



A Study to Assess the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Adjustment Level

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Abstract

Background and objectives

All of us have different personalities, different needs and different ways of showing our emotions. Navigating through this all takes cleverness – especially if we hope to succeed in life. This is where emotional intelligence becomes important. Emotional intelligence has been defined as the ability to adaptively recognize, understand and manage and harness emotions both in self and others and to use emotions to facilitate cognitive processing. It is a skill which involves three processes that are perception (or the ability to consciously recognize our emotions), understanding (integrating what is in our thought), and regulation (lead and manage effectively both positive and negative emotions).

EI can be described as a set of emotional and social skills that collectively establish how well we:

- How well we are perceive and express ourselves.
- Develop and maintain social relationships, how we empathies and work with other people.
- Cope with challenges, recovering quickly from stress and negative emotions.
- Use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way in other words tuning in to subtle signals that the body tells us.

Adolescence is a crucial period in which young people search for identity and meaning in life and the important aspects are their emotions and self-esteem. Goleman has cited that there is a worldwide trend for the present generation to be more troubled emotionally than others; more lonely and depressed; more angry and unruly; more impulsive and angry; and more nervous and prone to worry. Emotional intelligence can determine the quality of our relationship with our self and others. Whether we are students, teachers or managers or are in the clinical area, EI influences our stress level, our ability to perform, and our effectiveness when working with others. The main purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment problems among 1st year B.Sc Nursing students of a selected college of nursing.

Objectives of the study

1. Identify the level of emotional intelligence of the students using a rating scale.
2. Assess the adjustment level of students using rating scale.
3. Identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of students.
4. Find out the association of emotional intelligence score and adjustment level with selected baseline variables (educational level of parents, occupation of parents, number of siblings, birth order and family income per month).

Method

A descriptive correlational survey design was used for the study. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample. The sample for the present study consisted of 75 B. Sc. nursing students. Data was collected using EI rating scale and adjustment rating scale. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Result

There is a low negative correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level. The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves. Statistically there is no significant association between mean emotional intelligence score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. Statistically there is no significant association between mean adjustment problem score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. However, there was a statistically significant association between adjustment level score and mother's occupation. The obtained χ^2 value (4.60) is more than the table value (3.84, $p \leq 0.05$).

Interpretation and conclusion

There is a low negative correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level. The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and research hypothesis is accepted. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; Adjustment level; Nursing Students.

Introduction

Studies have revealed that people with average IQ, more often than not, outperform those with higher IQ. The reason is Emotional Intelligence.¹All of us have different personalities, different needs and different ways of showing our emotions. Navigating through this all takes cleverness – especially if we hope to succeed in life. This is where emotional intelligence become important.²As we venture into the millennium, the word emotion has emerged with a new meaning. The word emotional means “markedly aroused or agitated in feeling or sensibilities.”³ A person is said to be emotionally intelligent when he feels proper emotions in a proper situation and express it in proper quantity.⁴It is estimated that worldwide there are 1.2 million adolescents.⁵ Adolescence period is a crucial period in which young people search for identity and meaning in life and the important aspects are their emotions and self-esteem. Goleman has cited that there is a worldwide trend for the present generation to be more troubled emotionally than others; more lonely and depressed; more angry and unruly; more impulsive and angry; and more nervous and prone to worry.³Adolescent students should be regularly assessed for their Emotional Intelligence as it affects the self esteem and other variables of individuals. Educational interventions should be included in curriculum to manage emotional immaturity among adolescents.³ Adolescents is the developmental period of transition between childhood and adulthood, it involve biological, cognitive and socio emotional changes. These changes make a young person’s vision more complex, well organised and consistent picture. They are more likely to employ complex, abstract and psychological self characteristics.⁶Emotional intelligence (EI) has been defined as the ability to adaptively recognise, understand and manage and harness emotions both in self and others and to use emotions to facilitate cognitive processing. It is a skill which involves three processes that are perception (or the ability to consciously recognise our emotions), understanding (integrating what is in our thought), and regulation (lead and manage effectively both positive and negative emotions).Emotional intelligence is considered as a critical component of a nurse’s characteristics traits which is known as a significant predictor of a person’s job performance and life success.⁷ Emotional intelligence is the aptitude to perceive, express and logically process information provided by the emotions in the self and others. EI provides the foundation for the development of many competencies that help people perform more effectively. A person’s EI can influence individuals, teams and organisations.¹A study was conducted on the topic: emotional intelligence. Its more than IQ. It revealed that Emotional intelligence (EI) can determine the quality of our relationship with ourselves and others. Whether we are students, teachers, or managers or are in the clinical arena, EI influences our stress level, our ability to perform, and our effectiveness when working with others.⁸The future of nursing, leading change and advancing healthcare, challenges the profession of nursing to assume leadership of interdisciplinary healthcare teams. Leading these teams requires cognitive ability to manage highly charged and emotional work. Emotional intelligence is a characteristic necessary to process emotional information for creative problem solving. In addition, emerging evidence indicate that there may be an association of nurse’s EI and quality patient care.⁹

