A Study on Correlation of Emotional Intelligence to Leadership Styles of Nursing Managers and Nurses’ Organizational Commitment in Hospitals of Kerman, Iran
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Abstract
In this descriptive-correlational study, nursing managers (supervisors) were selected, through the census method to complete emotional intelligence questionnaire. Then, according to Cochran formula, 300 nurses working under each supervisor were selected through categorical sampling method. Then they filled out organizational commitment questionnaire and leadership. The collected data were analyzed via inferential and descriptive statistics. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership style of supervisors, and also between the leadership style and nurse’s organizational commitment. The results of this research and similar ones indicate the importance of the emotional intelligence role as an educable and learnable skill in workplaces and routine life. So, it is recommended that organizations, managers and staffs with more emotional intelligence are employed (particularly, attention to individual’s emotional intelligence in selection time) and also certain ways should be developed to increase emotional intelligence of managers and its current employees.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, leadership style, organizational commitment.

Introduction
Nowadays, emotional intelligence is recognized as a significant and effective factor in the success of people. Emotional intelligence is a concept introduced by Mayer and Salovey 1990 and then in 1995 it was generalized by Goldman (Aghayar, 2007). Mayer and Salovey defined emotional intelligence as an individual ability in evaluation, expression and regulation of feelings and emotions of oneself and others as well as its appropriate and effective use for leading and controlling of thoughts and practices (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). In addition, Goldman states that emotional intelligence is the ability for the identification of the feelings of oneself and others for creating motives and controlling our feelings and communication (Lash, 2006). It includes internal elements such as self-awareness, self-concept, feeling and capacity, self-actualization and predominance; external elements including interpersonal relationships, sympathy, and responsibility (Dehshiri, 2003).

In 2010, Benson’s research indicated that emotional intelligence is an effective factor in the creation of interpersonally satisfactory relationships and proper reaction under work pressure (Benson et al., 2010). Gritis, Derskon and Verburggen found a negative relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational exhaustion and Rostogi reported a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational self-efficiency (see Gritis et al., 2004).

In this regard, studying considering occupational stress of faculty members of Nigerian University, Adeyemo and Ogunyemi showed that emotional intelligence and self-efficiency, separately or together, are strong determinants of occupational stress and they have a negative relationship with it (Adeyemo et al., 2008).

Prati et al. also concluded that as emotional intelligence increases, the function and creation of individual become better and physical disorders reduce (Prati et al., 2009). In a research on practitioner nurses in a clinic, Codier et al. found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and superb levels of function and other organizational variables in sustaining employees and environment conditions (Codier et al., 2008). Also, in an emotional intelligence research of nurses, Mcqueen emphasized the importance of its role in success of nurses (Mcqueen, 2004).

Another issue is leadership style. In the past, usually managers believed that less sympathy and compassion with their coworkers would put them in an opponent position with their organizational goals. And, a group of them thought if they would not have emotional distance between themselves and others, they would lose the possibility of strict decision-making. But today, ethical concerns are regarded as an important factor in interpersonal relationships and it has been clarified that psychological pressure of manager’s leadership style makes staffs dull and disabled, significantly decreasing their comprehension ability (Goldman, 1995). Leadership is the art or process of influencing people in such a way that they try to achieve group goals enthusiastically, relying on their maximum ability (Khalili, 2001). Managers of an organization select their methods and styles of leadership to influence employees more, and if they apply an appropriate style, they can help obtain individual and organizational goals. Otherwise the situation would lead to irritation, lack of enthusiasm, insecurity and non-satisfaction in employees (Saneie, 2004).

In a research conducted by Saneie (2003) on nurses of Tehran hospitals, it was found that there is a significant relationship between supervisors’ leadership style, internal/external and occupational satisfaction of nurses (Mandell & Pherwani, 2003). Mandell & Pherwani addressed a significant relationship between individual emotional intelligence and pertinence leadership style (Feng Cheng et al., 2006). Feng Cheng and Chun in an investigation on employees of Medical University and educational hospitals of Taiwan found that employees who were managed according to benevolent leadership style showed higher organizational commitment and occupational satisfaction than those under authoritative style (Yun et al., 2007).

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Additionally, Yun, Cox, Sims & Salam showed that pertinence and autocratic leadership style would lead to increased individual occupational coordination via influencing occupational satisfaction. Cohen reported that supervisors are usually trained to show required leading and supportive behavior toward nurses (Loke, 2001). Moreover, applied research has specified the advantages and positive consequences of management, effective leadership, increasing of psychological wellbeing, organizational commitment, efficiency, occupational satisfaction, nurses’ empowerment and reduction of occupational exhaustion (Loke, 2001 & Failla, 2008).

