

## Emotional Intelligence and adversity handling levels Depending on the Occupation

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**Abstract.** The objective of this study is to examine the correlation between emotional intelligence and adversity depending on the occupation. The study objects include 290 nurses and 192 office workers. The collected data was analyzed by SPSS 20.0. Difference was found between nurses and office workers in terms of adversity quotient and emotional intelligence, and it turned out that the two factors—adversity quotient and emotional intelligence—were correlated. Hence, in order to cope with working environments efficiently and to improve the quality of service and that of workers' life, it is necessary to develop and apply interventional strategies in reflection of emotional intelligence and adversity.

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, adversity, nurse, occupation

### 1 Introduction

Emotional intelligence means the ability to understand, evaluate, and describe one's and others' emotions, the ability to control one's and others' emotions effectively, and the ability to utilize such emotions in planning and achieving one's life [1]. As various types of services continue to be developed in modern society, the importance of service providers' emotional intelligence is ever more emphasized. Existing studies indicate that emotional intelligence of hands-on workers at welfare facilities for elderly affect the quality of service directly or indirectly [2], and that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among nurses are of importance in reducing job stress [3]. As such, emotional intelligence is a vital variable that can affect job stress and intention of transfer as well as service quality among service sector workers.

The adversity quotient is the reactive index to a given adversity indicates human ability to overcome adversities and how to cope with them [4]. In other words, the adversity handling level shows one's subjective conviction upon a trial as part of adapting herself or himself to an organization [5]. This level can be used to predict human resiliency and to strengthen the effectiveness of a community or an organization [4].

Thus, this study aims to function as a basis for intervention programs that help cope with working environments effectively and improve the quality of workers' life

by examining the relation between emotional intelligence and adversity depending on the occupation.

## **2 Method**

### **2.1 Design**

This study is a descriptive research study on the correlation between emotional intelligence and adversity among nurses and common office workers.

### **2.2 Sample**

The data was selected in a way of convenient sampling among nurses at a general hospital and office workers located in the metropolitan area who understood the goal of this study and permitted to participate. The sample size was calculated by means of G\*Power3.1.2, and the data of 270 nurses and 192 office workers was used with that of others who gave insufficient answers excluded.

### **2.3 Measures**

Adversity was measured by means of adversity quotient developed by Stoltz (1997) [6] with 20 questions for the total score of 20 points. The higher score, the better ability to cope with adversities. In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha=.85$ .

As for emotional intelligence, utilized was WELIS (Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale), a tool to measure emotional intelligence developed by Wong & Law (2002)[7]. The 7-point Likert-type scale with 16 questions was used. The highest score, the higher level of emotional intelligence. In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha=.92$ .

### **2.4 Data-collection and Ethical Considerations**

Data was collected from September to November 2013 and passed the examination of IRB. Objects were informed of the study goal and method, anonymity, autonomy of participation, confidentiality, and instructions and so on. The survey was then conducted in a self-reporting type.

### **2.5 Data Analysis**

The collected data was analyzed by SPSS Win 20.0, and general characteristics were examined as frequency, percentage, average, and standard deviation. Chronbach's alpha was utilized as for tool reliability analysis, and an independent t-test as for the

adversity quotient and emotional intelligence. Correlation was analyzed Pearson's correlation coefficient.

### 3 Study Result

#### 3.1. General Characteristics of Objects

The average age of the object nurses was  $29.7 \pm 6.1$ . 97.8% of them were female and 2.2% male. Their average working hours per week were  $45.71 \pm 8.67$ , and the average working period at the current workplace was  $75.04 \pm 77.16$  months.

The average age of the common office workers was  $33.6 \pm 6.3$ . 59.4% of them were male and 40.6% female. Their average working hours per week were  $51.51 \pm 8.93$ , and the average working period at the current workplace was  $85.63 \pm 70.44$  months.

#### 3.2. Objects' Adversity and Emotional Intelligence

The object nurses' adversity quotient was  $133.05 \pm 17.79$  on average while that of the office workers was  $141.38 \pm 18.70$  on average, which indicates the significant difference between them ( $t=-5.021$ ,  $p<.001$ ). As for the sub-items, the score of 'reach' item was the highest in both groups, and then 'control,' 'endurance, and 'ownership' in the order.

As for emotional intelligence, the average level of the nurses was  $4.71 \pm .68$  while that of the office workers was  $4.94 \pm .84$ , which indicates that the level of the office workers was significantly high ( $t=-3.214$ ,  $p=.001$ ). Among the sub-items, the score of 'understanding of one's emotions' item was the highest among nurses ( $5.00 \pm .82$ ), and then 'understanding of others' emotions,' ( $4.81 \pm .79$ ) 'utilization of emotions,' ( $4.69 \pm .82$ ) and 'control of emotions' ( $4.32 \pm .92$ ) in the order. Among the office workers, the score of 'understanding of one's emotions' item was the highest as in the case of nurses ( $5.52 \pm .97$ ), but that of 'control of emotions' was higher than that of 'understanding of others' emotions.' The score of 'control of emotions' was the lowest.

#### 3.3 Correlation between Adversity and Emotional Intelligence

It turned out that the adversity handling level was in positive correlation of significance with emotional intelligence among the nurses ( $r=.438$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and that

the correlation between these two variables was statistically significant among the office workers too ( $r=.520, p<.001$ ).

#### **4 Conclusion**

It turned out that as for adversity quotient, nurse practitioners might seem to cope well with adversities, but accumulated stress and pressure would cause anguish. In contrast, it turned out that office workers would handle adversities comparatively well. This is probably because of the special working environments at a hospital. It is thought that personal or occupational efficiency could be enhanced by improving working conditions so that nurses could increase their adversity handling capability. In addition, as emotional intelligence turned out to be significantly correlated with adversity quotient, developing and applying intervention strategies to enhance emotional intelligence will improve the adversity, the satisfaction with the occupation, and ultimately, the quality of life.

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