The Mediating Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Relationship between Perceived Stress and Life Satisfaction among Nursing Intern Students

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Abstract

Background: Interns face many stressors that can affect their work and overall well-being. Emotionally intelligent nurses think positively and live fulfilling lives, which reduces their perceived stress. **Aim:** of this study was to examine the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction among nursing intern students. **Design:** A descriptive correlational research design was utilized. **Sample**: Convenient sample of 200 of 375 internship-year students. **Setting:** Data was gathered from several clinical settings where nursing intern students were trained at Kasr El-Aini hospital. **Tools:** Four tools were used, Personal characteristics data sheet, Emotional Intelligence questionnaire, Perceived stress questionnaire, and Life satisfaction scale. **Results:** This study found that 61.0% of participants were females. Most (83%) were single. (68.5%) nursing intern students exhibited high emotional intelligence, (62%), moderate stress, and (88.5%) moderate life satisfaction. Nursing intern students' perceived stress levels were negatively correlated with their life satisfaction but not with their emotional intelligence. **Conclusion:** Emotional intelligence did not mediate the connection between stress and life satisfaction. Also it was found that there was a direct negative relationship between perceived stress levels and Life satisfaction levels. **Recommendation:** Further research with larger sample sizes is recommended to generalize and enhance the understanding of the connection between emotional intelligence, perceived stress, and life satisfaction among this specific group of students.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Life Satisfaction, Nursing Intern Students & Perceived Stress.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a critical component of the nursing profession and the educational process, as it serves as a substantial indicator of nursing students' performance quality **(Gaballah et al., 2021).** Furthermore, these favorable outcomes stem from emotional intelligence's contribution to nursing students' capacity to foster connections, acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses, demonstrate empathy, maintain personal influence, serve as triggers for change, establish a collective vision, and collaborate **(Ayaad & Raghubir, 2018; Grason, 2019).**

Emotional intelligence knowledge arose in the 1990s as a result of research into ideas, feelings, and abilities. The concept of emotional intelligence has evolved over the previous 25 years, yet its understanding and application remain ambiguous. Despite this, emotional intelligence is a generally accepted notion in professions such as commerce, management, education, and, in the last ten years, nursing practice. **(AlAteeq, et al., 2020).**

Emotional intelligence (EI) is defined as a set of skills and a type of social intelligence that includes the ability to identify, discriminate, and observe the meticulous appraisal and expression of feeling in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotion in oneself and others, and thus the use of moods and knowledge to inspire, plan, guide, and achieve in one's life **(Ishaq, et al., 2020).**

As a result, the internship is a crucial phase in the development of clinical skills and professional attitudes among nursing students **(MacCann, et al., 2020)**. Nursing students must be able to handle a variety of clinical scenarios, adjust to various teaching philosophies, set and achieve goals on their own, and resolve disagreements while practicing nursing. Additionally, taking tests and practicing nursing techniques in medical facilities are also considered to be very stressful components of academic work **(Victoroff & Boyatzis, 2013; Ramadan et al., 2020)**.

Nursing practice responsibilities, such as dealing with death or disease, growing workloads, time constraints, and contempt for hierarchy, cause significant perceived stress in this profession. As a result, nursing students who fail to employ their emotional intelligence skills are more likely to resort to less effective methods of mood management. They are twice as likely to suffer from anxiety, depression, substance addiction, and suicidal ideation **(Del Sarto Azevedo et al., 2017, Dugué et al., 2021)**.

Stress is an ongoing issue in nursing education. According to a review of the literature, nursing students are more stressed than students from other degrees **(Labrague et al, 2018).** Furthermore, academic, clinical, and financial variables can all contribute to stress in nursing students. Clinical stress outnumbers other types of stress **(McCarthy et al, 2018).** Clinical stressors are the most important sources of stress for nursing students since they spend the majority of their time in the clinical setting **(Bartlett et al, 2016; Rafati, 2020).**

Nursing students may encounter a range of adverse effects as a result of stress and psychophysical exhaustion. These include substantial setbacks in their academic performance, absences from work, decreased effectiveness in managing class time and assignments, somatic conditions, coronary artery diseases **(Algaralleh, 2019; Castillo-Gualda et al., 2019; García-Martínez et al., 2021),** and in some cases, complete attrition to the field **(Zamarro et al., 2022; Moser & Wei, 2021).**

