

## Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Caring Behaviors Among Nurses in a Selected Hospital, Ajman, UAE

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### Abstract

#### Background & Aim:

Caring is the basic factor that distinguishes between nurses and other health. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's own emotions, and recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others. The present study was carried out to assess the effect of Emotional Intelligence on Caring Behavior among Nurses in UAE

#### Materials and Methods:

A quantitative approach using a descriptive cross-sectional design was used for this study among 91 nurses at Thumbay University Hospital, Ajman, using total enumeration sampling. The tools used were a Schutte self-report Emotional Intelligence (EI) test and a Caring behavioral inventory CBI. Data were entered into an Excel sheet and an SPSS package was used to analyze the data.

#### Results:

The present study revealed that 44 (48.4%) of the nurses were of age 21-30 years and 62 (68.1%) had 0-10 years of experience. The mean emotional intelligence score of nurses was 128.6 with a SD of  $\pm 14.2$  and a mean percentage of 77.93. The mean caring behavior score of nurses was 4.5 with an SD of  $\pm 0.6$  and a mean percentage of 75%. a weak positive 0.299 correlation between emotional intelligence & and caring behavior which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance.

#### Conclusion

The study has highlighted the importance and need of improving emotional Intelligence to enhance the quality in caring. CNEs can be conducted for nurses to understand on how to improve Emotional Intelligence.

**Key Words:** Emotional Intelligence, Caring Behavior, Nurses

#### Introduction

Caring is an important aspect of nursing care implementation. It refers to the ability to show attention and feel empathy for others, especially for patients.<sup>1</sup> Caring is the basic factor that distinguishes between nurses and other health professionals and therefore has a significant impact on the patient's perception of their hospital experience.<sup>2</sup> Nurses' caring behavior, can stimulate patient satisfaction, increase psychological well-being, and better health outcomes. Caring, compassion, and clinical performance are useful nursing attributes of emotional intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Emotional intelligence can be defined as a way for someone to reflect and behave to confront himself and others. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's own emotions, and recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others.<sup>2</sup> Emotional intelligence is the key guide to one's thinking and behavior which merged from the capability to observe others and personal emotions and feelings, honoring people's emotions and mood differentiation, and understanding.<sup>3</sup> Faith or religion contributes to the performing

behavior, attitudes, and emotions of nurses in doing their job. In addition, emotional intelligence is mentioned as a critical success factor in the work by 80%.<sup>1</sup> The ability of emotional intelligence proposed four abilities about emotional expression and perceptions, the way of thinking influenced by emotions, emotional management, and understanding. On the other hand, the trait of emotional intelligence had four comprehensive well-being, self-control, emotionality, and sociability factors.

A nurse's caring behaviour can affect patient satisfaction which can contribute to a nurse's attitude, and the specific baseline is emotional intelligence. Caring behavior related to good emotional intelligence will support the creation of decent nursing services based on patient expectations.<sup>4</sup>

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a multidimensional construct that involves the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and express emotions effectively. It has gained considerable attention in the healthcare field due to its potential impact on healthcare professionals' performance and patient outcomes. Among healthcare providers, nurses play a crucial role in delivering compassionate and empathetic care, making it essential to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and caring behavior in nursing practice. Emotional intelligence is the potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand, and explain emotions. Service quality also can be defined as the post-consumption assessment of the services by consumers that are determined by many variables.

Emotional intelligence in nursing is of global interest. International studies identify that emotional intelligence influences nurses' work and relationships with patients. It is associated with compassion and care. Nursing students scored higher on measures of emotional intelligence compared to students in other study programs. The level of emotional intelligence increases with age and tends to be higher in women<sup>5</sup>.

A study aimed to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and caring behavior among 52 Muslim nurses in a religious-based hospital in Surabaya, Indonesia. This was a cross-sectional study. The population was all nurses in a surgical ward of a religious-based hospital in Surabaya. Data were analyzed using the Spearman Rho test. The study showed that 57.7% of Muslim nurses performed good care and 51.9% showed the ability to control emotions. The correlation between emotional intelligence and caring behavior in nurses showed a p-value of 0.000 and a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.684$ . Emotional intelligence showed a positive correlation with the caring behavior of Muslim nurses. It means that emotional intelligence could increase nurse caring behaviors.<sup>1</sup>

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has witnessed significant growth in its healthcare sector, with hospitals striving to provide high-quality patient care. Caring behavior is of paramount importance in nursing, as it influences patient satisfaction, overall healthcare experience, and even clinical outcomes. Understanding the role of emotional intelligence in fostering caring behavior among nurses in the UAE is crucial for enhancing the quality of nursing care in this context.