Among other important concerns of organizational commitment are psychological links with institution that must be inspired employees; this psychological factor can be created with occupational involvement, loyalty and belief in organizational values (Esmaili, 2000). In fact, one of the important concerns of managers is employees’ encouragement for more commitment to the organization or institution (Robbins, 2002). Majidi recognized organizational commitment as an approach to employees’ loyalty toward organization, stating that this is a continual process through which organization members show their interest toward the institution, its continuous success, and efficiency (Majidi, 1998). Moverhed believes that organization commitment makes employees work harder, stay there more, and have more discipline in their work (Moverhed & Graifin, 1995). Porter et al. showed a direct significant relationship between organizational commitment and problems such as leave of service, absence, delay and lack of participation of workforce, on one hand, and low performance and efficiency, on the other. Lotanz states that organizational commitment of employees will be a significant factor for understanding and predicting their organizational behavior (Lotanz, 1993). In an evaluation of organizational commitment with leadership styles, Zaffafi concluded that the most important factor is investing commitment, flexibility and consistency of the leadership style. The findings indicate that old and experienced employees have more organizational commitment in comparison to young and less experienced ones (Loke & Crawford, 2001).

Furthermore, employees with a higher level of education show lower organizational commitment, because they have more expectations and look for more occupational opportunities. Simons addressed organizational culture, occupational satisfaction, and education as important indicators. Studies indicate that the leadership style of managers and employees control central is effective factors in organizational commitment (Davenport, 2010).

Regarding what was implied, there is no doubt that organization success depends so much on adequacy of leaders, because even best employees need to know how they can participate in achieving organizational goals. Organizations can become promoted and powerful only by having proper management and appropriate leadership. Modern world requires managers whose skills in fundamental emotional features can produce consequences such as more empathy with employees’ feelings, the ability to solve conflict before it gets problematic, and the ability to be deeply concentrated on work. The evidence shows that emotionally intelligent leaders have been recognized as a key factor in creating work space, providing grounds for growth and education of employees, and encouraging them toward their best performance (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007).

Regarding the importance of hospitals’ roles as one of the most important organizations which offer services to people and the vital role of nursing staff in these organizations, it is essential to consider the impressing factors of their efficiency and effectiveness. So, in this research, the focus is on considering the relationship between emotional intelligence of supervisors and their leadership style with organizational commitment of nurses. It is obvious that more clarification of effective factors on nurses’ efficiency, such as organizational commitment, can have a practical effect on the decisions of human sources managers, because they can use its benefits for organizational goals through discovering some guidelines for establishing a suitable workspace.

Materials and Methods
This study is a descriptive correlational research. The population under study included practitioner nurses and supervisors in the hospitals of Medical University of Kerman, Iran. As the criteria for selecting nurses and supervisors, they had to have BS and MS, and have at least six months work experience. The data was collected through questionnaires and direct interviews in free times of nurses. To determine the scores of emotional intelligence, a questionnaire consisting of 28 items and 6-option scales (never, rarely, sometimes, often, usually and always) were used. Each item focused on the evaluation of one of emotional intelligence components. In order to evaluate leadership style, a 20-item questionnaire with a 5-option scale (completely agree, agree, partly agree, disagree, completely disagree) were used. Items 1 to 10 were related to staff-oriented style and items 11 to 20 related to work-oriented style of leadership. To evaluate organizational commitment, a 15-item questionnaire of organizational commitment of Mudai, Stiroz & Porter was used. All three questionnaires used in this research had already been test for validity in previous studies. The validity of emotional intelligence was found to be 0.89 by Mokhtari (2007), in a research on the evaluation of the relationship of emotional intelligence to psychological wellbeing and occupational exhaustion in nurses of Kerman hospitals. Also, the validity of the leadership style questionnaire by Esmailian (2007) was found to be 0.91 in a study on the relationship between leadership style and emotional intelligence in state organizations of Kerman city. Also, the validity of organizational commitment questionnaire was found to be 0.72 by Sara Chitsaz (2010) in a research on the relationship between occupational stress and organizational commitment in faculty members of Vali Asr University and Azad University of Rafsanjan. The reliability of all three questionnaires used in this research was determined previously in other studies. The reliability of emotional intelligence questionnaire by Mokhtari (2007) was 0.84 in a study on the relationship of emotional intelligence to psychological wellbeing and occupational exhaustion in nurses of Kerman hospitals”. Also, the reliability of Esmailian’s leadership style questionnaire (2007) was found to be 0.83 in a study on the relationship between leadership style and emotional intelligence in state organizations of Kerman city. Also, the reliability coefficient of Sara Chitsaz’s organizational commitment questionnaire (2010) was 0.82 in a research on the relationship between...
Occupational stress and organizational commitment in faculty members of Valiasr University and Azad University of Rafsanjan.