According to the majority of studies, life satisfaction is more complex than pleasure. However, on occasion, the phrase is applied synonymously to pleasure or well-being. Most consider life satisfaction to be an assessment of one's existence. Consequently, it is not merely the present state of an individual's pleasure. According to research, happiness is a more "immediate, in-the-moment experience that, while enjoyable, is ultimately transitory" **(Badri et al., 2022).** Consequently, while moments of pleasure are undeniably a component of a healthy lifestyle, they rarely constitute a satisfying and all-encompassing existence **(Seligman, 2011& Badri et al., 2022).**

Furthermore, research indicates that life satisfaction is more "stable and long-lived" than happiness and has a broader scope **(Helliwell et al., 2017).** Life satisfaction is described as "a positive evaluation of the conditions of your life, a judgment that, at least on balance, measures up favorably against your standards or expectations." **Kjell & Diener (2020).** Moreover, numerous research look at overall or holistic life satisfaction as well as satisfaction from specific life domains such as family life, friend relationships, employment, wages, schooling and education **(Valente & Berry, 2016).** According to several researches, life satisfaction reflects both mental and physical health **(Fagerström et al, 2007 & Badri et al, 2022).**

Significance of the Study

An internship is a crucial phase in which nursing students build clinical skills and foster professional attitudes. The significance of Emotional Intelligence in the practice of nursing students resides in the fact that nurses frequently engage with patients and families who face difficult situations and conditions. Nursing student interns must recognize that they are engaging with patients and families who are experiencing emotional distress. They should also be mindful of their own emotional state and how it can influence their interactions with patients, families, and other members of the healthcare team **(Dou, et al., 2022).**

Typical pressures encountered during clinical training were assignments, workload, and patient care. Academic stresses includes factors such as little spare time, poor academic performance, examinations, and heavy course workload. Nursing students employed problem-focused, emotion-focused, and dysfunctional stress coping strategies to mitigate their stress. The problem-focused approach involved addressing the root cause of the stress, while the emotion-focused approach aimed at regulating their emotional response. On the other hand, the dysfunctional coping mechanism involved releasing their feelings without effectively resolving the underlying stressors.

The nursing profession is known to be highly stressful, which can negatively impact nurses' life satisfaction and wellbeing. However, emotional intelligence has been shown to help individuals manage stress more effectively. Consequently, this study aims to enhance students' leadership skills, practical performance, and patient safety. It will provide guidance to nursing interns, teachers, and executives in improving nurses' job satisfaction and organizational trust by developing emotional intelligence skills and implementing measures to reduce perceived. Overall, this study provides valuable insight into how to support the wellbeing of nursing students through targeting emotional intelligence and stress management skills. As the nursing shortage continues, focusing on nursing students' wellbeing and satisfaction is key to strengthening the profession.

Aim of the study

The current study aimed to examining the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction among nursing intern students.

Research questions of the Current Study

To achieve the aim of the current study; the following research questions were formulated:

Q1: what is the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction?

Q2: What is the effect of emotional Intelligence on life satisfaction?

Q3: What is the effect of emotional intelligence on Perceived Stress?

Q4: What is the role of emotional intelligence in mediating the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction?

Research design:
A descriptive correlational research design was utilized to achieve the aim of the current study.

Sample
The study participants consisted of all available nursing intern students (Convenient sample of 200 out of 375) who were enrolled in internship year during the academic year 2022/2023, agreed to participate in the study and were trained in clinical setting as follows: pediatric department (25), medical department (69), emergency department (27), and obstetric department (52).Inclusion criteria both the Egyptian male and female and the international students who enrolled in internship for the first time. Exclusion criteria students and who are repeating any round of internship period more than two trials.

Setting
Study data were collected from different clinical settings where nursing intern students have been trained, they included (pediatric department, medical department, emergency department, and obstetric department) at Kasr El-Aini hospital which is affiliated to the Cairo University Teaching hospitals.

Tool of data collection
Data was collected using the following self-administered questionnaires.

1st tool: personal characteristics data sheet: It was developed by the authors. It was used to collect personal characteristics information about nursing intern students' gender, specialty training setting, marital status, working during internship training in a private hospital and training trials in current specialty.

2nd tool: Emotional Intelligence questionnaire: it was adopted by Ismail, (2022). It was used to measure emotional intelligence as perceived by nursing intern students. It consisted of (91 items) categorized under seven dimensions as follows: Self-awareness (15) items, Emotional control (11) items, self- motivation (5) items, Empathy (12) items, Social communication skill (10) items, Address Stress (24) items and Self -confidence (14) items.

Scoring system: The responses were measured by five-point Likert scale ranging from: strongly agree (5) agree (4) and neutral (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The levels of emotional intelligence Computed as: ($< 50\%$) low level of Emotional Intelligence, $50 < 75$ % indicated moderate level of Emotional Intelligence and 75% indicated high level of Emotional Intelligence.