In healthcare settings, nurses play a critical role in providing quality care and ensuring positive patient outcomes. Caring behavior is not only beneficial for patients but also contributes to nurses' job satisfaction and overall organizational success<sup>7</sup>. Emotional intelligence has been recognized as an important factor influencing interpersonal relationships and professional behaviors in various fields, including healthcare.

While several studies have explored the impact of emotional intelligence on various outcomes in healthcare settings, such as job performance, teamwork, and patient satisfaction, limited research has specifically focused on its relationship with caring behavior among nurses in the UAE. Considering the multicultural and diverse patient population in the UAE, it is essential to investigate the role of emotional intelligence in promoting caring behavior among nurses.

### **Statement of the problem**

A study to assess the effect of emotional intelligence on caring behavior among nurses in a selected hospital, UAE.

### **Aims, Objectives & Hypothesis**

#### **Aim of the study**

The aim of the study to assess the effect of emotional intelligence on caring behavior among nurses in a selected hospital, UAE.

### **Objectives of the study**

- 1 To assess the Emotional Intelligence among nurses in a selected Hospital UAE
- 2 To assess the Caring Behaviour among nurses in a selected Hospital UAE
- 3 To correlate Emotional Intelligence and Caring Behaviour among nurses in a selected Hospital UAE
- 4 To associate Emotional Intelligence and Caring Behaviour with selected baseline variables of nurses

### **Hypothesis of the study**

H01: There will be no significant correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Caring Behavior among nurses at a 0.05 level of significance.

H02: There will be no significant association between Emotional Intelligence and Caring Behavior with selected baseline variables of nurses at 0.05 level of significance

### **Materials & Methods**

#### **Research Approach and Design**

The research approach is a Quantitative approach with a descriptive cross-sectional design.

#### **Research Setting**

The study was conducted at Thumbay University Hospital, Ajman. UAE

#### **Population**

The population for the study was nurses working at Thumbay University Hospital. Ajman, UAE

#### **Sample**

Nurses working at Thumbay University Hospital. Ajman, UAE, and who satisfied the inclusion criteria.

#### **Inclusion criteria**

- Nurses who are available at the time of data collection
- Nurses who are directly involved in patient care

#### **Exclusion criteria**

- Nurses on long leave
- Nursing personnel such as CNO, ACNO, Nurse educators & Nurse supervisors

#### **Sample size estimation**

The sample size was 91 nurses who satisfied the inclusion criteria.

#### **Sampling technique**

A total enumeration sampling technique was used for the study.

#### **Research Tools and Techniques**

**Section A:** Proforma to elicit baseline variables such as age, gender, qualification, country, designation, years of experience at TUH, and Total years of experience.

**Section B:** Schutte self-report Emotional Intelligence (EI) test- is a Likert scale consisting of 33 items ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, with a total score of 165, the higher the score the greater the EI

**Section C:** Caring behavioral inventory CBI-24 – consists of 24 items ranging from never to always with a total score of 144, the higher the score greater the caring behavior

#### **Validity and Reliability of the tool**

Reliability was not done as both were standardized tools. CBI 24 - 0.91; Schutte's EI – 0.90

### Data collection process

Ethical clearance was obtained from IRB of GMU and permission was obtained from Thumbay University Hospital, Ajman to conduct the study. Subjects were selected by total enumeration sampling based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. A written informed consent was taken from the nurses after explaining the details of the study. Demographic data and the tool to assess Emotional Intelligence and caring behavior were administered to the staff directly. The subjects were given 20-25 minutes to complete both tools.

### Ethical consideration

The study proceeded after obtaining approval from the IRB, GMU and TUH, Ajman, UAE

### Results

The study revealed that 44 (48.4%) of the nurses were of the age 21-30 years, 78 (85.7%) were females, 72 (79.1%) had a BSN degree, 74 (81.3%) were from India, 87 (95.6%) were staff nurses, 74 (81.3%) had 0-10 years of experience at TUH and 62 (68.1%) had 0-10 years of experience. The mean emotional intelligence score of nurses was 128.6 with an SD of  $\pm 14.2$  and a mean % of 77.93. The mean caring behavior score of nurses was 4.5 with an SD of  $\pm 0.6$  and a mean % of 75%. There was a weak positive 0.299 correlation between emotional intelligence & caring behavior which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. As EI increases caring behavior improves. There was a significant association between caring behavior and from which country nurses belong. ( $<0.001$ ). All other variables such as age, qualification, gender, total years of experience, and experience at TUH were not significant. Emotional intelligence scores were not significant for any of the baseline variables.

