



Emotional Intelligence Components among Librarians Working at Medical Sciences Universities in Tehran

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Abstract

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Introduction: Emotional intelligence is non-cognitive intelligence that includes recognizing emotions and using them correctly. The use of emotional intelligence in libraries can be vital to librarians' success in dealing with users. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the components of emotional intelligence in librarians working in libraries of selected medical sciences universities in Tehran.

Methods: The study method is a survey. The study population included all 110 librarians working in 27 libraries of the faculties of Tehran, Iran, and Shahid Beheshti Universities of Medical Sciences. The standard questionnaire of Bradberry and Greaves emotional intelligence was used to collect the data. The mean and standard deviation were used to present the emotional intelligence score, student's t-test was used to examine the difference in emotional intelligence between male and female. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and age.

Results: The results revealed that the average score of self-awareness is 83.5, self-management is 69.7, social awareness is 72.1, relationship management is 67.5, and the overall emotional intelligence is 73.3. There was no significant difference between male and female librarians in terms of emotional intelligence, but there was a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and age.

Conclusion: The results showed that emotional intelligence and its components in librarians working in medical universities are at the favorable level, but significantly are far from the ideal score. Consequently, the use of practical methods and workshops in universities is recommended to boost librarians' emotional intelligence.

Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence was first introduced in the 1940s, and then in 1990, Mayer and Salovey elaborate the term (1). Finally, Daniel Goleman elaborated emotional intelligence extensively on the ability to control one's own and others' feelings and emotions, accept other people's views, and control social relationships and actions (2). Goleman believes that wherever people interact with others, they need to be equipped with specific unique characteristics, which called emotional intelligence for optimal productivity and better performance in addition to technical and professional ability. Because it is these abilities that, in the face of others

or situations, make a person alert, calm, respectful, obedient, supportive, listener, responsive, explainer, and acceptor. It has long been believed that the only condition for success in life, work, and study having technical and analytical skills. However, human resource management and social skills theorists have concluded that another essential element called emotional intelligence is necessary for people's success (3). In general, people with higher emotional intelligence have better social skills and more stable relationships and are better able to cope with problems (4).

Academic libraries are practical and useful institutions in



universities that support scientific and research activities. Academic libraries, which appear in the role of information centers, play an essential role in the spread of modern science and knowledge. Supporting educational and research processes by providing, organizing, and disseminating essential and relevant information to academic disciplines is a crucial mission of academic libraries and librarians. One of the new approaches in academic libraries is to take advantage of the theory of leadership and user guidance by relying on psychological methods. This practical approach can be achieved with the help of librarians and library managers, and supporting them in specialized activities and increasing library services (5). In this regard, emotional intelligence can be a good ground for creating a favorable environment for active learning and communication so that clients can freely express their information needs and expectations for the support by librarians (6). A successful librarian emphasizes the promotion of emotional intelligence and the development of emotional capabilities. If librarians of a library have enough emotional intelligence and communication skills in addition to knowledge and experience, they can create a healthy atmosphere with healthy communication with clients (7).

Mills and Lodge believe that emotional intelligence can be considered a useful strategy in the interaction between the librarian and the client best to identify the needs of clients and their requested services. Accordingly, emotional intelligence is theoretically a guarantee of emotional skills that play a role in communicating with others and the quality of those relationships. Besides, Emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in creating attitudes, feelings, beliefs, technologies, messages, resource selection, and the formation of a resource-based mental image in librarians. They stated that merely identifying information sources or pointing out how to find them through catalog and databases, and web in the process of providing services, and informing librarians to their users is not enough, instead, to provide an information service, something beyond the increasing scope of resources and equipment, and professional issues are needed (8). Thus, the weakness of emotional intelligence skills disrupts the information process, and therefore in two-way communication, the librarian cannot easily express his/her emotional intelligence skills, thus negatively affecting the understanding of clients' information needs.

Numerous studies in the field of emotional intelligence of librarians in various aspects and different library communities and suggested that the existence of emotional intelligence among librarians working in libraries can be one of the crucial factors of their success to communicate effectively with clients and meet their information needs (5,7,9-26). Therefore, it can be said that a librarian who has the necessary emotional intelligence abilities will most likely provide services in a way that will increase clients' satisfaction. However, a small number of these studies have been conducted in the libraries of medical universities (12,14). Therefore, the present study aims to investigate emotional intelligence and its components in librarians working in the faculty libraries of Tehran, Iran, and Shahid Beheshti Universities of Medical Sciences in Iran

