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Emotional Intelligence And Spiritual Well-Being Among Nursing Students (Abstract)

Audrey Beauvais, *Sacred Heart University*

Susan DeNisco, *Sacred Heart University*

Julie G Stewart, *Sacred Heart University*

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Audrey M Beauvais, Sacred Heart University; Susan DeNisco, Sacred Heart University; Julie Stewart, Sacred Heart University

Purpose: To examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual well-being among nursing students.

Theoretical Framework: Mayer and Salovey's emotional intelligence model. Emotional intelligence is the ability to reason with, and about emotions. It combines feelings with thinking.

Methods: A descriptive correlational design was utilized. A convenience sample was recruited at one New England University. Background data was collected in addition to administering the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) and the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS).

Results: There were 124 participants. The sample was predominately Caucasian (88%), female (97%), and mean age 30 years. There were 86.2% undergraduate and 13.8% graduate students with a 3.49 mean grade point average. The mean score (scaled) for emotional intelligence was 95.75, $SD \pm 12.605$ indicating moderate emotional intelligence. The mean score for spiritual well-being was 91.08, $SD \pm 16.94$ indicating moderate spiritual well-being. Although overall scores were not significantly correlated, additional analyses found a weak but statistically significant relationship between the emotional intelligence branch four (managing emotion) score and spiritual well-being. In addition, there was a moderate but statistically significant relationship between branch four (managing emotion) score and existential well-being.

Conclusion and Implications: The significant relationship between emotional intelligence (Branch 4-managing emotions) and spiritual well-being as well as existential well-being in this study supports the statements in the literature that spirituality is related to both emotions and the rational application of those emotions. Emotional intelligence may aid in spiritual development, well-being, and education as emotions are a basis of awareness and engagement within humanity. Research is needed to examine if strategies to enhance emotional intelligence can facilitate the process of increasing spiritual well-being with a test-retest design. Emotional intelligence and spiritual well-being ought to be examined in relationship to other outcomes measures such as student performance, workplace performance, resilience, empowerment, and health benefits.