

September 2016

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Title: The relationship between emotional intelligence and nursing competence among Bachelor's degree nursing students who have experienced clinical practicum

ABSTRACT

In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness of emotional intelligence (EI). It influences one's ability to perceive, use, understand and manage emotions. EI plays an important role in strengthening interpersonal, stress-coping, decision-making and problem-solving skills. In reality, nurses working in hospitals are experiencing critical and urgent situations, challenges and decision-making process. They have to collaborate with multidisciplinary healthcare team members, patients and their relatives. As a result, EI may influence competence of nurses in handling their job duties.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and nursing competence among bachelor's degree nursing students who have experienced clinical practicum. This study was a non-experimental quantitative descriptive cross-sectional survey. By convenience sampling, 421 bachelor's degree nursing students from six institutions in Hong Kong which provided bachelor's degree nursing programme were recruited to complete a set of 56-items self-reported questionnaire. The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) was used to measure EI and Short Nursing Competence Questionnaire (SNCQ) was used to measure nursing competence. Demographic data included gender, programme of study, year of study and clinical practicum experience (in terms of weeks) were collected. SPSS 22 was used in data analysis.

A statistically significant positive correlation was found between EI and nursing competence ($r=0.599$, $p<0.01$). Besides, significant differences of EI were also found in nursing students with different gender ($p>0.05$) and year of study ($p>0.05$). However, insignificant differences of EI were found in nursing students with different

programme of study and clinical practicum experience. To conclude, EI training workshop should be integrated in to nursing curricula for equipping nursing students to deal with authentic clinical situation.