Methods

The present research method is a descriptive-analytical survey. The study population was all 110 librarians working

in the faculty libraries of Tehran, Iran, and Shahid Beheshti Universities of Medical Sciences who have been examined in the complete enumeration. The tool used to collect data is the Bradberry and Greaves Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (26). This questionnaire has 28 items set in 4 competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and overall emotional intelligence score. Scoring of this questionnaire is done using a 6-item Likert scale with a scoring range of 1 to 6 (from never to always). The sum of the scores that the subject obtains in each item determines the score of different competencies and the total score of the test, which will be reported on a scale of one hundred. The total score of the obtained scores is divided into three parts, and the score less than 33.3 indicates low, between 33.3 to 66.6 is medium, and above 66.6 is favorable, respectively. The Bradberry and Greaves emotional intelligence questionnaire is a general questionnaire used in various fields of the humanities and medical sciences, and the validity and reliability of this questionnaire are confirmed. In the study of Ganji et al. (2006), the validity coefficient of emotional intelligence components was obtained in the field of self-awareness equal to 0.73, in the field of self-management was 0.78, in the field of social awareness was 0.76 and in the field of relationship management was 0.82. Also, the reliability of this test was 0.88 using Cronbach's alpha (27). Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and SPSS software version 16. Mean and standard deviation were used to present the emotional intelligence score, t-test was used to examine the difference in emotional intelligence between male and female, and Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and age.

Results

The findings revealed that the majority of respondents (86.4%) were female, and the rest (13.6%) were male. In terms of age, the highest is related to the age group of 41-45 years (49.2%), and the lowest is related to the age group of 21-25 years (0.8%). In terms of degree, most subjects (37.3%) had a master's degree, and the lowest numbers (0.9%) were Ph.D. Also, 80.7% of respondents were in the medical library and information science and 19.3% are in fields other than the medical library and information science.

Table 1 showed that self-awareness achieved the highest score of 83.5, and the component of relationship management with a score of 67.5 had the lowest score for emotional intelligence. Also, overall emotional intelligence obtained a score of 73.3.

Table 2 shows the average score of the components of emotional intelligence in terms of gender. The results of the student's t-test in Table 2 indicate that in none of the components of emotional intelligence, there is a significant difference between the two groups of males and females (P -value > 0.05).

Table 3 shows that based on the Pearson correlation coefficient test; there is a positive and significant relationship between the components of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and overall emotional intelligence with age (P -value \leq 0.05). However, a significant relationship between age and relationship management, not observed. (P -value = 0.14)



Table 1. The mean and standard deviation of emotional intelligence components among librarians

Statistical indicators		
Emotional intelligence components	Mean	SD
Self-awareness	83.5	7.03
Self-management	69.7	9.65
Social awareness	72.1	6.68
Relationship management	67.5	8.37
Overall emotional intelligence	73.3	6.03

Table 2. Determining and comparing the components of emotional intelligence in terms of gender among librarians

Variable	Gender	Mean (standard deviation)	Significant
Self-awareness	Male	81.13 (7.37)	t=1.44
	Femle	83.95 (6.94)	p=0.15
Self-management	Male	(9.41) 67.6	t=0.89
	Femle	(9.7) 69.9	p=0.37
Social awareness	Male	(6.96)72.21	t=0.61
	Femle	71.07 (4.59)	p=0.54
Relationship management	Male	(6.96)72.21	t=0.23
	Femle	68 (9.69)	p=0.81
Overall emotional intelligence	Male	(5.80) 71.87	t=0.95
	Femle	73.47 (6.07)	p=0.34

Table 3. The relationship between emotional intelligence and age among librarians

Variables	Correlation coefficient	P-value
Self-awareness	r= 0.27	0.005
Self-management	r= 0.25	0.008
Social awareness	r=0.21	0.03
Relationship management	r=0.14	0.14
Overall emotional intelligence	r=0.29	0.003

Discussion

The present study identifies the status of the components of emotional intelligence of librarians working at Iran, Tehran, and Shahid Beheshti Universities of Medical Sciences. Emotional intelligence refers to recognizing one's own and others' emotions, managing interpersonal relationships, adapting to the environment to satisfy one's needs, and at the same time, attracting others' attention (5). Libraries and information centers are, in fact, the center of interaction and communication. In the meantime, the librarian is

the client's focus, and his/her task is to be able to adequately control emotions at all times and be successful in social communication. The results of this study showed the librarians' emotional intelligence with an average of 73.3 out of 100 scores is at a favorable level, which is in line with the results of some previous research on the emotional intelligence of librarians in academic and public libraries (5,9,10,20,23,28). However, in the research of Amraei et al., The level of emotional intelligence of librarians in libraries of Isfahan



universities is lower than the average level (12). Since librarians with appropriate emotional intelligence and responsibility for their job position in front of the client can meet their information needs, the results showed that the ability of librarians surveyed in all areas of their emotional intelligence is in professional condition, and this affects the success of librarians.