EI can be described as a set of emotional and social skills that collectively establish how well we:

- How well we are perceive and express ourselves.
- Develop and maintain social relationships, how we empathies and work with other people.
- Cope with challenges, recovering quickly from stress and negative emotions.
- Use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way in other words tuning in to subtle signals that the body tells us.¹

An article regarding EI and its role in recruitment of nursing students has explained about the concept of EI and how it can be used in the recruitment and development of nursing students. The links between EI and the qualities of caring and compassions are examined. The ethical difficulties surrounding the use of emotional intelligence tests are explored and the values of using a variety of recruitment methods are emphasized. The article suggested that emotional intelligence is an ability which may be developed through nurse education programme, even if not fully present at interview.¹⁰A research study aimed at analysing the correlation of self compassion and emotional intelligence of nursing students. Results indicated that there is a correlation between self compassion and EI which include the individual perceiving one’s emotions and using the knowledge one gained from them to function, while directing thoughts, actions and professional applications. It has positive contribution to the features of nurse with developed self compassion.¹¹Emotional training adds an important aspect of education in that it would prepare learners to better cope with environmental demands and increase their ability to function and succeed in their life.¹

Materials and Method

Research approach

Research approach is a basic procedure for conduction of the research study. The selection of the research approach depends on the purpose of the study⁹. In view of the nature of problem selected for the study and objectives to be accomplished quantitative non experimental descriptive survey method was found to be best method for this study.

Research design

The research design is the master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analysing the needed information in a research study.⁹The research design adopted for the present study was a descriptive correlational survey design. The study intended to find out the correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students.

Results

In this study, the data was analysed based on the objectives and hypothesis of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Hypotheses

All the hypotheses will be tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- H₁: There will be a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students of a selected nursing college.
- H₂: There will be significant association between mean emotional intelligence score of students with selected baseline variables.
- H₃: There will be significant association between mean adjustment level score of students with selected baseline variables.

Organisation of the findings

The data collected from 1st year B. Sc. nursing students regarding EI and adjustment level are organised, analysed, and presented under the following headings:

Section I: Description of demographic proforma.

Section II: Description of Emotional Intelligence of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students.

Section III: Description of adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students.

Section IV: Relationship between EI score and adjustment level score of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students.

Section V: Association of EI score and adjustment level score of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students with their demographic variables.

Section I: Demographic proforma

This section deals with the data pertaining to the demographic proforma of the 1st year B. Sc. nursing students. The demographic variables are analysed using descriptive statistics. The data obtained from 75 students was analysed using descriptive statistics and is presented in terms of frequency and percentage.

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of sample according to selected demographic variables $n=75$

Sl. No.	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Fathers education		
	No formal education	4	5.3
	Primary	9	12.0
	Higher primary	42	56.0
	PUC	19	25.3
	Any other	1	1.4
2.	Mother's education		
	No formal education	2	2.7
	Primary	8	10.6
	Higher primary	42	56.0
	PUC	23	30.7
	Any other	0	0.0
3.	Father's occupation		
	Farmer	29	38.7
	Daily wage worker	15	20.0
	Business	15	20.0
	Professional	13	17.3
	Any other	3	4.0

Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of sample according to selected demographic variables $n=75$

Sl. No	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
4.	Mother's occupation		
	Home maker	63	84.0
	Daily wage worker	8	10.7
	Professional	1	1.3
	Any other	3	4.0
5.	Monthly income of parents in rupees		
	≤ 10000	40	53.3
	10001 -150000	22	29.3
	≥ 15000	13	17.4

6.	Number of siblings		
	1	38	50.6
	2	26	34.7
	3 or more	11	14.7
7.	Birth order		
	1 st	33	41.3
	2 nd	31	44.0
	≥3 rd	11	14.7

Data presented in the Table1 and Figure 3 shows that more than half (56%) of the fathers had completed higher primary education, few of the fathers (5.33%) had no formal education, (12%) had primary education, 25% had studied up to PUC or above and 1.33% finished some other education courses.