3rd tool: Perceived stress questionnaire: it was adopted from (**Sheu et al. in 1997**). It was used to measure the levels of stress as perceived by the nursing intern students, this questionnaire consisted of (28) items covered the following five dimensions: Stress from teachers and nursing staff (7 items); Stress from taking care of patients (6 items); Stress

from lack of professional knowledge and skills (5 items); Stress from the nature of clinical practice (6 items); Stress from student's role demands (4 items).

Scoring system: The responses were measured by along five points Likert scale as follows: very often (1); fairly often (2); sometimes (3); almost never (4) and never (5). The total scores ranged from 0 to 116, higher scores indicating higher degrees of stress.

4th tool: Life satisfaction**.** It was developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). It was used as a self-report measure to assess life satisfaction as a whole, this questionnaire consisted of (5) items.

Scoring system: The responses were measured by seven points Likert scale as follows: strongly agree (7); agree (6); slightly agree (5); neither agree nor disagree (4); slightly disagree (3); disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). The level of life satisfaction computed as: < 14 Dissatisfied, $14 < 30$ moderately satisfied, 35 highly satisfied

Validity and reliability of the tools:
The material of the tools were designed and validated for content validity by two professors from the nursing administration department and one professor from the psychiatric department at Cairo University's college of nursing. The surveys were examined by each expert on the panel for material, coverage, clarity, phrasing, length, structure, and overall appearance. Important changes were made in response to their recommendations. To confirm the translation's validity; they were double translated in English-Arabic-English.

Reliability
Reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the three questionnaires. Results for the questionnaires emotional intelligence and perceived stress (0.93, 0.89) correspondingly, indicate that both questionnaires were highly reliable. While Life satisfaction was (0.70) that considered accepted.

Ethical considerations
An Ethical approval was obtained from the scientific research ethics committee in the Faculty of Nursing, Cairo University before conducting the study. Also, an official agreement was obtained from the head of the nursing administration department to conduct the study. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary; each participant had the right to accept or refuse participation in the study. The participants were informed that by submitting the questionnaires; it is considered that you are agree on participating in this study. Anonymity and confidentiality were assured through coding the data, every participant had the right to withdraw from the study at any time; participant were assured that this data will not be reused in another research without taking the permission of the participants. The ethical issues considerations included explaining the purpose and

nature of the study, participation was protected from any risk. Collected data were used in the purpose for the research.

Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out on (n=20) (10%) of the total sample of nursing intern students who were under training across various units before data collection to ensure the applicability of the tools and to estimate the time needed to complete the used tools. No recommended modification was done. The pilot sample was included.

Procedures

Upon receiving the approval letter from Scientific Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Nursing, Cairo University. the authors obtained the nursing intern students' names from the nursing administration department, at faculty of nursing to obtain their permission to conduct the study among the nursing intern students online (google form). After that, the authors designed the questionnaires on the google form app, a meeting was conducted with the nursing intern students on Microsoft teams

application "online" to explain the aim, the importance and benefits of the study to seek their cooperation. The list of students and their distribution in the work setting was identified by the clinical instructors who supervise them to distribute the link, the authors organized online fixed time (1-2 hours) daily for any question or clarifications if needed from the students. Data were collected in June 2023.

Statistical design

A statistical package for the social sciences, SPSS (version 25.0) was used to classify, organise, and analyse the data collected from the study tools. We used frequency, percentage, standard deviation, and mean to describe the data. In this study, we used linear regression analysis and the correlation coefficient to find the important correlations between the variables. A significance level of 0.05 (p-value) was used in the statistical studies. Results are not considered statistically significant when the p-value is larger than 0.05.

Results

Table (1): Distribution of the study sample according to personal characteristics data (n.= 200)

Personal Characteristics	No.	%
Gender		
Male	78	39.0
Female	122	61.0
Marital status		
Single	166	83.0
Married	34	17.0
Working during internship training in a private hospital		
No	157	78.5
Yes	43	21.5

