

THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIOEMOTIONAL VARIABLES ON BURNOUT SYNDROME AMONG NURSING ASSISTANT WORKING IN OLDER CARE SETTINGS

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Introduction

Older care is a stressful job, however, some people are more affected than others by the negative consequences of a chronic stress at work. Emotional demands coming from older people, family members and other professionals are one of the stressors that most lead professionals to Burnout (Demerouti, 2014). Socioemotional variables may help to explain individual differences in Burnout development. This thesis work aims to know the influence of social and emotional variables on the Burnout syndrome among geriatric nursing assistants. The present work is the first step to achieve this objective, where descriptive results of the sample are described.

Method

A cross sectional study has been designed to gather information about the following variables, through a previously well-defined questionnaire survey:

Table 1. Studied variables, its components and administered questionnaires

VARIABLES	COMPONENTS	QUESTIONNAIRES
Sociodemographic and organizational variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Age- Marital status- Shifted work- Educational level- Work experience	Ad-hoc questionnaire
Burnout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Emotional Exhaustion- Depersonalization- Personal Accomplishment	Maslach Burnout Inventory (Seisdedos, 1997)
Perceived Emotional Intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attention to Feelings- Clarity of Feelings- Mood Repair	Trait Meta-Mood Scale (Fernández-Berrocal, Extremera y Ramos, 2004)
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Fantasy- Perspective Taking- Empathic Concern- Personal Distress	Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Pérez-Albéniz, De Paúl, Etxeberria, Montes y Torres, 2003)
Alexithymia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Difficulty Identifying Feelings- Difficulty in Describing Feelings- Externally Oriented Thinking	Toronto Alexithymia Scale (Martínez-Sánchez, 1996)

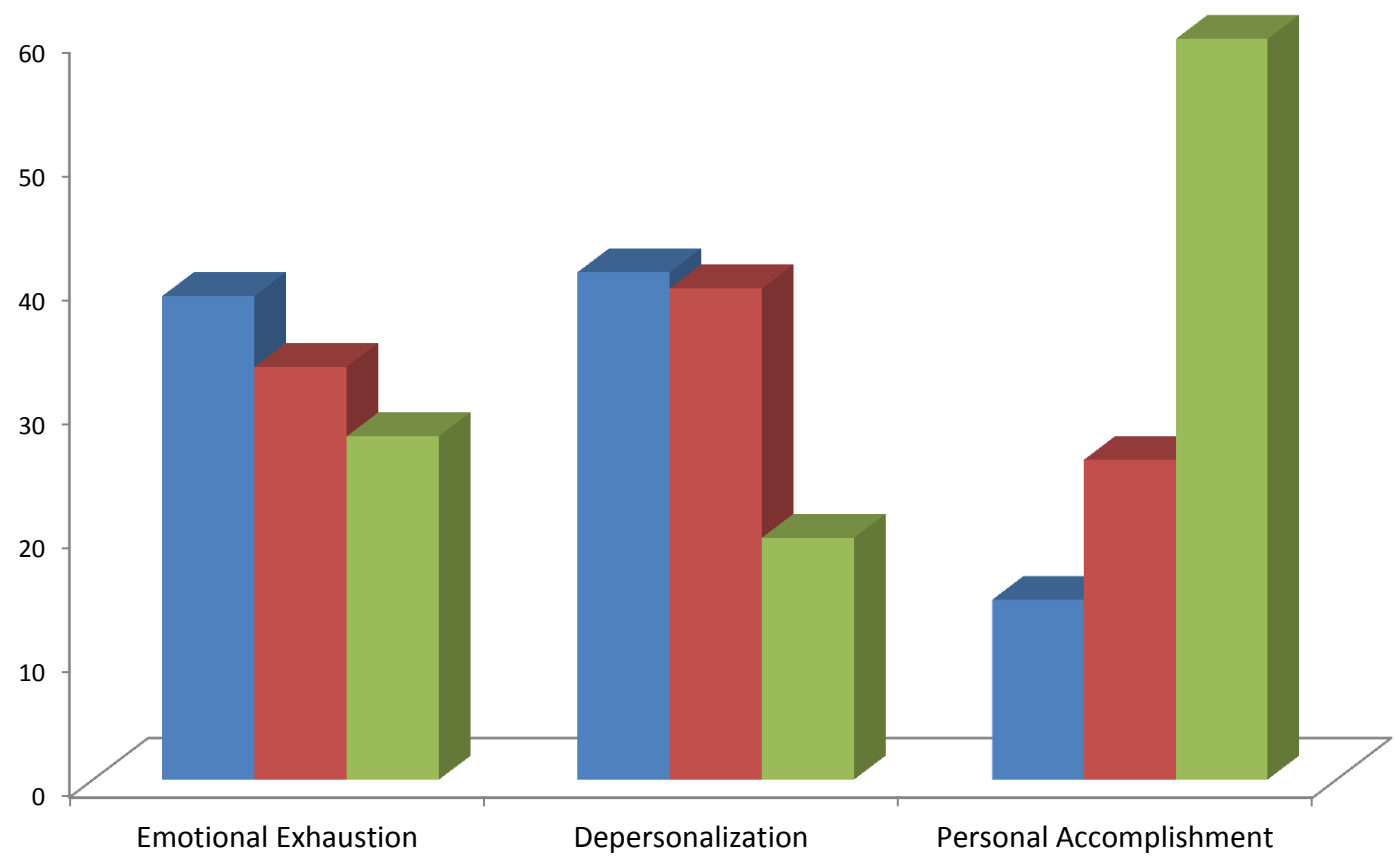
Participants were recruited from ten nursing homes for older people, managed by different providers in Gipuzkoa. The inclusion criteria were (1) to work as a nursing assistant in a nursing home setting in Gipuzkoa, (2) to work in a direct contact to older people at least the 80% of the workday and (3) being working in the same center and job at least for the last one year. Participants’ anonymity has being guaranteed during the project.