Self-awareness means being aware of oneself, the ability to self-examine, and recognizing one's feelings as they are. In other words, self-awareness is a kind of inner cognition of human beings from their characteristics (29). In this study, self-awareness evaluated with an average of 83.5 at a favorable level. These results are consistent with some previous research (10,20,23,28). However, Amraei et al., in their research, concluded that self-awareness in librarians of Isfahan University and Isfahan University of Medical Sciences is at a low level (12), which is inconsistent with the findings of the present study. Perhaps the reason for this discrepancy was the difference in the questionnaire used.

Self-management skills in individuals mean the precise control and guidance of emotions, the reactions created by people in different situations. Emotional reactions occur in different places, especially when a person is involved in two-way communication. Therefore, positive guidance of these emotions is very effective and useful in an environment appropriate to people's work policies, and such a goal depends on the self-management of individuals (29). The average score in the field of self-management (67.5) based on some previous research (10,23,28) shows that the self-management of librarians is in the favorable level and librarians can to some extent, in dealing with others on emotions, excitement, as well as environmental stress and stress, arise from environmental factors. In contrast emotional intelligence in nurses and librarians of Isfahan universities has been assessed as weak (12,30).

Social awareness is a component of emotional intelligence, which refers to how a person perceives others and feels responsible for others, and what exactly is happening concerning others. The more important the people around us are, the more we will try to react appropriately (29). The average score for the social awareness component (72.1), as in some previous studies that examined emotional intelligence in librarians in Malaysia, Nigeria, and the University of Tehran (10,23,28), shows the favorable level of social awareness of the librarians of this study. It also indicates that librarians are well aware of the client's needs, which will increase the client's satisfaction with the libraries. Meanwhile, the level of social awareness in nurses, librarians of Isfahan University, Isfahan Medical Sciences University, and Shiraz University students have been evaluated as weak (12,29,30).

Relationship management is another component of social intelligence that shows the attractiveness and capacity to communicate with others, the art of interacting and communicating with people, and the ability to manage relationships with oneself and others. Individuals should be able to control the conflicts created in relationships in different situations (29). In the libraries and information centers, the client may be incapable and unsuccessful in expressing his / her information needs and may not be able to communicate appropriately with the librarian, so in such situations, conflicts and challenges arise. The librarian must be able to control the situation well. In the present study, as in previous studies in the study of emotional intelligence of Malaysian and Nigerian librarians and nurses (23, 28,30), the average score obtained for relationship management (67.5) is evaluated at a favorable level. However, in librarians of Isfahan University, Isfahan University of

Medical Sciences, and Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, this component has been evaluated at a low level (12,29).

According to the results of the t-test, there is no significant statistical relationship between any of the components of emotional intelligence and gender. Therefore, it can be concluded that the scores obtained on emotional intelligence are not related to the gender of the librarians participating in the study. These findings are consistent with the Keshavarz et al.'s findings in the relationship between nurses' emotional intelligence and gender (30) but are inconsistent with the findings of Siegliing et al., who examined this relationship in British managers (31). Perhaps the reason for this discrepancy is the difference in research tools, and statistical population studied. The results show that in both female and male, gender, physical and gender personality traits cannot indicate a person's ability to recognize their emotions in the workplace, manage emotions, control different situations, social awareness, and empathy with individuals to provide the right service.

Based on the results obtained from the Pearson correlation coefficient, there is a significant relationship between self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness and age, but no significant relationship was observed between the component of relationship management and participants' age. There is also a significant relationship between overall emotional intelligence and age. These findings are similar to the findings of Madadkhani et al., on the relationship between age and emotional intelligence of nurses (32), but are not consistent with the findings of Kar et al., on the relationship between age and emotional intelligence of high school students (33). It can be concluded that people's emotional intelligence will increase with age and experience, especially in the workplace, which will increase the power of interaction, control of stress and environmental conflicts, control of false emotions, and self-confidence.

Conclusion

The results demonstrated that overall emotional intelligence and its competencies in librarians of medical sciences universities examined are at the desired level, which shows that the ability of librarians surveyed in the fields of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in different conditions, is at a high level. On the other hand, increasing such ability will affect the success of librarians. Besides, there was no significant relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and gender in participants, while age had an effect on emotional intelligence skills in individuals. The components of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and the overall emotional intelligence have been affected by age, and as a result, the average of these components will increase with age. Therefore, given that high emotional intelligence can draw a significant vision of individuals' success and progress, the recommendation is that programs and workshops hold to strengthen this skill in librarians, especially young librarians.

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Conflicts of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interests.



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