

Extroversion, Neuroticism and Job Satisfaction

A Comparative Study of Staff Nurses and Students

Razeena Padmam

A HUNDRED years ago, Nursing in this country was an occupation of uneducated women who had no sophisticated training. But today Nursing is a skilled, honourable and well-organised profession which prescribes a well-defined course of training. Moreover, unlike other medical and paramedical professions, Nursing is described both as a science and an art – a science in the wide body of specialised knowledge and an art in the approach to the patient as a human being. Since the human aspect of Nursing is most often stressed, it is important that a Nurse must possess certain personal qualities. She or he must certainly be a person of unquestioned personality and stability. She or he must be capable of making both personal as well as social adjustments. Personality factors and degree of adjustment are no doubt the major determinants of job satisfaction.

The personality of an individual emerges from the interaction of the individual with the environment and is reflected in her or his motives, habits, traits, feelings, actions, attitudes, etc. It is also established that a person's personality is deter-

mined on the basis of the biological and psychological needs and on how well they are being satisfied. Thus a study of the relationship between personality and job satisfaction has special implications in a profession like Nursing.

Extroverts and Introverts

Here, the personality variables — extroversion, introversion, and neuroticism — are selected based on the Eysenckian dimension of personality. According to Eysenck (1952a) extroverts are characterised by strong inhibition and weak excitation, while introverts show the opposite tendency. Extroverts are sociable in nature, like company and make friends easily while introverts like to be alone, talk less, are shy and withdrawn. It would be interesting to know the personality dimension of persons choosing to be Nurses.

Neuroticism is also an important variable that is to be considered in Nursing research. Since most of the Nurses have stressful working conditions, they are reported to have worries, anxieties and other disagreeable emotional feelings that a neurotic person has. It is felt that a comparative study of Nursing students and Staff Nurses in 'neuroticism' would

throw more light in this regard.

Eysenck (1964) has suggested that emotions act as a drive and is a function of greater emotional arousability in some people, as compared with others. If this is so, one would expect that there would be an interaction between extroversion and neuroticism in their effects upon job satisfaction.

Studies indicating neurotics to be dissatisfied in their jobs have been done by early researchers like Kornhawser and Sharp (1932) and Oakely (1934).

Lack of Studies

Although it has been argued that personality has a bearing on job satisfaction, no relevant studies have been reported in the field of Nursing. Even now, no psychological measurements or other criteria have been made use of in the selection of Nurses. No attempts have been made so far to see whether the Nursing staff or those who are under going training in Nursing are satisfied with themselves and with their jobs or whether they are finding it difficult to adjust with their professional climate. In fact, what is lacking in the Nursing field is the development of a complete body of scientific knowledge that can be truly termed Nursing Research.

Research studies related to

Dr. Razeena Padmam is Reader, School of Behavioural Sciences, M.G. University, Kottayam.

the personality of Nurses are few in our country and attempts to conduct studies, especially in the Kerala culture, are found to be more or less sporadic. Therefore, the following hypotheses have been formulated for the study based on general reasoning.

1. There will be significant difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Extroversion.
2. There will be significant difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Neuroticism.
3. There will be significant difference between satisfied and dissatisfied Nurses in Extroversion.
4. There will be significant difference between satisfied and dissatisfied Nurses in Neuroticism.

METHOD

Sample

The sample for the study was selected from the various hospitals and Nursing Colleges of Thiruvananthapuram district, the capital of Kerala State. The study was confined to Thiruvananthapuram district owing to its cosmopolitan nature. Staff Nurses and Nursing students in Thiruvananthapuram represent a crosssection of the population of the Kerala state.

Tools

The tools used are:

- Moudsley Personality Inventory

- Job Satisfaction Inventory
- Personal Data Bank

Moudsley Personality Inventory (MPI)

MPI measures the two dimensions of personality, viz., Neuroticism and Extroversion. The coefficient of split-half and test-retest reliabilities of Extroversion and Neuroticism scales are 0.58 and 0.50 as well as 0.73 and 0.77 respectively.

Job Satisfaction Inventory

Job satisfaction inventory covers information on pay, work opportunity, lack of technical know-how, promotional opportunity, facilities for work, work load, conflicting work roles, underwork, monotony of work, work expectations of supervisors and authority vested on the job. The reliability coefficient for the job satisfaction scale is 0.81.

Administration of the Test

The subjects were contacted personally by the investigator and were administered the tests individually. Printed instructions were read out and mode of answering was explained to them. The tests were scored as per the directions in the manual.

Analysis

As the size of the various subsamples in the study exceeds 30, and as the variables are not correlated the analysis as well as the interpretation of the results is done on the basis of the standard criteria followed in the test of significance for large independent samples.

Results

The results reveal significant difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Extroversion. At the same time the two groups do not differ significantly in Neuroticism. The results also indicate that there is significant difference between satisfied Nurses and dissatisfied Nurses both in Extroversion and Neuroticism. The means and standard deviations of the scores obtained by the two groups and the 't' values are presented in respective tables.