Figure 3: Bar diagram showing the distribution of sample according to their father's educational status

Figure 4: Cylindrical diagram showing the distribution of sample according to their mother's educational status

Data presented in the Table 1 and Figure 4 shows that 2.66% of the mothers had no formal education, 10.66% had completed primary education, 56% had higher primary education, and 30.66% had studied up to PUC or above.

Figure 5: Cone diagram showing the distribution of sample according to father's occupation

Data presented in the Table1 and Figure 5 shows that 38.66% were farmers, 20% were daily wage workers, 20% were having business, 17.33% were professionals and 3% were doing some other jobs.

Figure 6: Pyramid diagram showing the distribution of sample according to their mother's occupation

Data presented in the Table 1 and Figure 6 shows that most of the mothers (84%) were homemakers, 10.66% were daily wage workers, 1.33% were professionals and 4% were doing some other jobs.

Figure 7: Pie diagram showing the distribution of sample according to monthly income of parents (in rupees)

It is evident from the data presented in Table 1 and Figure 7 that more than half (53.33%) of the sample had a family income of rupees ≤ Rs. 10000, 29.33% had Rs. 10001-15000 and 17.33% had an income of above Rs. 15001 per month. It is evident from Table 1 and figure 8 that 50.66% had one sibling, 34.66% had two siblings and 14.66% had three or more siblings.

Figure 8: Pie diagram showing the distribution of samples according to the number of siblings

Figure 9: Bar diagram showing the distribution of sample according to their birth order

Data presented in Table 1 and Figure 9 shows that 41.33% were 1st born, 44% were 2nd born and 14.66% were in 3rd or more than 3rd in birth order.

Section II: Description of Emotional Intelligence of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students

Emotional intelligence of nursing students was assessed using rating scale and was analysed using descriptive statistics which is represented in Table 2. It is evident from Table 2 and Figure 10 that majority (84%) of the sample had high emotional intelligence and only 14% had moderate emotional intelligence and none of them had low emotional intelligence. The mean score was 130±10.10.

Table 2. Range Frequency, percentage, Mean, and standard deviation of EI score of the sample n = 75

Level of emotional intelligence	Score range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean score	SD
High emotional intelligence	121-160 (76-100%)	63	84	130	10.10
Moderate emotional intelligence	80-120 (50%-75%)	12	16		

Maximum score: 160

Adjustment problems of nursing students were assessed using rating scale and were analysed using descriptive statistics which is represented in Table 3.

Table 3. Range Frequency, percentage, Mean, and standard deviation of adjustment problem of the sample n=75

Level of adjustment	Score range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean score	SD
Poor	1-61 (0-50%)	3	4	75.50	9.70
Satisfactory	62-93 (50%-75%)	70	93.3		
Good	94-124 (76%-100%)	2	2.7		

Maximum score: 124

Figure 11: Cone diagram showing the adjustment of the sample

It is evident from Table 3 and Figure 11 that only 4% had poor adjustment level and most of them (93.3%) had satisfactory adjustment level. The mean score was 75.5 ± 9.70 .

Section IV: Relationship between EI score and adjustment level score of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students

In order to find the correlation between EI and adjustment level of the sample the following null hypothesis was formulated:

H_{01} : There will be no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 4.Karl Pearson correlation coefficient to find out the correlation between EI and adjustment problemn=75

Variables	Mean score	SD	'r' value	Inference
EI	130	10.10	-0.01261	Low negative correlation
Adjustment level	75.5	9.70		

It is evident from Table 4 show that there is a low negative correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level. The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and research hypothesis is accepted. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves.

Section V: Association of EI score and adjustment level score of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students with their demographic variables

Chi square test was used to find out the association between score of 1st year B. Sc. Nursing students towards EI and adjustment level and their selected demographic variable, and the following null hypothesis was stated:

H_{02} : There will be no significant association between emotional intelligence score of students with selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5.Chi-square test to find out the association between EI score of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students with their selected baseline variablesn=75

Sl. No.	Variable	EI Score		χ^2 value	Inference
		\leq Mean	\geq Mean		
1.	Father's education			2.271	Not significant
	\leq Primary	8	5		
	Higher primary PUC	18 7	24 13		
2.	Mother's education			3.52	Not significant
	\leq Primary Higher primary/ PUC	7 25	3 40		
3.	Father's occupation			3.74	Not significant
	Farmer Daily wager/business/professional	18 18	11 28		
4.	Mothers occupation			1.27	Not significant
	Homemaker Daily wage worker/others	30 3	33 9		
5.	Monthly income of parents (Rupees)			0.09	Not significant
	\leq 10000 \geq 10001	18 17	22 18		
6.	Number of siblings			0.11	Not significant
	1 \geq 2	16 17	22 20		
7.	Birth order of the sample			0.84	Not significant
	1 st \geq 2 nd	16 18	15 26		

Data presented in Table 5 shows that statistically there is no significant association between mean emotional intelligence score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is retained.