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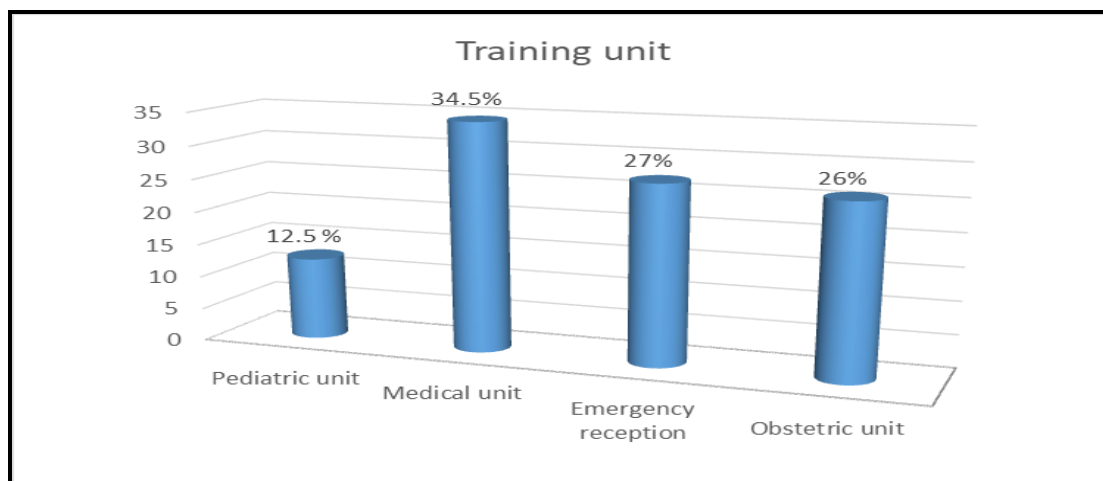
Figure (1): Distribution of the nursing intern students according to their training unit (n= 200)
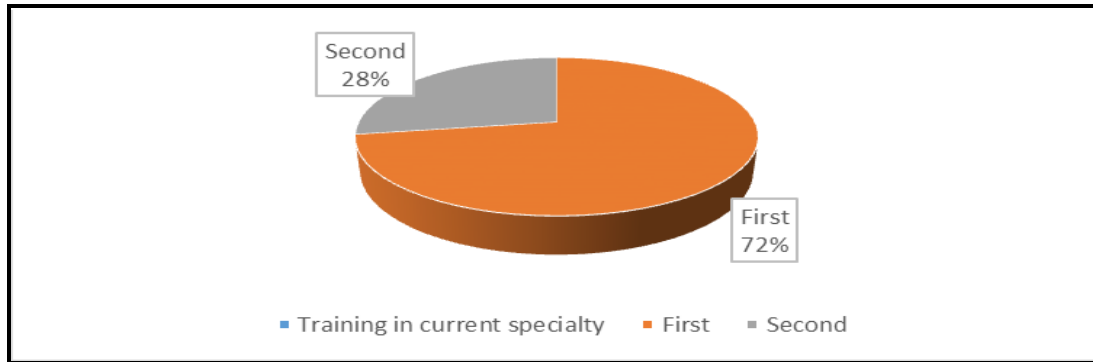
Figure (2): Distribution of the nursing intern students according to training trials in current specialty (n= 200)

Table (2): Mean and mean percentage of the nursing intern students' regarding emotional intelligence dimensions (n= 200).

Emotional intelligence dimensions	Min	Max	Mean± S.D	Mean%
Self-awareness	15	75	56.18±3.94	74.9
Emotional self-regulation	11	55	41.40±3.74	75.3
Self-motivation	5	25	19.54±2.47	78.2
Empathy	12	60	46.24±4.02	77.1
Social awareness	10	50	38.76±3.59	77.5
Stress management	24	120	93.98±8.04	78.3
Self esteem	14	70	53.20±6.37	76.0
Total	91	455	349.28±25.50	76.8

Descriptive statistics (Mean &SD, Mean %)

Table (3): Mean and mean percentage of the nursing intern students' regarding perceived stress dimensions (n= 200).

Perceived stress dimensions	Minimum	Maximum	Mean± S.D	Mean%
Teachers and nursing staff	7	35	19.92±5.37	56.9
Taking care of patients	6	30	15.49±4.53	51.6
Lack of professional knowledge	5	25	12.56±3.93	50.2
Nature of clinical practice	6	30	17.19±5.17	57.3
Student role demands	4	20	11.20±3.21	56.0
Total	28	140	76.36±16.55	54.5

Descriptive statistics (Mean &SD, Mean %)

Table (4): Mean and mean percentage of the nursing intern students' perception regarding to total life satisfaction (n= 200).

