

## **Does Self-Awareness help in reducing Work Stress Caused by Work Overload and Role Conflict?**

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### **Abstract**

*This study has been conducted to observe the importance of self-awareness in reducing the work stress caused by two common work stressors i.e. work overload and role conflict. The objective of this research was to see the self-awareness level and its effect on work overload and role conflict amongst nurses and medical staff of three major hospitals and nursing schools of district Peshawar, KP. 361 self-administered questionnaires employing systematic random sample technique were used to obtain this sample size out of 1800 population size. Smart PLS 3.0 was used for data analysis and path analysis. The path coefficients and T- statistics result shows inverse relationship and p-value highly significant. The results show that self-awareness negatively impacts the work overload and role conflict with path coefficients (-0.278) and (-0.325), 5.85 and 6.87 T-statistic values with (0.000) P-values and R-square value 7% and 10 % and F-Square value 8% and 11.4% shows highly significant result. The result demonstrates that knowing own self can help reduce the stress caused by work overload and role conflict.*

*Keywords:* self-awareness, role conflict, work overload.

### **Introduction**

Numerous researches concluded the significance of work stress in relations with many organizational factors that are closely related to organizational success, growth, production, performance, satisfactions, turnover etc. (Anjum & Swathi, 2017). It's a proven fact, on the basis of establish literature that work stress negatively impacts all the positive organizational variables (performance, satisfaction, growth) and positively affect all the negative organizational variables (employee's health, turnover, absenteeism). Many stressors that contribute into work stress i.e. role ambiguity, role conflict, work overload and time pressure. This paper focused on two stressors work overload and role conflict. Emotional intelligence is considered a best coping strategy to deal with work stress. Emotional intelligence has four dominions i.e. self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. In this paper the self-awareness dimension will be put on test to see its effect on these stressors (role conflict and work overload).

### **Literature Review**

The term Emotional Intelligence was clearly defined and conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as "The ability to monitor

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one's own feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action" (p.189).

### *Self-Awareness*

It is imperious to twitch with vibrant descriptions of crucial terms, as misunderstanding between 'consciousness', 'self-awareness', and a multitude of related terminologies is widespread in the literature (Antony, 2001, 2002). The sociologist George Herbert Mead (1934) anticipated a definitive difference between Consciousness and self-awareness, the consciousness concentrating outwards toward the environment while the self-awareness converging the attention toward inward i.e. self. 'Conscious' refers to the adaptively responding to the incoming information's (stimuli) of organisms. (Natsoulas,1996). Duval & Wicklund, (1972) defined Self-awareness as the capacity of becoming the body of one's own attention. During the state of self-awareness one can easily recognizes, process and stores information about own self. Self-awareness means being "aware of both one's mood and his/ her thoughts about that mood" It can be a non-reactive and non-judgemental attention to inner states" (Rani & Yadapadithaya, 2018). Self-awareness is the core dimension of emotional intelligence. It is the basis on which most of the other elements of emotional intelligence are constructed, the essential first step toward discovering and knowing to understand own self, and toward transformation.

### *Role Conflict*

Role conflict can be defined as when individuals simultaneously perform multiple roles and they are in conflict with each other. The demands and expectations that one's job carries is refers to role conflict. (Rizzo et al., 1970; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980; Ashforth & Lee, 1990) (Idris, 2011). Incompatible role requirements of individual's job create role conflict. Role conflicts also occurs when individuals perform contradictory job task or when he is obliged to do things, he has no desire to do (Gharib et al., 2016). Commitment to one role requirement and involve in another role requirement put employee in difficult situation (Seller & Damas, 2002). There are three types of Role conflict can be observed first one is the conflict between the individuals and the role itself, there might be contradiction of personality traits and expectation of the role. Second type is intra role conflict which occurred with confliction expectation about the methods of doing the role, it happens when role requirement is not incompatible with values and attitude of the individuals. And the last type of intra role conflict arises with the contrast obligation

of two or more roles of the individual performed at same time (Luthans, 2013).

