

Emotional Intelligence of Bus Drivers: The Effectiveness of Psychosocial Interventions

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Introduction

Driving behavior is a behavior that a driver chooses as a pattern for his driving, and it depends on three factors: the driver, the vehicle, and factors related to the driving route. The driver's psychological and personality characteristics are the most important factors in his driving behavior and the driver behavior is related to his emotional and behavioral characteristics. Many studies have shown the role of emotional intelligence as one of the most important determinants of driver behavior. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage our own and others' emotions which play a key role in all kinds of personal, social and professional situations. Some research have shown that high emotional intelligence is associated with greater ability to manage emotions, and low emotional intelligence is often associated with greater involvement in risky behaviors. Emotional intelligence can improve through training and have a positive effect on people's performance. Adults can learn to manage their behaviors and emotional reactions. Considering the importance of emotional intelligence in reducing inappropriate driving behaviors, the aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of the mental health training program of drivers on their emotional intelligence.

Method

In the present study, in order to enhance the emotional intelligence abilities of bus drivers through psychosocial training, a quasi-experimental with a pre-

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and post-test design was used. The driver training project of Tehran Bus Company has been started since 2011 and is implemented in different phases on drivers who are applying for employment in the Company. In one of the phases, 88 bus drivers from Tehran Bus Company who received 9 training sessions on anger management, retaliatory driving, stress management and effective communication participated in the study. Bar-On (1977) emotional intelligence test was used to collect data in two stages of pre-test and post-test. This questionnaire is a self-assessment tool that can be used for people over 18 years old. In the present study, a shortened form of the questionnaire was used, in which there are 54 items related to 9 scales of problem solving, stress tolerance, emotional self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, optimism, impulse control, flexibility, empathy, and self-expression.

Results

The research findings of multivariate analysis of variance with repeated measures and univariate analysis of variance showed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of four subscales. This difference is significant for the subscales of problem solving, emotional self-awareness and optimism at the 0.01 level and for the subscale of interpersonal relationships at the 0.05 level. In other words, participating in the training program has led to an increase in the ability of the participants in these subscales. Also, the value of F in these 4 subscales of emotional intelligence is equal to 7.70, 16.48, 11.52, and 5.29, respectively.

Discussion

The findings show the effectiveness of the program on some components of emotional intelligence. In other words, the training course on socio-emotional interventions can be considered effective in promoting drivers' emotional intelligence.

Keywords: Bus Driving, Driving Behavior, Emotional Intelligence, Socio-Emotional Interventions

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