Life satisfaction	Minimum	Maximum	Mean± S.D	Mean%
Total	5	35	19.99±5.17	56.8

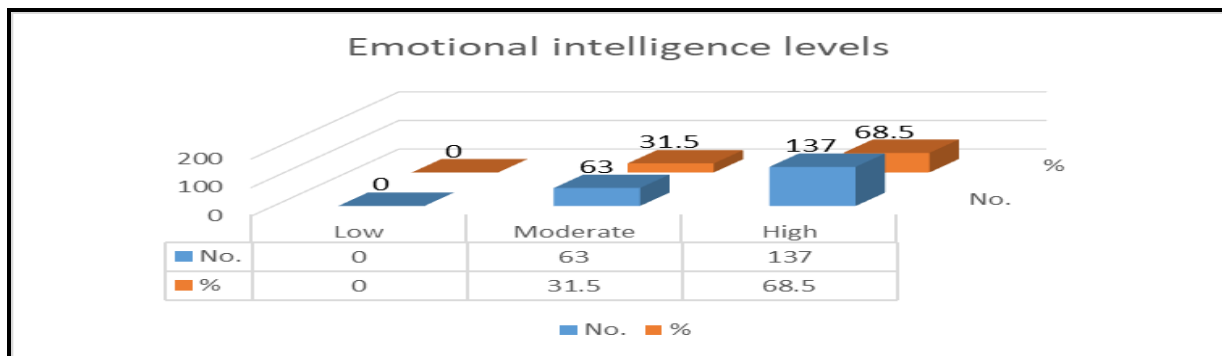*Descriptive statistics (Mean &SD, Mean %)*

Figure (3): Distribution of nursing intern students according to their level of Emotional intelligence (n=200)
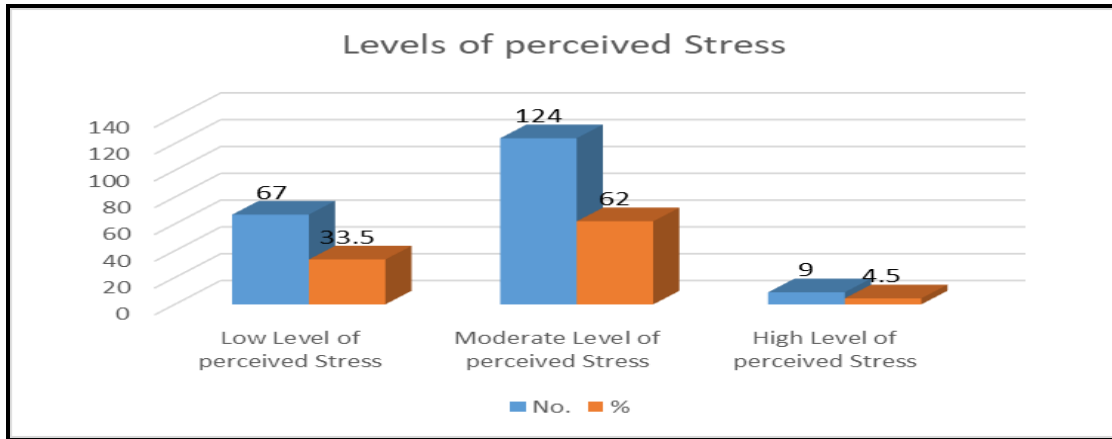
Figure (4): Distribution of nursing intern students according to their perceived stress levels (n=200).
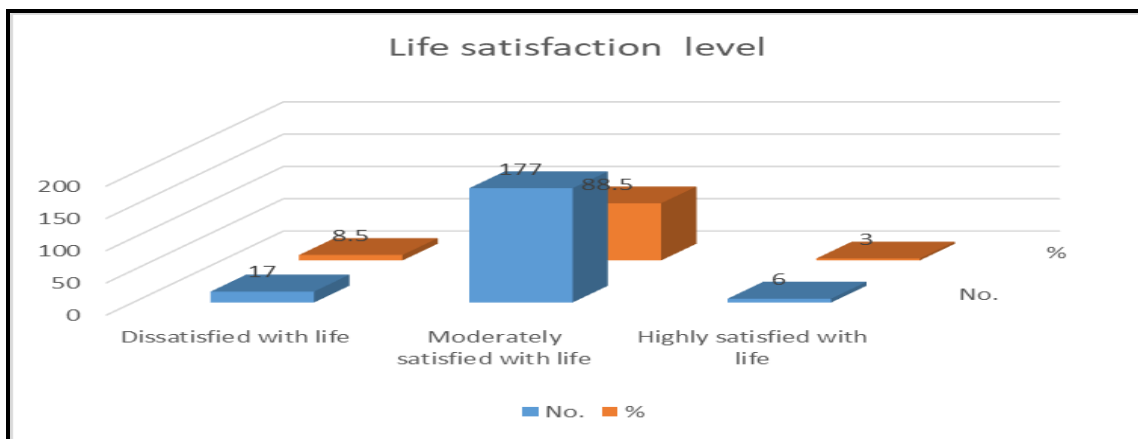

