

An Exploratory Study of Nurses' and Healthcare Technicians' Knowledge of Soft Skills

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Abstract

The goal is to determine which soft skills (SS) are most important and to gauge the degree of knowledge that nurses and healthcare technicians possess in this area.

Method: 350 nurses and healthcare technicians in the Souss-Massa region participated in this quantitative exploratory study with an analytical focus.

In conclusion, even in the absence of official training, nurses and healthcare technicians are knowledgeable about SS. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the most significant SS in this field in order to incorporate it into training programs for students and healthcare professionals. Furthermore, more research on the development and evaluation of SS is advised.

Keywords: Healthcare, Nursing, Technicians, Communication.

1. Introduction

Stress and burnout among nurses have increased as a result of the workload, lack of human resources, epidemics, and an increase in diseases. The need for nurses to develop and become proficient in a variety of soft skills (SS) has been highlighted by technological advancements as well as the growing public demands regarding the quality of care. These SS also known as human or socio-emotional skills—are very good predictors of job performance and employability (Martin , 2023).

The effectiveness of SS in healthcare, especially in the organizational and human elements of patient care, has been shown in numerous studies. In order to care for patients, their families, and the larger community, nurses must always be alert and ready. Their use of knowledge and expertise determines how well they can contribute to the health and well-being of society. Therefore, in order to address the various needs of patients and the general public, healthcare professionals need to be SS. The growth of SS reduces anxiety, work- related stress, and demoralization by promoting drive, optimism, curiosity, and accountability. Furthermore, SS fosters professionalism, teamwork, sociability, optimism, and confidence in addition to

supporting the growth of critical thinking, communication, problem- solving, and team spirit (Nicolaides , 2018).

The purpose of this study is to determine the most important SS in the field of nursing and health techniques as well as to evaluate the degree of knowledge that nurses and health technicians possess about SS.

Important and evaluating nurses' and healthcare technicians' knowledge of SS :

Finding the most important SS and evaluating nurses' and healthcare technicians' knowledge of SS were the main goals of this study.

Given that only 12.3% of the participants had received training in SS, their poor comprehension of the subject (49.7%) can be ascribed to insufficient training. According to earlier research along similar lines, participants most frequently identified socio-relational skills as SS, followed by human skills and SS. The significance of SS was given top priority by the participants, who placed particular emphasis on boosting patient care, human skill development, and working conditions. Human abilities were thought to be especially important for building good relationships and having productive conversations with patients and their families (Robles , 2012).

Furthermore, 73.4% of participants said they needed SS training, and they recommended self-, continuous, and basic training as the main approaches for SS development. Accordingly, Dube and Laari emphasized the growing need for SS training, which is being driven by globalization and population growth, with the goal of enhancing patient relationships and improving the quality of care. Whether through self- training, ongoing education, or incorporating SS modules into nursing and health technology training programs, the crucial role that training plays in SS development was emphasized (Schmit , 2020).

Paramount significance of 10 specific SS :

communication, cooperation, stress reduction, problem-solving, conflict resolution, integrity, judgment, flexibility, lifelong learning, and self-assurance. Numerous studies throughout the literature have consistently acknowledged the critical roles that communication, teamwork, stress management, problem solving, conflict management, honesty, decision-making, adaptability, lifelong learning, and confidence play (Ariga , 2021).

demonstrating the multiplier effect of training on the probability of knowing SS, which is in line with earlier research that highlights the value of training for SS development.

The Nursing and Healthcare Professions:

For thorough and efficient patient care, it is essential to combine soft skills with fundamental knowledge. Enhancing the application of technical and clinical competencies—basic skills—necessary for healthcare tasks requires soft skills. Effective communication is essential for healthcare workers to collaborate with colleagues, educate patients, and transmit information. Clear communication improves patient outcomes by reducing errors and misunderstandings. Healthcare professionals can emotionally connect with patients when they are confident, empathetic, and honest. This can greatly improve the patient experience by fostering trust and

making sure that patients feel heard and appreciated (Berwick , 2010). Another essential soft skill that encouraged cooperation amongst multidisciplinary teams is teamwork. By ensuring that all facets of patient care are optimized and coordinated, effective teamwork lowers the possibility of mistakes and raises overall quality. Healthcare workers are better equipped to make prompt, well-informed decisions, especially under pressure, when they possess problem-solving, stress-reduction, flexibility, and conflict-resolution abilities. Under ideal working conditions, this guarantees patient safety and prompt interventions (Dalaya, 2015).

Additionally, lifelong learning is essential for maintaining technological advancement in the field and for the skill development of health professionals. The development of the nursing profession, the evolution of nursing practice, the quality of care provided, and ultimately the health and well-being of society are all closely related to this.

2. Recommendations:

It should be noted that this study has some limitations even though it advances our understanding of nurses' and healthcare technicians' knowledge of SS and yields reliable results thanks to quantitative methods and a sizable sample size.

It only addressed the public sector; professionals in the private sector might know different things, especially when it comes to working conditions, which could affect how important SS is in this sector. Furthermore, the results can't be applied to other parts of Morocco or other nations because they are limited to the Souss Massa region. In this regard, future research may benefit greatly from using more diverse samples and qualitative techniques to increase research robustness.

3. Conclusion:

This study examined the prioritization of important SS in the nursing and health techniques fields as well as the degree of SS knowledge among nurses and health technicians. Only 12.3% of the participants had formal training in SS, even though nearly half of them understood the concept to some extent. Communication, teamwork, stress management, problem-solving, conflict management, honesty, decision-making, flexibility, lifelong learning, and confidence are all included in the top 10 SS that have been identified. Therefore, it is advised that training programs for students and healthcare professionals incorporate these essential SS.

In a dynamic and ever-changing work environment, evaluating nurses' and healthcare technicians' knowledge of SS is essential to their growth and fulfillment. Furthermore, these results provide a useful database for medical professionals, educators, healthcare facilities, and training programs, which promotes the skill development of medical professionals and, in turn, improves the standard of care, patient outcomes, and public health. Furthermore, more research is necessary to examine the creation and assessment of SS, not only for nurses but also for all other medical professionals in this region and across the nation. In order to identify the best pedagogical approaches for the development of SS, it is crucial to test a number of them with

both students undergoing initial training and healthcare professionals undergoing ongoing training.

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