H_{03} : There will be no significant association between adjustment problems of students with selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 6. Chi-square test to find out the association between adjustment level score of 1st year B. Sc. Nursing students with their selected baseline variables $n=75$

Sl. No.	Variable	Adjustment score		χ^2 value	Inference
		\leq Mean	\geq Mean		
1.	Father's education \leq Primary Higher primary PUC	7 23 9	6 19 11	0.579	Not significant
2.	Mother's education \leq Primary Higher primary/ PUC	5 35	5 30	0.0515	Not significant
3.	Father's occupation Farmer Daily wagger/business/professional	16 25	13 21	0.004	Not significant
4.	Mothers occupation Homemaker Daily wage worker/others	37 3	26 9	4.60	Significant
5.	Monthly income of parents (Rupees) \leq 10000 \geq 10001	23 17	17 18	0.59	Not significant
6.	Number of siblings 1 \geq 2	22 18	16 19	0.643	Not significant
7.	Birth order of the sample 1 st \geq 2 nd	17 25	14 19	0.028	Not significant

χ^2 value at df 1 = 3.384 $p \leq 0.05$

Data presented in Table 6 shows that statistically there is no significant association between mean adjustment problem score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is retained. However there was a statistically significant association between adjustment level score and mother's occupation. The obtained χ^2 value is more than the table value (3.84, $p \leq 0.05$).

There is a low negative correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level. The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves. Statistically there is no significant association between mean emotional intelligence score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. Statistically there is no significant association between mean adjustment problem score and selected baseline variables at 0.05 level of significance. However, there was a statistically significant association between adjustment level score and mother's occupation. The obtained χ^2 value (4.60) is more than the table value (3.84, $p \leq 0.05$).

Interpretation and conclusion

There is a low negative correlation between emotional intelligence and adjustment level. The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected and research hypothesis is accepted. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves.

Discussion

This chapter presents the major findings of this study and discuss them in relation to similar studies conducted by other researchers. The aim of this study was to assess the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students. Data collection and analysis was carried out based on the objectives of the study.

Objectives of the study

1. Identify the level of emotional intelligence of the students using a rating scale.
2. Assess the adjustment level of students using rating scale.
3. Identify the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of students.
4. Find out the association of emotional intelligence score and adjustment level with selected baseline variables (educational level of parents, occupation of parents, number of siblings, birth order and family income per month).

Major findings of the study

Section I: Sample characteristics

1. Most of the 1st year students' fathers (56%) had studied up to higher primary, 25.33% were PUC.
2. Most of the 1st year students' (56%) mothers' education was higher primary, 30.7% were PUC or above.

3. Majority of the fathers (38.66%) were working as farmers. Daily wage workers and business men are in equal proportion (20%) and only 17.33% were professionals.
4. Almost all (84%) mothers were home makers, 10.66% were doing daily wage works, 1.33% were professionals and 4% were doing other works.
5. More than half (53.33%) of the students had monthly family income of less than or equal to 10,000, 29.33% had Rs. 10,001-15000 and 13% had income above 15,001.
6. About half of the students (50.6%) were having only one sibling, 34.66% had two and the remaining (14.66%) students were having three or more siblings.
7. With regard to birth order 44% students were standing in the 2nd ordinal status, where as 41.33% were 1st born. Very few students (14.66%) were in 3rd or more in birth order.

Section II: Emotional intelligence and adjustment level of the sample

Most of them (84%) had high emotional intelligence and 16% had moderate emotional intelligence. With regard to adjustment level only 4% had poor adjustment and 93.3% had satisfactory adjustment.

Section III: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and adjustment level of 1st year B. Sc. nursing students

Correlation coefficient 'r' test was computed to find out the relationship between emotional adjustment and adjustment level and the calculated 'r' value

(-0.0126) showed a very low negative correlation.

The obtained 'r' value (-0.01261) is statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. It can be inferred that as emotional level improves adjustment also improves.