Figure (5): Distribution of nursing intern students according to their life satisfaction levels (n=200)

Table (5): Correlation between total perceived stress levels and total life satisfaction levels as perceived by nursing intern students (n=200).

perceived stress level life satisfaction levels	Dissatisfied with life		Moderately satisfied with life		Highly satisfied with life		X2	P
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Low perceived stress level	3	17.6	63	35.6	1	16.7	-34.5	0.0001*
Moderate perceived stress level	12	70.6	110	62.1	2	33.3		
High perceived stress level	2	11.8	4	2.3	3	50.0		
Total	**R= -0.13**		**P= 0.05**					

Pearson Correlation   *significant at p-value<0.05

Table (6): Correlation between total perceived stress levels and total emotional intelligence levels as perceived by nursing intern students (n=200).

Perceived stress level / Emotional Intelligence levels (EI)	Low (EI)		Moderate(EI)		High(EI)		X2	P
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Low perceived stress level	0	0.0	19	30.2	48	35.0	0.98	0.61
Moderate perceived stress level	0	0.0	42	66.7	82	59.9		
High perceived stress level	0	0.0	2	3.2	7	5.1		
Total			R= -0.01		P= 0.85			

Pearson Correlation   *significant at p-value<0.05*

Table (7): Correlation between total emotional intelligence levels and total life satisfaction levels as perceived by nursing intern students (n=200).

Emotional intelligence level (EI) / Life satisfaction level	Dissatisfied with life		Moderately satisfied with life		Highly satisfied with life		X2	P
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Low (EI)	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1.2	0.53
Moderate(EI)	4	23.5	58	32.8	1	16.7		
High(EI)	13	76.5	119	67.2	5	83.3		
Total		**R= 0.02**		**P= 0.77**				

Pearson Correlation   **significant at p-value<0.05*

Table (8): The effect of emotional intelligence on perceived stress among nursing intern students (n=200)

Independent variable	Regression coefficient (Beta)	Standard error	T value	p-value	R2
Emotional intelligence	-0.01	0.046	-0.23	0.81	0.0001

Linear regression analysis   **A significant level at p ≤0.05*

Table (9): The effect of emotional intelligence on life satisfaction among nursing intern students (n=200)

Independent variable	Regression coefficient (Beta)	Standard error	T value	p-value	R2
Emotional intelligence	0.005	0.01	0.36	0.71	0.0004

Linear regression analysis   **A significant level at p ≤0.05*

Table (1): Shows that more than half (61.0%) of study sample were females. The majority (83 %) of them were single. Moreover, the highest percent (78.5%) of the study sample weren't working during internship training in a private hospital

Figure (1): Shows that around one-third (34.5%) of the nursing intern students were being trained at medical units. While small percentages (12.5%) of them were being trained in pediatric unit.

Figure (2): Shows that the highest percent (72.5%) of the nursing intern students were trained for the first trial regarding training in current specialty.

Table (2): Reveals that the nursing intern students highly perceived all dimensions of emotional intelligence. The highest mean percent (78.3% & 78.2%) of the nursing intern students were perception related to Stress management and Self-motivation respectively. while the lowest mean percent (75.3%) was related to emotional self-regulation.

Table (3): Indicates that the highest mean percent (57.3%, 56.9%, and 56.0%) of the nursing intern students' were regarding the Nature of clinical practice, Teachers, nursing staff and Student role demands respectively. while the lowest mean percentage (50.2%) was related to a lack of professional knowledge.

Table (4): Indicates that the mean percent of the nursing intern students' perception related to life satisfaction was (56.8%).

According to the figure (3): Illustrates that the highest percentage (68.5%) of nursing intern students had a high level of emotional intelligence and about

one third (31.5%) had a moderate level of emotional intelligence.

Regarding the figure (4): Reveals that (4.5%) of nursing intern students highly perceived stress and more than half (62%) had moderately perceived stress, while (33.5%) of them had a low level of perceived stress.

Regarding to the Figure (5): Reveals that (3.0%) of the nursing intern students had a high level of life satisfaction, while the majority of them (88.5%) had a moderate level of life satisfaction and (8.5%) of nursing intern students had a low level of life satisfaction.

Table (5): Declares that there was a highly significant negative correlation between nursing intern students' perceived stress levels and their Life satisfaction levels (X2=34.5, p=0.0001*).