By using the sample number formula, \[ n = \frac{z^2 \delta^2}{d^2} \], in which \( \alpha = 0.05 \), the sample number was measured to be 300 persons. Of course, all of 43 managers (supervisors) were selected through census in order to complete emotional intelligence questionnaire. Then, through the categorical sampling method, nurses were selected.

**Results**

Table 1: Data of emotional intelligence and leadership style of supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>150.00</td>
<td>117.5116</td>
<td>17.89303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership style</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>65.4907</td>
<td>11.56234</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Data of leadership style of supervisors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership style</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employ-oriented</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>31.8692</td>
<td>9.92193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-oriented</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>50.00</td>
<td>34.1288</td>
<td>7.52471</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Data of organizational commitment of nurses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff-oriented</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>105.00</td>
<td>66.7709</td>
<td>14.82614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: The relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership style of supervisors in Hospitals of Medical University of Kerman, Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spearman's rho</th>
<th>intelligence</th>
<th>Leadership style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Correlation Coefficient</td>
<td>0.352(*)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.038</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to results, there is a significant relationship between manager’s emotional intelligence and employee-oriented and work-oriented leadership styles (\( p<0.05 \)). As emotional intelligence increased, the tendency for using an employee-oriented leadership style increased, and while it decreased for a work-oriented style. But there is no significant relationship between managers’ emotional intelligence and organizational commitment of nurses (\( p=0.1 \)) (Table 8).

Table 5: Determining the relationship between leadership style (employee-oriented) of supervisors and organizational commitment of nurses in hospitals of Medical University of Kerman, Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>0.440(**)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff-oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Determining the relationship between leadership style (work-oriented) of supervisors and organizational commitment of nurses in hospitals of Medical University of Kerman, Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>-0.120</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff-oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.086</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On one hand, there is a significant relationship between employee-oriented leadership style and organizational commitment (\( p<0.0001 \)), but, on the other hand, no significant statistical relationship was seen between work-oriented leadership style and organizational commitment (\( p=0.08 \)). In general, there is a statistical significant relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment (\( p<0.0001 \)) (Tables 5, 6 & 7).

Table 7: Determining the relationship between leadership style of supervisors and organizational commitment of nurses in hospitals of Medical University of Kerman, Iran

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Pearson Correlation</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>0.284(**)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff-oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, there is a significant relationship between employee-oriented leadership style and organizational commitment (\( p<0.0001 \)) (Table 4). In general, there is a statistical significant relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment (\( p<0.0001 \)) (Tables 5, 6 & 7).
Interdisciplinary leaders are those who provide a \_improvement in action, and sustaining \_by the precise application of \_r has a vital role in \_ns of \_rs with more \_r & Sharifi, 2007) indicated \_ance of the emotional intelligence role as \_employees have more selection rights and expectations. And \_methods of organizations are toward freedom of action and \_of competitive benefit (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007).

Emotional intelligence is among the parameters which can \_development. \_advancement of organization’s leaders, and leade \_with growth and progression of organizational leadership; in \_that emotional intelligence of a leader has a direct relationship \_leadership style and organizational commitment of \_and efficiency.

However, an employee-oriented leadership style emphasizes \_dimensions, stimulants and individual requirements of \_organization employees. According to this premise, \_suc\_\_s more on individuals who must work in the organization rather than the precise application of \_organizational regulations and complete dependency of \_expectations. It should not be conceived that the \_based style pays less attention to organization goals than the work-based style. Rather, in this approach, the quickest way to achieve organization goals is emphasis on personal dimensions and attention to individuals’ stimulation. In this management style, the chance of choosing the most \_method for doing duties, fit for employees’ \_abilities, is given to them. In fact, through this method, \_can play essential roles in increasing sense of \_dependency in employees, uniting their goals with organization goals, and finally establishing commitment and efficiency.