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of Baseline variables of nurses.**

n=91

Parameters	Frequency (%)
<b>Age</b>	
21-30 years	44 (48.4%)
31-40 Years	33 (36.3%)
41-50 years	10 (11.0%)
51-60 years	4 (4.4%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	78 (85.7%)
Male	13 (14.3%)
<b>Qualification</b>	
Diploma	18 (19.8%)
BSN	72 (79.1%)
MSN	1 (1.1%)
<b>Country</b>	
UAE	12 (13.2%)
INDIA	74 (81.3%)
Egypt	2 (2.2%)
Palestine	1 (1.1%)
Philippines	2 (2.2%)
<b>Designation</b>	
Staff Nurse	87 (95.6%)
Ward In charge	4 (4.4%)

Years of experience at TUH	
0-10 years	74 (81.3%)
11-20 years	16 (17.6%)
20-30 years	1 (1.1%)
Total years of experience	
0-10 years	62 (68.1%)
11-20 years	24 (26.4%)
20-30 years	5 (5.5%)

Table 1 shows that 44 (48.4%) were of the age 21-30 years, 78 (85.7%) were females, 72 (79.1%) had a BSN degree, 74 (81.3%) were from India, 87 (95.6%) were staff nurses, 74 (81.3%) had 0-10 years of experience at TUH and 62 (68.1%) had 0-10 years of experience.

**Table 2: Mean, standard deviation & mean percentage of Emotional Intelligence among nurses n=91**

Parameters	Maximum score	Mean $\pm$ SD	Mean %
Emotional Intelligence scores	165	128.6 $\pm$ 14.2	77.93

Table 2 shows that the mean emotional intelligence score of nurses was 128.6 with a SD of  $\pm$  14.2 and a mean % of 77.93

**Table 3: Mean, standard deviation & mean percentage of Caring behavior among nurses**

**n=91**

Parameters	Maximum score	Mean $\pm$ SD
Caring Behaviour Inventory scores	6	4.5 $\pm$ 0.6 Mean %=75%
Assurance	6	4.5 $\pm$ 0.6
Knowledge and Skill	6	4.6 $\pm$ 0.6
Respectful	6	4.5 $\pm$ 0.6
Connectedness	6	4.3 $\pm$ 0.7

Table 3 shows that the mean caring behavior score of nurses was 4.5 with an SD of  $\pm$  0.6 and a mean % of 75%.

**Table 4: Pearson's correlation and p-value to show a correlation between emotional intelligence and caring behavior among nurses**

**n=91**

Outcome	Mean $\pm$ SD	Pearson Correlation	P-Value
Caring Behavior	4.5 $\pm$ 0.6	0.299	0.004
Emotional Intelligence	128.6 $\pm$ 14.2		

Table 4 shows a weak positive 0.299 correlation between emotional intelligence & and caring behavior which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. As EI increases caring behavior improves

**Table 5: Test of significance and p-value to show the association caring behavior and selected baseline variables of nurses**

n=91				
Parameters	Age			P-value
	21-30 years	31-40 Years	>40 years	
N	44	33	14	
CBI	4.4 ± 0.6	4.6 ± 0.4	4.4 ± 0.5	0.120
Assurance	4.4 ± 0.8	4.7 ± 0.5	4.5 ± 0.5	0.210
Knowledge and Skill	4.6 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 0.5	4.5 ± 0.5	0.460
Respectful	4.4 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 0.5	4.4 ± 0.7	0.051
Connectedness	4.3 ± 0.7	4.5 ± 0.7	3.9 ± 0.8	0.066

  

Parameters	Qualification		P-value
	Diploma	BSN/MSN	
N	18	73	
CBI	4.3 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.6	0.200
Assurance	4.5 ± 0.5	4.5 ± 0.7	0.870
Knowledge and Skill	4.4 ± 0.7	4.7 ± 0.6	0.044
Respectful	4.2 ± 0.7	4.5 ± 0.6	0.061
Connectedness	4.1 ± 0.9	4.3 ± 0.6	0.130

  

Parameters	Country			P-value
	UAE	India	Others	
N	12	74	5	
CBI	4.6 ± 0.4	4.5 ± 0.5	3.6 ± 1.1	0.001*
Assurance	4.7 ± 0.4	4.6 ± 0.5	3.5 ± 1.5	<0.001*
Knowledge and Skill	4.7 ± 0.4	4.7 ± 0.5	3.9 ± 1.2	0.009*
Respectful	4.7 ± 0.4	4.5 ± 0.6	3.5 ± 1.1	<0.001*
Connectedness	4.5 ± 0.6	4.3 ± 0.7	3.7 ± 0.9	0.097

