intelligence, intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, stress management and adaptability skills. Likewise, the students' academic performance do not vary according to sex, number of siblings and birth order.

The students' level of emotional intelligence does not also affect their over academic performance as well as their intrapersonal skills, level of interpersonal skills, and stress management skills, and adaptability skills, On the other hand, a strong co-relation exists between emotional intelligence and intrapersonal abilities, interpersonal abilities, stress management skills and adaptability skills.

Recommendations

1. Nursing schools should exert more efforts to attract more male nursing students. Attracting more men into the profession can help solve the recruitment and retention problems, as well as help create a more gender equal working environment.

Using males in posters and advertisement billboards may help attract men to the nursing profession.

2. The Office of Promotion and Retention should collaborate with the Office of the Guidance Counselor to identify students with "low" to "markedly low" levels of emotional intelligence so that interventions can be designed to help them improve their emotional intelligence and their sub-skills. Courses or modules on improving emotional literacy can be designed and introduced and taught in schools.

3. Guidance Counselor can also collaborate with teachers, class advisers of students with high emotional intelligence to further enhance their potentials and to tap them as peer counselors.

4. Although the instrument used is standardized, succeeding researchers interested in the results of this study should consider testing the instrument for its reliability based on the Filipino setting; taking into account Filipino values and norms.

5. A follow up study is recommended by the researcher on the same group of students when they have experienced a higher form of nursing education and training to evaluate whether some form of improvement or regression on their level of emotional intelligence has occurred.

6. Although no significant relationship has been identified between the level of emotional intelligence and academic performance in this study, it is strongly recommended that programs be initiated and supported by academic institutions to help identify levels of emotional intelligence of students. Furthermore, programs fostering the growth of emotional intelligence should be made available to students.