The results are in line with previous studies which show a \_significant relationship between managers’ \_intelligence and their leadership style and also between managers’ \_style and organizational commitment of \_Goldman’s study (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007) indicated that emotional intelligence of a leader has a direct relationship with growth and progression of organizational leadership; in \_words, emotional intelligence is the path for advancement of organization’s leaders, and leaders with more \_intelligence will have a better development. \_ntelligence is among the parameters which can help manager-employee relationships. A leader can govern a \_suitable organizational atmosphere by using emotional intelligence, incurring improvement in action, and sustaining of competitive benefit (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007). Nowadays, the trends and evolution process of leadership methods of organizations are toward freedom of action and independency in the workplace; in comparison with the past, employees have more selection rights and expectations. And

### Table 8: Evaluation of relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership style (work- and employee-oriented) of supervisors and nurse’s organizational commitment in Kerman hospitals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode 1</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Correlations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Zero-order</td>
<td>Partial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>51.120</td>
<td>9.428</td>
<td>5.422</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>0.777</td>
<td>0.443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>1.012</td>
<td>0.320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dependent Variable: Style.

### Discussion and conclusion

In the work-oriented leadership style, the focus is on organization expectations by relying on normative standards. It is based on the hypothesis that to achieve organization goals, the procedures, guidelines and suitable regulations will be combined with responsibilities and expectations of organization, and employees’ should obey the organizational duties closely. According to this style, if organizational roles are defined clearly and each person accepts the responsibility of his roles, desired consequences will be achieved. In this kind of management style, subordinates should carefully exert the rules and the manager determines or applies the rules. The success criterion in this management style is the behavioral consistency with organizational expectations and effectiveness.

However, an employee-oriented leadership style emphasizes individual dimensions, stimulants and individual requirements of organization employees. According to this premise, organization success depends more on individuals who must work in the organization rather than the precise application of organizational regulations and complete dependency of organization expectations. It should not be conceived that the employee-based style pays less attention to organization goals than the work-based style. Rather, in this approach, the quickest way to achieve organization goals is emphasis on personal dimensions and attention to individuals’ stimulation. In this management style, the chance of choosing the most appropriate method for doing duties, fit for employees’ abilities, is given to them. In fact, through this method, managers can play essential roles in increasing sense of organizational dependency in employees, uniting their goals with organizational goals, and finally establishing commitment and efficiency.

The results are in line with previous studies which show a significant relationship between managers’ emotional intelligence and their leadership style and also between managers’ leadership style and organizational commitment of nurses. Goldman’s study (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007) indicated that emotional intelligence of a leader has a direct relationship with growth and progression of organizational leadership; in other words, emotional intelligence is the path for advancement of organization’s leaders, and leaders with more emotional intelligence will have a better development. Emotional intelligence is among the parameters which can help manager-employee relationships. A leader can govern a suitable organizational atmosphere by using emotional intelligence, incurring improvement in action, and sustaining of competitive benefit (Aghayar & Sharifi, 2007).

By making a more moral culture, leaders with high emotional intelligence inspire more satisfaction and commitment in employees and, as a result, more efficiency and success in achieving organizational goals are created. In fact, such leaders move toward joining with employees and they prevent individual and imperious methods (more tendencies to employee-oriented methods). The research indicates that leaders who lack proper self-consciousness and self-evaluation (dimensions of emotional intelligence) become angry quickly and demonstrate an invading behavior. They do not accept their mistakes and they are elusive of formative criticism of others (Adeyemo, 2008).

While employee-oriented leaders provide a ground for effective leadership by creation of commonsense, intimacy and mutual confidence between employees and themselves are created (Sobhaninezhad & Yozbashi, 2008). In fact, leaders with higher emotional intelligence know how to cooperate and influence others for achieving desired results. Therefore, they prefer employee-oriented styles; through this, they help realize organizational goals by inspiring the sense organizational commitment in employees.

In conclusion, the results of this research and similar ones indicate the importance of the emotional intelligence role as an educable and learnable skill in workplaces and routine life. So, it is recommended that organizations, managers and staffs with more emotional intelligence are employed (particularly, attention to individual’s emotional intelligence in selection time) and also certain ways should be developed to increase emotional intelligence of managers and its current employees. Supervisors should become familiar with management styles and their consequences, because this matter has a vital role in workplaces, such as hospitals, in which human relations and interactions have an important role in better doing of works.
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