Table (6): Indicates that there was no correlation between nursing intern students' perceived stress levels and their emotional intelligence levels (X2=0.98, p=0.61).

Table (7): Indicates that there was no correlation between nursing intern students' emotional intelligence levels and their life satisfaction levels (X2=1.2, p=0.53).

Table (8): Indicates that there was no significant effect of emotional intelligence on perceived stress (R2= 0.0001, p=0.81).

Table (9): Indicates that there was no significant effect of emotional intelligence on life satisfaction (R2= 0.0004, p=0.71).

Discussion:

This study emphasise the importance of emotional intelligence in reducing the adverse impact of stressors on overall life satisfaction by clarifying the mediating function of emotional intelligence in the link between perceived stress and life satisfaction. The results highlight the significance of building emotional intelligence abilities as a viable approach to enhancing the mental health and satisfaction of nursing interns within the obstacles of their clinical education. In order to provide the best possible care for patients, healthcare workers must improve their emotional intelligence. This is also important for supporting the professional and personal growth of students undertaking the demanding nursing program. Therefore the current study aimed to examine the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction among nursing intern students.

The findings of this study indicated that nursing intern students exhibited a high level of all categories of emotional intelligence. The nursing intern students had the greatest mean percentages of 78.3% and 78.2% for their stress management and self-motivation, respectively. The lowest mean percentage (75.3%) was seen in relation to emotional self-regulation. This findings disagree with **Khademi, et al., 2021** who exhibited a weak level of all categories of emotional intelligence among nursing students.

From the authors' perspective, it is common for nursing students to engage in intensive training and education, encompassing both theoretical coursework and hands-on practice in managing emotionally charged scenarios. The experience of encountering stress and emotional difficulties can result in building up of emotional resilience and coping mechanisms, consequently enhancing one's emotional intelligence. In addition, clinical rotations and internships provide nursing students the opportunity to have direct exposure to the provision of care for patients presenting with diverse medical problems. This exposure enables individuals to gain a more comprehensive comprehension of the emotional dimensions inherent in illness and healthcare, so improving their emotional intelligence.

In relation to the dimensions of perceived stress, the findings of the present study suggest that the nursing intern students exhibited the highest average percentage in relation to the Nature of clinical practice. This was followed by Teachers, nursing staff, and Student role demands. The lowest mean percentage was shown to be associated with a deficiency in professional expertise. Similarly **Shdaifat, et al., 2018** who stated types of stressors perceived by nursing students were stress from assignment and workload followed by teacher and

nursing staff, taking care of patients and the last type of stress was Stress from lack of professional knowledge and skills.

To justify these results; Clinical practice involves direct patient care, which comes with a significant responsibility. Nursing students may experience stress because they are accountable for the well-being of patients, and the stakes are high. Furthermore, nursing students may experience stress related to meeting the expectations of their teachers and clinical instructors. They may worry about their performance being evaluated and graded, which can create pressure to do better than. Additionally, Balancing coursework, clinical rotations, assignments, and exams can be overwhelming. Nursing students often have demanding academic schedules that require effective time management and coping strategies.

The present study illustrated that the highest percentage of nursing intern students had a high level of emotional intelligence and about one-third had a moderate level of emotional intelligence this is congruent with the results of other studies which found the majority of nursing intern students had a high level of emotional intelligence **(Polis et al., 2021) & Similarly, et al., (2018)**, who stated emotions play a crucial role in the nursing profession, and emotional intelligence is recognised as a fundamental characteristic of student nurses that influences various aspects of their performance, such as clinical decision-making, critical thinking, and the application of evidence and knowledge in practise.

To justifay this findings; Nursing education programmes frequently incorporate curricula and instruction pertaining to interpersonal abilities, empathy, and emotional intelligence. The incorporation of emotional intelligence (EI) into the curriculum has the potential to enhance the development of emotional intelligence among nursing students. Furthermore Clinical rotations and hands-on patient care offer nursing students a multitude of opportunities to cultivate and employ emotional intelligence. Nursing intern students often work closely with experienced nurses who serve as mentors and role models. Exposure to nurses who exhibit high emotional intelligence can positively influence students' own EI development.

The current study results showed that more than half of the studied nursing intern students had moderate levels of perceived stress, while around one-third of them had a low level of perceived stress. In the same line **Yildirim-Hamurcu & Terzioglu, (2021).** Stated that the students in the study reported a moderate level of stress during clinical practise (mean =2.56, SD = 0.74).