The 't' value indicates that the difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Extroversion is highly significant (0.01 level). The Table further shows that Nursing students are more extroverted than Staff Nurses.

Every individual possesses both the mechanisms of Extro-

Table I
Means and Standard Deviations of the Scores Obtained by the Nursing Students and Staff Nurses in Extroversion

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	't' value
Nursing students	150	23.81	6.49	3.51 **
Staff Nurses	150	20.98	7.44	

** P < Significant at .01 level.

version and Introversion. Although inner dispositions play a role in determining the particular trait, external circumstances have much to do in favouring any one of the two mechanisms and impede or restrict the other.

In the case of Nursing students, they are subject to working conditions where they have tasks which are clearly outlined and easily worked out; they have more leisure time to develop interest in things or going outside. These factors naturally lead to the dominance of the mechanism of Extroversion in Nursing students. Moreover, the learning tasks of Nursing students itself demand extroverted behaviour.

As Table II shows, the 't' value obtained is 1.37 which indicates that the difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Neuroticism is not significant statistically. However, there is a small difference between the two groups as shown by the difference in the mean value. The slight increase in the mean scores of Staff Nurses in Neuroticism can be attributed to the heavy work load, the responsibility and the monotonous nature of their work.

A study conducted by Mathew and Joseph (1977) re-

Table III
The Means and Standard Deviations + Value of the Scores in Extroversion of Satisfied and Dissatisfied

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	't' Value
Satisfied Group	168	22.28	8.48	2.18*
Dissatisfied Group	132	22.85	7.52	

P* Significant at .05 level

veals that 75 per cent of the Staff Nurses studied were neurotic. But there are no relevant studies to show that there is significant difference between Nursing students and Staff Nurses in Neuroticism.

Further, a comparison of the means of extroversion scores of satisfied and dissatisfied groups is made and is presented in Table III.

The 't' value indicates that the difference between satisfied and dissatisfied groups in extroversion is moderately significant. From the means it can be inferred that satisfied Nurses are more extroverted than dissatisfied Nurses.

Interpersonal relations are very important in determining the job satisfaction. 'Nursing' is an area where constant interpersonal transactions occur. Nurses who succeed in deriving satisfaction in their job are also able to develop and maintain healthy and satisfying social and interpersonal relationships.

The means, standard deviations and 't' value obtained from the scores of satisfied and dissatisfied groups in Neuroticism are presented in Table IV.

The result indicates a highly significant difference between satisfied and dissatisfied groups in Neuroticism. From the means it is seen that the dissatisfied group gets a higher score in neuroticism than the satisfied group of Nurses.

The result obtained is expected because of the general notion that emotional problems interfere with one's work. Both neuroticism and job satisfaction are inter-correlated. Dissatisfaction in one's job breeds anxiety. Anxiety is often compensated with several psychosomatic mechanisms. They try to fool themselves by rationalising their failures, often complaining of physical ailments and projecting their weakness on others. They even become emotionally apathetic. Job dissatisfaction is undoubtedly proved disastrous to one's mental health and brings out neurotic tendencies.

Although few attempts to study the relationship between job satisfaction and Neuroticism have been done in the field of Nursing in Western countries, no studies have been reported in the Kerala culture.

Table II
Means and Standard Deviations of the Scores Obtained by the Nursing Students and Staff Nurses in Neuroticism

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	't' Value
Nursing Students	150	21.72	8.49	1.37
Staff Nurses	150	23.26	10.83	

Table IV
Means, SD and 't' value of Satisfied and Dissatisfied Groups in Neuroticism

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	't' Value
Satisfied Group	168	20.85	8.68	6.2**
Dissatisfied Group	132	25.19	9.51	

**P (Significant at .01 level)

Summary and Conclusions

The study is mainly intended to determine the difference, if any, between Staff Nurses and Nursing students with regard to Extroversion - Introversion dimension, Neuroticism and job satisfaction. Based on the results obtained, the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Nursing students are found to be more extroverted than Staff Nurses.

2. There is no significant difference between Staff Nurses and Nursing students in Neuroticism.

3. Staff and Student Nurses who are satisfied in their jobs are seen to be more extroverted than the dissatisfied Staff and Student Nurses.

4. Staff and Student Nurses who are satisfied in their jobs are seen to be less neurotic than the dissatisfied Staff and Student Nurses.

The main part of the analysis in the study resulted in a very important finding that the satisfied group irrespective of the status as a Staff Nurse or a Nursing Student is more extroverted than the dissatisfied group. This implies that job-satisfaction is a very important determining factor in the Nursing profession. Another finding is that Nursing students are more extroverted

than Staff Nurses. Subjects who are extroverted are more sociable, like company and make friends easily. These qualities are inevitable for successful Nursing practice which are lacking among Staff Nurses. Conditions such as lack of leisure time, forceful subordination, lack of encouragement from superior officers, etc, may be some of the reasons for the Staff Nurses to seek Introverted tendencies. Therefore, problems of Nursing profession must be viewed from

a larger societal or psychological angle rather than from the narrow angle of medical field so that their working conditions can be improved and their status raised.

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