Results

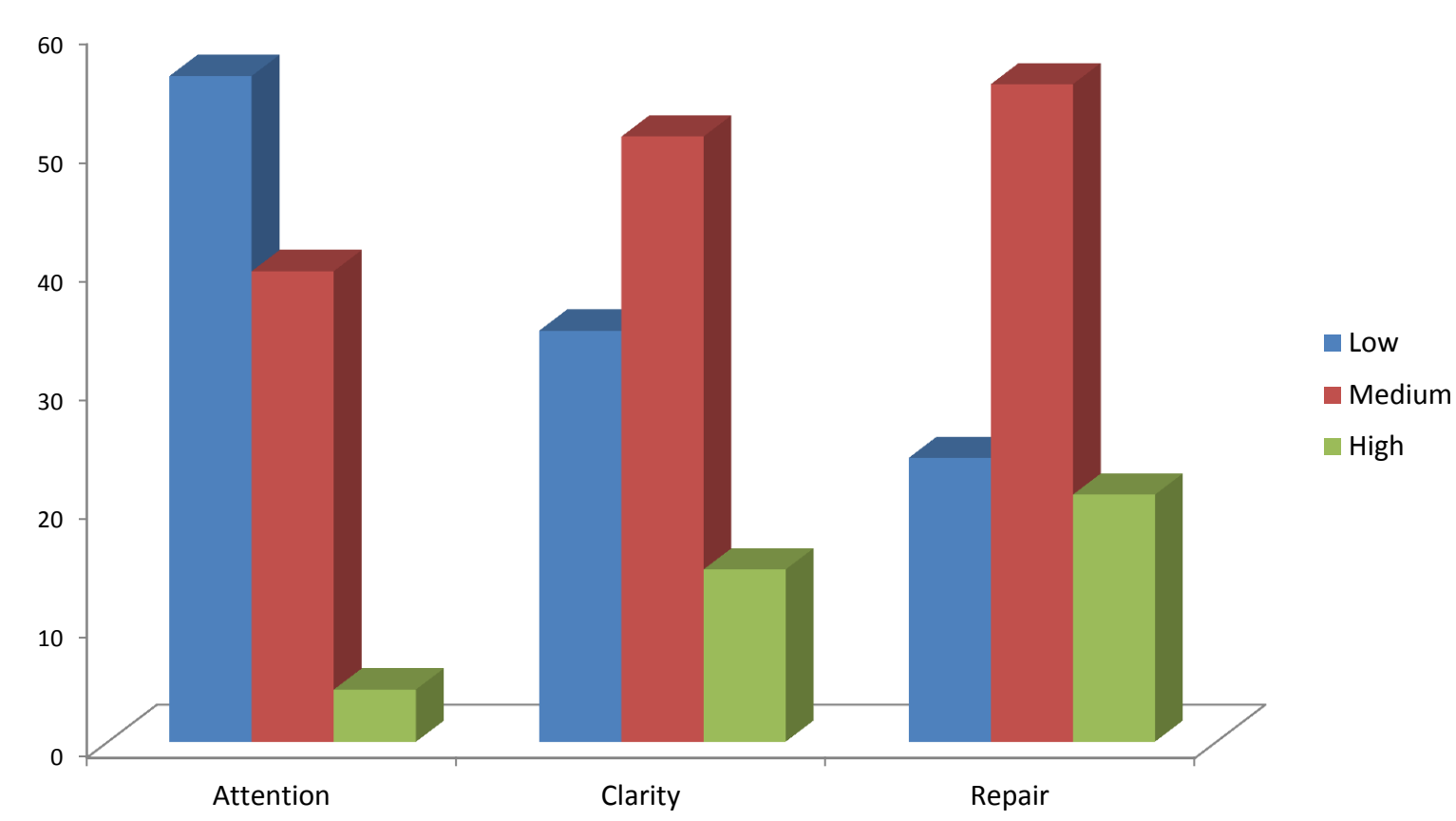
The sample consisted of 159 nursing assistants, mainly women (93.7%), married (56.6%), with secondary level studies (71.6%; mainly vocational training) and with a mean aged of 42, ranging from 22 to 65 years old (\bar{X} = 41.89; SD=9.86). They had about 8 years of work experience in average (\bar{X} =7.79, SD= 5.53) and the 45% of them presented shifted work, including nights and weekend.

Regarding Burnout symptomatology, the sample characterized by low Emotional Exhaustion (39.0%), low level of Depersonalization (40.9%) and high Personal Accomplishment (59.7%) (see graphic 1). The sample showed low Attention to Feelings (56.0%), medium level of Clarity to Feelings (50.9%) and medium Mood Repair (55.3%) in Perceived Emotional Intelligence (see graphic 2). As showed in Graphic 3, in relation to Empathy they showed high level of ability to Perspective Taking (45.3%), medium level of ability to Empathic Concern (39.8%) and low level of Fantasy (60.4%) and Personal Distress (65.4%). Finally, the 15.7% of the sample showed difficulty identifying and describing feelings (Alexithymia).