In order to verify these findings, it is essential for nursing students to engage in clinical rotations, where

in they administer patient care while being closely supervised by senior nurses. The responsibility and pressure associated with providing actual medical care can potentially induce stress among students. Moreover, Nursing internships sometimes include extended shifts and unpredictable schedules, which have the potential to disturb sleep patterns and personal lives. The variability in work hours has the potential to contribute to heightened levels of stress. Moreover, nursing students are frequently exposed to patients who may be in a state of distress or suffering critical health problems. Delivering care to patients in such circumstances might result in emotional strain and the experience of perceived stress.

The present study results reveals that small percentages of the nursing intern students had a high level of life satisfaction, while the majority of them had a moderate level of life satisfaction and less than ten percentage of nursing intern students had a low level of life satisfaction. **Similarly et al., 2018** who reported that university students experienced a moderate degree of life satisfaction. The results can be justified by considering, the nursing profession is known for its demanding and often stressful nature. Long working hours, dealing with patients' illnesses and emotions, and the responsibility for people's health can be challenging. These factors might contribute to a moderate level of life satisfaction among nursing students.

The current study declared that there was a statistical significant correlation between nursing intern students' perceived stress levels and their Life satisfaction levels. In the same line Lee, Kim, and Wachholtz, 2018 who found perceived stress was negatively associated with life satisfaction (r=−.470, p<.01). From the authors' perspective. Working in a healthcare setting, especially during internships, can be emotionally and mentally challenging. Students may witness distressing medical conditions, deal with patients' suffering, and experience the pressure of making critical decisions. Such experiences can contribute to higher perceived stress levels, which may, in turn, affect life satisfaction.

On the other hand, there was no correlation between nursing intern students' perceived stress levels and their emotional intelligence levels. Incongruent with **Mousa, et al., (2022)** who found a Significant negative Correlations between level of perceived stress and emotional intelligence among the studied interns (r=-0.341, p= <0.001). This results may be related to there is variation in emotional intelligence among individuals. There were a variation exists in the levels of emotional intelligence among nursing intern students, with certain individuals demonstrating higher levels while others exhibit

lower levels. Nevertheless, the influence of emotional intelligence on the perception of stress levels may vary based on individual features, life experiences, and additional variables. The presence of variability may result in an absence of a consistent correlation between the two variables.

Additionally, there was no correlation between nursing intern students' emotional intelligence levels and their life satisfaction levels. This finding Incongruent with **Urquijo, et al., (2016)** who expected, emotional intelligence was positively associated with life satisfaction. To justifay this finding, Life satisfaction is influenced by a wide range of factors, including socioeconomic status, personal values, cultural background, health, and life circumstances. These factors can significantly impact an individual's overall life satisfaction, and emotional intelligence may not be the most influential factor among them. In cases where other factors play a more prominent role, the correlation between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction may be weak or non-existent.

Finally, the current study demonstrated that, emotional intelligence may not be a meaningful predictor of perceived stress and life satisfaction among nursing Intern Students. These results disagree with **Ishaq, et al., (2020)** who reported that emotional intelligence positively correlates with life satisfaction and negatively correlates with perceived stress.

From the authors' prespectives, nursing intern students may have unique stressors and coping mechanisms that differ from other populations. It's possible that in this specific group, emotional intelligence may not play a significant role in determining perceived stress levels and enhancement life satisfaction. Additionally, there could be other factors that are more influential in predicting perceived stress and life satisfaction among nursing intern students. These factors could include workload, clinical experiences, personal life circumstances, or individual differences that were not considered in the current study **(Budler, et al., 2022).**

Conclusion

To conclude there is a direct association between perceived stress and life satisfaction as a negative and statistically significant correlation was observed between total perceived stress level and life satisfaction. This implies that greater life satisfaction is associated with reduced stress level as perceived by nursing intern students.

In addition, there was no effect of emotional intelligence on life satisfaction and perceived stress level as perceived by nursing intern students. So the emotional intelligence didn't mediate the relationship between perceived stress and life satisfaction.

Finally, based on the study findings, it could be concluded that the nursing intern students highly perceived all dimensions of emotional intelligence. While more than half had perceived moderate stress level and moderately satisfied with life.

Recommendations

- Further research may be needed in this area to build a more comprehensive understanding of perceived stress and life satisfaction in this particular group of students.
- Develop and implement intervention and support programs that address the specific stressors and challenges faced by nursing intern students. These programs could focus on stress management techniques, communication skills, and coping strategies that may be more directly related to reducing perceived stress and enhancing life satisfaction.
- Regularly gather feedback from nursing intern students regarding their stress levels, satisfaction with the program, and perceived support. Use this feedback to make continuous improvements in the curriculum and support services.

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