  

Parameters	Years of experience at TUH		P-value
	≤10 years	>10years	
N	74	17	
CBI	4.5 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.5	0.99
Assurance	4.5 ± 0.7	4.6 ± 0.5	0.66
Knowledge and Skill	4.7 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.5	0.41
Respectful	4.5 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.5	0.58
Connectedness	4.3 ± 0.7	4.2 ± 0.7	0.62

  

Parameters	Total years of experience		P-value
	≤10 years	>10years	
N	62	29	

<b>CBI</b>	4.5 ± 0.6	4.6 ± 0.4	0.400
<b>Assurance</b>	4.5 ± 0.7	4.6 ± 0.4	0.220
<b>Knowledge and Skill</b>	4.6 ± 0.6	4.7 ± 0.4	0.540
<b>Respectful</b>	4.4 ± 0.6	4.5 ± 0.6	0.450
<b>Connectedness</b>	4.3 ± 0.7	4.3 ± 0.7	0.880

\*Significant

Table 5 shows a significant association between caring behavior and from which country nurses belong. (<0.001)

## Discussion:

### Findings related to emotional Intelligence among nurses.

The present study shows the mean emotional intelligence score of nurses was 128.6 with an SD of  $\pm 14.2$  and a mean % of 77.93. A study in Indonesia also showed emotional intelligence of 51.9%.<sup>1</sup> In a study in Iran results revealed the mean EI score was estimated to be 78.31 with the highest and lowest scores related to self-awareness (20.83) and self-management (18.19) dimensions respectively.

### Findings related to caring behavior among nurses.

The present study shows the mean caring behavior score of nurses was 4.5 with an SD of  $\pm 0.6$  and a mean % of 75%. In a study among 69 nurses in Indonesia, 44.9% of nurses had a deficient caring attitude.<sup>3</sup> **A descriptive study among 156 nurses** revealed that high education level, working in shifts, as well as appraisal of the emotion subscale of the emotional intelligence scale and autonomy, expressing benevolence, and following praxis subscales of the moral sensitivity questionnaire were high predictors for caring behaviors.<sup>14</sup>

### Findings related to the Correlation between emotional intelligence and caring behavior among nurses.

The present study shows a weak positive 0.299 correlation between emotional intelligence & and caring behavior which is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. As EI increases caring behavior improves.

In a study among 69 nurses in Indonesia, a significant emotional intelligence association with caring behavior was found ( $p=0.001$ ).<sup>3</sup> A study among 52 nurses showed a correlation coefficient of  $r= 0.684$  with a p-value of 0.000

<sup>1</sup> Another study conducted among nurses revealed a positive statistically significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.26$ ,  $p < 0.007$ ) between the level of EL in nurses and their ability to demonstrate caring behaviors.<sup>8</sup>

### Findings related to emotional intelligence and caring behavior with selected baseline variables among nurses.

The present study shows a significant association between caring behavior and from which country nurses belong. (<0.001). All other variables such as age, qualification, gender, total years of experience, and experience at TUH were not significant. Emotional intelligence scores were not significant for any of the baseline variables.

In a study conducted in Iran, the mean (SD) score of EI was 91.17 (12.33) in nurses, and the mean (SD) score of nursing care quality was 184.01 (37.41) and 202.22 (22.30) from the viewpoint of patients and nurses, respectively. There was no significant difference between the two viewpoints ( $p = 0.652$ ). However, there was a significant correlation between the nurses' EI and the quality of nursing care ( $r = 1.00$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The educational level was the strongest predictor of an increase in nursing care quality from the patient's viewpoint, according to the multivariate analysis ( $\beta = -0.27$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). EI positively affects the quality of nursing care and its dimensions.<sup>11</sup>

In a study conducted in Iran, the mean EI score was estimated to be 78.31 with the highest and lowest scores related to self-awareness (20.83) and self-management (18.19) dimensions respectively. The mean total score of communication skills was estimated to be 70.91.

There was a significant relationship between the total EI score and total communication skills score ( $r = 0.775$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ) and a strong significant relationship between the four dimensions of EI and the total score of communication skills.<sup>12</sup>

## Conclusion:

The present study findings have revealed that the emotional intelligence score and caring behavior scores of nurses were good. A weak positive correlation was seen which was statistically significant. The study has highlighted the importance and need of improving emotional Intelligence to enhance the quality of caring. CNEs can be conducted for nurses to understand on how to improve Emotional Intelligence. Nurses need to understand which areas of Caring Behaviour need to be improved, which will ultimately improve quality patient care.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in writing this article.

## Author's contribution

All authors have contributed to this research article

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