A Cross-sectional study of empathy of mental health nurses in Ayrshire and Arran

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Empathy?

Term originates from the German ‘einfühlung’ or, ‘in feeling’.

Perhaps the most influential and widely accepted definition of empathy, is that of Carl Rogers:

“To sense the clients’ world as if it were your own, without ever losing the ‘as if’ quality”. (Rogers, 1957, p.99).
Why Explore Empathy?

- Benefits to organisations through lower litigation rates and alleged malpractice. (Beckman et al 1994, Moore, Adler and Robertson 2000).
- No current evidence to allege this decline in mental health nursing.

Hypotheses.

1. Empathy levels will decline as the mental health nurse becomes more experienced,
2. Empathy levels will differ according to area of practice,
3. Empathy levels will differ between the genders of participants.
Methods.

60-item self-reporting empathy scale, (Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004) completed by 124 mental health nurses in Ayrshire & Arran, at various chronological stages in their career.

Methods Continued.

Correlations between years of experience and empathy scores were studied using parametric and non-parametric correlation coefficients.

Correlations were also examined between area of work and empathy scores using the same coefficients.

One-way analysis of Variance was used to examine variance in empathy scores between gender.
Results.

Histogram

Box plot.
## Gender and Mean Empathy Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>46.18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>54.54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52.25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.819</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Report*  

$t(112) = -3.69$, $p < .001$ level, ($\alpha_{crit} = .05$).

## Conclusion.


References Cont.