The findings of the present study are supported by findings of other researchers wherein it is shown that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of students. One study showed the significant relationship between EI and adjustment among students.¹²

A study was conducted a study on Emotional Intelligence ability and grade point average in nursing students in order to explore the relationship between measured emotional intelligence ability and grade point average (GPA) of first year nursing students. The findings showed for some relationship between GPA and measured emotional intelligence ability, but also demonstrated lower than average range scores in several emotional intelligence scores.¹³

A study was conducted to find out the relationship of EI with adjustment, stress and achievement among 200 male and female senior secondary students from rural and urban area schools located in Delhi region using standardized test by descriptive survey method. The study showed that there was a correlation between emotional intelligence and academic intelligence, emotional intelligence and stress, EI and adjustment (home, health, social and economical).¹⁴

Section IV: Association between adjustment score and selected demographic variables

To find the association between the mean score of EI and adjustment level with selected demographic variables Chi-square test was used. There was no significant association between EI and selected demographic variables as well as association between adjustment level and demographic variables except for mother's occupation and adjustment level. The obtained value (4.60) is higher than the table value (3.84, $p \leq 0.05$). The findings of the present study are supported by findings of other researchers. A study was conducted on personal, family and academic factors towards Emotional Intelligence. This study revealed that there is no correlation between parent's employment and parent's educational level with EI. The same study proved that academic performance was not correlated with EI.¹⁵ An article named "comparing adolescent only children with those who have siblings on academic related outcomes and psychosocial adjustment" revealed that there is no impact of number of siblings or order of delivery on academic outcomes and psychosocial adjustment.¹⁶

Conclusion

This chapter deals with the major findings of the study, nursing implications, limitations of the study, suggestions, and recommendations based on the study. Emotional intelligence theory provides a view about predicting effective factors in people's lives whether in education or profession. According to earlier studies, people who have higher emotional skills are more successful in many of life aspects. eg: reaction to stress and controlling stress situations, managing adjustment problems, etc.¹⁷ The conclusions drawn based on the findings of the study are:

Major findings of the study

1. Most of the 1st year students (56%) father's education was higher primary.
 2. Most of the mother's (56%) education was higher primary.
 3. With regard to occupation, 38.66% fathers were working as farmers.
 4. Almost all (84%) of mothers were home makers.
 5. More than half (53.33%) of the students' family had monthly income of less than or equal to Rs. 10,000.
 6. About half of the students (50.6%) were having only one sibling, 34.66% had two and the remaining (14.66%) students were having three or more siblings.
 7. Majority (44%) of the students were 2nd birth order 41.33% were firstborn.
- Most of the sample (84%) had high EI and only 3% had poor adjustment. A very low negative correlation was found between EI and adjustment level. There was no association between the EI and adjustment level with selected demographic variables.

Implications of the study

The present study was conducted to find out the relationship between emotional intelligence and adjustment level of students. The study provided useful information regarding the EI and adjustment level of students and it showed that when EI is good adjustment problems decreases. Hence, the findings of the present study have implications for nursing in all these areas.

Nursing education

The curriculum of Indian nursing schools and colleges gives prime importance to the technical aspects of care and academic performance of the students rather than to the psychological aspects. The concept of EI should be given adequate weightage in the nursing curriculum. An effective guidance and education based on EI can improve the adjustment level of the students.

Nursing practice

Both at the undergraduate and postgraduate level, the nursing students should be trained to identify their EI level which will help them to have a better adjustment level in the clinical area. An emotionally stable person will be able to handle the problems effectively and also help the patients in handling their problems.

Nursing administrators

A nurse administrator should take measures to promote health of the students. Counselling facility should be available for the students as well as for patients. Early identification of adjustment problem in the college as well as in the clinical area is important. In service education programmes such as stress management, problem solving skills etc. should be provided.

Nursing research

One of the aims of nursing research is to expand and broaden the scope of nursing. Emphasis on research and clinical studies is needed to improve the quality of nursing care. Nurses should conduct projects and researches which will give knowledge regarding new concept like EI which in turn will help to improve their adjustment level.

Limitations of the study

1. The sample was selected from only one college at Mangalore, which limits the generalization of the findings.
2. The rating scales prepared by the investigator for measuring adjustment level and EI was used for data collection which restricted the amount of information that can be obtained from the respondents.
3. No intervention was conducted to improve the adjustment level.

Suggestions

1. Health professionals can conduct planned teaching programs for nursing students regarding adjustment problems and ways to improve their EI.
2. Group and individual counselling sessions and education can be conducted to identify the students who have adjustment problems and give additional care to improve their EI.

Recommendations

On the basis of study the following recommendations have been made:

1. The study can be replicated on a larger sample for generalizing the findings.
2. The present study can be used as a baseline to plan for awareness program for nursing students regarding their adjustment problems.
3. Replication of the same study can be done on other population segments such as school or college students.
4. A comparative study can be conducted between the degree students and nursing students.

Summary

This chapter has dealt with the conclusions drawn based on the findings of the study, nursing implications, limitations, suggestions and recommendations. The experience of the investigator during the study helped to give suggestions and recommendations for further study.

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