

Short Communication

Enhancing Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Skills in Nursing Education: Preparing Omani Nurses for Excellence in Healthcare

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A B S T R A C T

The nursing profession is a cornerstone of delivering high-quality healthcare services, particularly in the context of the rapid changes occurring in the global healthcare sector and specifically in Oman. While significant emphasis is placed on developing clinical skills in nursing education at the academic level, the integration of emotional intelligence and leadership skills remains limited across many contexts, including Oman. This article explores the importance of fostering these skills, their role in enhancing the quality of healthcare services, and developing nurses professionally by refining their abilities. It also provides practical strategies for integrating these competencies into nursing curricula in Oman, drawing from global best practices and addressing local challenges. This study aims to empower the nursing workforce across all healthcare domains and contribute to achieving Oman Vision 2040's goals in advancing the healthcare sector.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Skills, Nursing Education

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is being recognized to be one of the important pillars of the skills and abilities needed today, whether in organizations or in life. Understanding the levels of EI at any organization helps to detect problems and create a harmonious working environment. In the education sector, this understanding helps generate a more effective learning and teaching environment which in turn improves productivity of the students and enhance their skills. This paper looks at the levels of emotional intelligence in private colleges and universities in Oman. Using the WEIS questionnaires, the findings revealed a moderate to high levels of EI among the students regardless of their age and gender. The sample covered 150 students from

five colleges and two universities in the Sultanate of Oman, total of 7 higher education institutions.¹

Methodology

This study employs a narrative review methodology to synthesize insights from existing literature and global best practices on emotional intelligence and leadership in nursing education. The methodology includes:

Literature Review

A comprehensive review of academic journals, systematic reviews, and case studies was conducted to identify the significance of emotional intelligence and leadership in nursing education.

Contextual Analysis

Challenges specific to nursing education in Oman were identified, focusing on curriculum design, cultural norms, and resource limitations.

Synthesis of Best Practices

Effective strategies implemented globally in nursing education were analyzed to propose actionable recommendations tailored to the Omani context.

Qualitative Insights

The study qualitatively analyzes the implications of these recommendations for Oman's healthcare system, aligning them with the broader goals of Oman Vision 2040.

This methodology does not involve primary data collection but instead builds a conceptual framework to address gaps in current nursing education practices and enhance workforce readiness.

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Nursing

A first known study conducted in Albaha province to examine the role of trait emotional intelligence in academic performance of undergraduate students. It makes several important contributions to the growing body of knowledge surrounding emotional intelligence. This study implies that despite the fact that emotional intelligence was not correlated with academic performance, it is recommended that emotional intelligence skills should be introduced first to students who are studying in some developing countries where paying adequate attention to special soft skills during academic years is rare. As such, awareness of emotional intelligence for students should be prior to any attempt to measure such skill. Students produce their own EI profiles and the useful "tips for development" workbook whereby students can take some control in their own development of skills for which they perceive themselves to be weak. Moreover, this study recommends that educational planners and policy makers should include EI developing courses that should be taught by experts of the field at university level, starting in the first semester of study.²

Leadership Skills in Nursing

Leadership is not limited to administrative roles; it also includes everyday situations that demand quick decision-making, conflict resolution, and teamwork. Leadership skills empower nurses to enhance their competence, advocate for patients' rights, and collaborate effectively within multidisciplinary teams. In Oman, where the healthcare sector is advancing toward comprehensive development under Oman Vision 2040, leadership has become an essential skill to prepare nurses for these

changes. Nevertheless, the absence of leadership training in nursing education remains a significant challenge that must be addressed innovatively.³

Challenges in Nursing Education in Oman

- **Curriculum Design:** Current curricula heavily emphasize clinical aspects, neglecting the development of personal skills, which are fundamental to nursing education.
- **Cultural Norms:** Cultural traditions may hinder discussions on emotional topics or training in leadership.
- **Resource Constraints:** A shortage of qualified trainers and resources to support such programs. These challenges necessitate serious efforts to restructure nursing education.⁴

Practical Strategies for Integration

Incorporate the design of SEL (Social Emotional Learning) programs as it has been proven that it helps to develop students' competencies as well as the overall social-emotional attributes of classrooms. Such a program will enable students to develop their different abilities and competencies and improve their networking and social skills in class and that in turn will enable them to build up their personalities and improve their performance further.⁵

Implications for Oman's Healthcare System

Integrating emotional intelligence and leadership skills into nursing education has the potential to create a transformative impact on the healthcare sector in Oman. Nurses trained in these skills can deliver holistic patient care, improve team dynamics, and enhance the overall efficiency of the healthcare system. This approach aligns with Oman Vision 2040, which emphasizes building an innovative workforce capable of addressing future challenges.⁶

Recommendations Based on Emotional Intelligence, Depression and Psychological Adjustment among University Students in the Sultanate of Oman, this study gives the following recommendations: The strong link between low EI and depressive symptoms calls for intensifying and activating individual and group counseling services which are based on EI practices. Similar to other studies, this study states that the psychological factors related to EI abilities, areas or factors, contribute to increasing or decreasing levels of depression, psychological adjustment and conformity with life. The findings show that the average EI among women is higher than men. This is an indication that more training is needed for males. It also calls for a closer look at the way women acquire their EI skills, and an improved way for raising the level of EI in Low and high EI were good indicators of both psychological adjustment and depressive symptoms. Therefore, it can be said that these three concepts form a circle, and thus training on EI is a necessity that will lead to positive results, and can also be used to discover some distinguishing

abilities.^{7,8} Psychological traits and life skills of people. The results of this study encourage conducting more studies on EI, and more pilot studies that provide individual and group counseling services for male and female students who suffer from depressive symptoms and psychological maladjustment to university life. The dimensions, areas and factors of EI, including social skills, should be part of the curricula and syllabuses for both teachers and students. This is necessary to facilitate the learning process as EI does not only facilitate learning; but it also improves vocational choice and success and contributes to successful adjustment to different aspects of life, including adapting to university life.^{9,10}

Conclusion

Various findings paved greater understanding of EI current status and measures to improve further among nursing students and provides a platform for interventions for improving EI along with Leadership skills. Preparing them as future Nurses. EI have an impact on nursing education and it's Dimensions. Therefore it is advised that Policy makers, Faculty consider educational programs to strengthen the nursing students EI to enhance quality nursing care and to foster competent nursing practice. Promoting these competencies will enable nurses to meet the evolving needs of the healthcare sector while improving the quality of patient care and satisfaction. Achieving this goal requires close collaboration between universities, healthcare institutions, and policymakers to address the challenges to nurses working to their full potential. Oman continues to develop its healthcare sector, and focusing on these skills will remain a fundamental pillar in building a sustainable and advanced healthcare system.

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