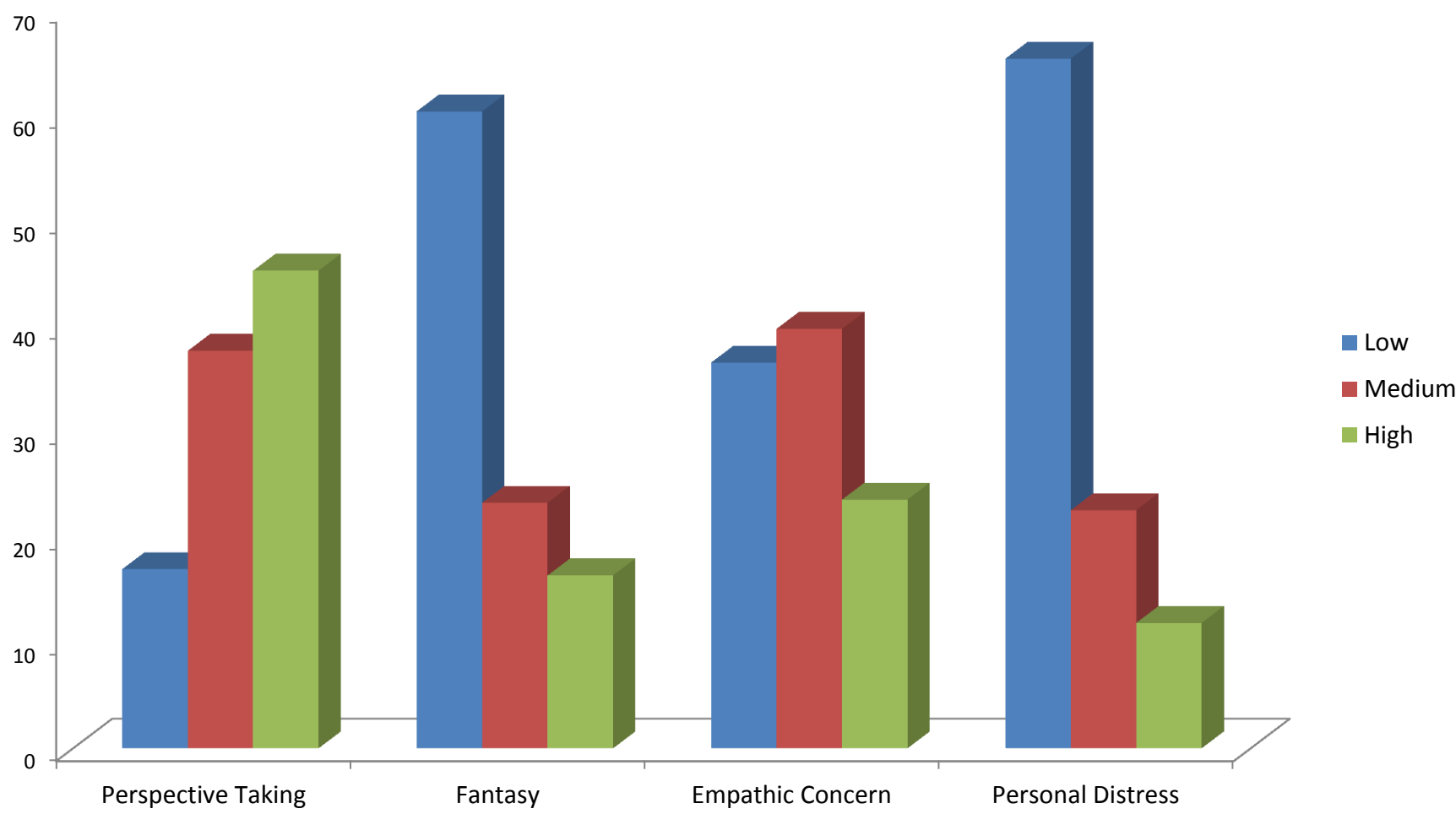
Graphic 1. Burnout symptomatology among the sample (%)



Graphic 2. Levels of Perceived Emotional Intelligence dimensions (%)



Graphic 3. Levels of Empathy dimensions (%)



Conclusions

The results showed medium to high Burnout symptomatology among the sample. They showed an appropriate clarity to feelings and mood repair, however, they should improve the attention they pay to feelings, as well as the cognitive and emotional ability to place oneself in another's position. Finally, although they mostly showed an appropriate emotional expression, there are some participants that should improve their ability to identify and describe feelings. These results showed the need to develop the emotional competences among nursing assistants working with older people. Next steps of this thesis should explore the association between emotional competences and Burnout symptomatology among the sample of the study to know if emotional competences would be preventive variables of the Burnout syndrome.

References

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