

## Original Article

# The Relationship of General Health, Hardiness and Spiritual Intelligence Relationship in Iranian Nurses

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**Objective:** Nursing is one of the stressful jobs that affect nurse's well-being. The aim of this study was to assess the relationship between spiritual intelligence, hardiness and well-being among Iranian nurses.

**Methods:** Samples of this cross-sectional study selected by Randomized stratified sampling, 125 nurses who have been working in different wards of Bushehr university hospitals. Data were collected using spiritual intelligence, hardiness, well-being and demographic characteristics questionnaires. Correlation, t-test, ANOVA, Tukey and regression analysis were applied.

**Results:** The results revealed a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and hardiness, spiritual intelligence and well-being, Hardiness and well-being. It also showed that among the demographic characteristics (age, gender, working ward, marital status, job experiences, and education) working ward significantly correlated with spiritual intelligence.

**Conclusion:** Improvement of spiritual intelligence and reinforcement of hardiness could help increase the well-being of nurses.

**Key words:** well-being, Spirituality, Hardiness, Nurses

*Iran J Psychiatry 2013; 8:4: 165-167*

Nurses in their workplace are faced with several stressors which may endanger their health and reduce the motivation for fulfilling duties. Although they devote their life to patients' health, unfortunately less attention has been paid to their mental and physical health (1). Stressors such as excess work, personal friction, dealing with death, shift work, lack of mental support, friction with physicians and ambiguity in options may greatly influence the mental and physical health of nurses (2).

Since the beginning of 1980's many psychological researchers believe that stressful events may endanger peoples' health. Sortet has found a significant positive relationship between stressor conditions of workplace and peoples' health (3).

Researches reveal that people may use different strategies to cope with difficult conditions and stressors of life. Kubasa and Salvatormedi coined the term Hardiness and stated that persons having high level of hardiness may not become ill under high stress conditions (4,5). Many researchers studied the relationship between nurses' health and hardiness (1, 6, 7).

World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as not just lack of having disease rather as lack of compatibility with physical, emotional, social and spiritual factors (8). Piedemont has defined spirituality as the main core (self) which connects man to the unit power (9). In 1999, Emmons mixed such factors as spirituality and intelligence as a new

construction and coined the term spiritual intelligence. He believes that spiritual intelligence is the capacity of man to ask final questions in relation to meaning of life and to integrate the relationship between us and the world in which we live in (10).

Several psychologists have offered different definitions of spiritual intelligence. In a semi-empirical study, Walker indicated that increasing spiritual awareness of nurses by using the heart touch technique and hardiness may assist decreasing their stress (11). Researches indicated that persons who have spiritual tendency while faced with harm may show better responses and better administer the stress related conditions (12,13, 14, 15,16).

Considering the occupational sensitivity of nurses and the importance of their health, the goal of the present research was to study the relationship between spiritual intelligence, hardiness and public health of nurses at governmental hospitals of Bushehr (Iran).

## Material and Methods

This was a cross-sectional study. Subjects were nurses who have been working in different wards of university hospitals of Bushehr.

Randomized stratified sampling was used, and 125 nurses were selected by Morgan table (1979). After obtaining the informed consent, we asked the subjects to complete a questionnaire. Data were

analyzed using SPSS 16 software. Correlation, t-test, ANOVA, Tukey and regression analysis were applied.

In order to collect data, we used spiritual intelligence, hardiness, general health and demographic properties questionnaires. Spiritual intelligence questionnaire includes 97 questions which assesses 4 components of self-awareness, spiritual experience, patience and forgiveness. Grading was performed by Likert method and 1 to 4 patterns (17). Test retest Reliability was estimated as 0.93. Hardiness questionnaire have 50 items which assesses commitment, control, and challenges in nurses (18).

General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) was introduced by Goldberg and Hiller (20). This questionnaire has 4 choice questions which are as follows: A) Physical symptoms B) Anxiety symptoms C) Disorder in social function D) Depression symptoms; and 4 subsidiary scales; each of which having 7 questions. Reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was reported to be 0.91(20).

## Result

The mean age of subjects was  $32.58 \pm 7.35$ . 97 were female (77.6%), 72 married (69.8%) and 37 were single (29.6%); 124 subjects had Bachelor's Degree (99.2%). Correlation coefficient showed a direct linear relationship between spiritual intelligence and hardiness. High self-awareness, spiritual experiences, and patience ( $P < 0.005$ ). t test showed (Three of components of spiritual intelligence) have a significant direct relationship with hardiness (table 1).

Therefore, the first research hypothesis concerning a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and hardiness was confirmed. In addition, findings of this table revealed a significant positive relationship between spiritual intelligence and general grade of general health and components of spiritual intelligence and general health. Furthermore, findings of table 2 demonstrate a significant positive relationship between

hardiness and general health of nurses. One-way analysis of variance reveals a significant relationship between workplace and patience ( $P < 0.005$ ); and the result showed a difference only in mean of ER ward compared to other wards, and no relation was found with other variables.

## Discussion

Results revealed a linear significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and hardiness. Further, findings of this study indicated that spiritual intelligence, high awareness, spiritual experiences and patience had a significant relationship with hardiness. This result was compatible with the result of research done by Walker (11). Furthermore, results of table 1 reveals a significant relationship between grades of spiritual intelligence with grades of hardiness. Systems of spiritual and religious beliefs enables people to give meaning to mental stress, problems and inevitable issues in life cycle (21); the reason for this is that people may have psychological support in relation to super natural phenomena (22).

In addition, the results of table 2 indicates that people with hardiness may have higher public health and control their life events better and may also have higher resistance to tensions; this result was similar to that of other researches(16,17).

Moreover, the results of this study revealed no significant relationship between hardiness and its components with demographic variables. This result was compatible with that of other researches (5, 24). Among demographic properties, only workplace had a significant relationship with the third component of spiritual intelligence (patience). Patience means tolerance and endurance against problems; and persons not having this property may easily be stressed when they are faced with problems, but those having patience while facing with stress do not easily lose their control (25).

**Table1: correlation coefficient between spiritual intelligence, Hardiness and general health (n=125)**

Spiritual intelligence and its factors	Hardiness		General health	
	r	P	r	P
Self conscious of	** .193	.003	** .298	.001
Experiment of spiritual	** .203	.023	** .193	.003
Patient	** .342	.001	** .381	.001
Forgiveness	.048	.592	** .201	.004
Total	** .246	.006	** .251	.005

\*\*Level of significance: ( $p < .05$ )

**Table: 2 correlation coefficient between Hardiness, and general health (n=125)**

Factors of Hardiness	R	P
Challenge	** .278	.001
Commitment	** .337	.000
Control	** .315	.002
Total	** .356	.000

\*\*Level of significance ( $p < .05$ ) give Alpha = 0.05

## Conclusion

Results of this research indicated that spiritual intelligence has a significant relationship with hardiness and general health of nurses. Whereas physical and mental health of nurses has an effect on patients' care and healthy workplace. It is obvious that if nurses have high level of spiritual intelligence and hardiness, their workplace and also their patients may meet their requirements and may supply their physical and mental health, so they may be able to resist difficulties of their job. One of the principal limitations of this research was that no similar research was done in Iran. Therefore, the researcher was not able to compare the results of this research with similar domestic researches. It is recommended to conduct more broad researches on spiritual intelligence according to Iranian Islamic culture.

## Acknowledgment

Researchers hereby acknowledge the Manager of Nursing Office affiliated to Bushehr University of Medical Sciences and all nurses who sincerely assisted us for conducting the present research.

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