### *Work Overload*

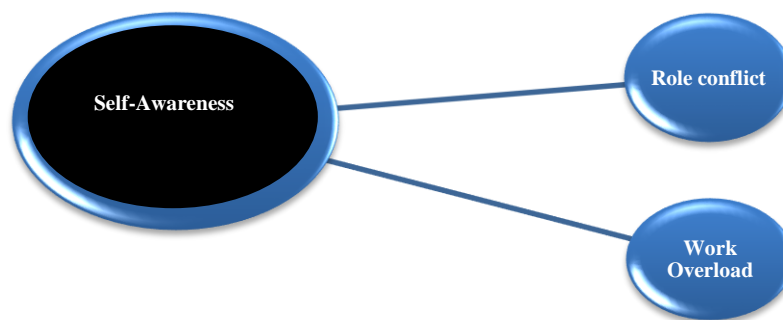
Role overload describes states in which individuals' sense that there are too many tasks or activities expected of them in relation to the time available, their abilities, and other constraints (Yongkang, Weixi, Yalin, Yipeng, & Liu, 2014). "Role overload occurs when people feel inconsistency between the time required to finish the task and the time available for them" (Yongkang et al., 2014). The no of tasks and assignments which employee are bond to perform during his duty time is referred to work load (Ali et al., 2014). The degree of stress felt by employee due to the believe that they having difficulty adjusting to the amount of work assigned to them refer to work overload (Idris, 2011). French and Caplan (1973) considered work overload can be either quantitative means too much has to be done or qualitative some things which is very difficult to complete. In theoretical explanation it refers to excessive demands. Classification of workload can be observed in two forms 1. Role overload and 2. Role lower load. Role overload refers to over expectation from individuals with regards to available time, resources and their capabilities which are directed from top management, immediate boss, colleagues, and subordinates and even from local community (Ammar, 2006). Work load can be qualitative or quantitative in nature (Trayambak, Kumar, & Jha, 2012). Qualitative refers to ability of the individual to complete a task while quantitative refers to the no of tasks in relation to shortage of time (Conley & Woosley, 2000). (2) Role lower load refers to when the level of individual capabilities are higher than the role and duty assignments which leads to boredom or stress, in either case individual will experience job stress, one is due to the fear of not completing the task and expectations of the job and the other is due the small duty assignments and less importance of the task assigned.

- H1: self-Awareness is inversely related to role conflict  
HI was formulated which state that there is negative relationship between Self- Awareness and role conflict. Self-Awareness was used as independent variable while role conflict was used as dependent variable. Path analysis using smart pls 3.0 were used to test the hypothesis, bootstrapping technique were used to obtain the T-statistics and P-value to see the significance of the relationship. It was found that Self-Awareness is inversely related to role conflict. Hence our hypothesis was accepted. Many researchers like King & Gardner's (2006), Ioannis &

Ioannis (2002), Gardner (2005), Oginska-Bulik (2005) Singh and Singh (2008) Brink (2007) studies shows that emotional intelligence significantly reduce stress. There is no evidence found that specifically can test the self-awareness with role conflict. This study is first in context of separately checking the role of self-awareness with role conflict.

- H2: self-Awareness is inversely related to work overload  
H2 was formulated which state that there is negative relationship between Self- Awareness and Work Overload. Self-Awareness was used as independent variable while Work Overload Was used as dependent variable. Path analysis using smart pls 3.0 were used to test the hypothesis, bootstrapping technique were used to obtain the T-statistics and P-value to see the significance of the relationship. It was found that Self-Awareness is inversely related to Work Overload. Hence our hypothesis was accepted. Oginska-Bulik (2005), Petrides & Furnham (2006), Adeyemo & Ogunyemi (2006), Vembar & Nagarajan (2011), Sherafatmandyari et al., (2012). These researchers proved that emotional intelligence play significant role in reducing stress.

*Theoretical Framework*



**Methodology**

Data were collected from the nurses and medical staff of three major hospital of district Peshawar, employing personally administrated questionnaire. A Systematic sample random technique was used to select sample out of population. Three different adapted scales for each variable (self- awareness, role conflict and work load were used) with 5-point likert

scale. Data were collected during their schedule working hours mostly in their break times after the approval of respective authorities.

*Data Analysis, Results and Discussions*

For data analysis the latest Smart plus 3.0 Software was used to perform the path analysis. Path coefficient, R square, F Square and T-statistic and P value were calculated to see the significance of the model and results. Before the path analysis second order latent variable were obtained before running the PLS algorithm and to obtain the significance of the model basic Bootstrapping option were used with 1500 subsample. The results, tables and path coefficients figures are as under.

Figure 1.0 Path Coefficients Self-Awareness, Role Conflict and Work Overload

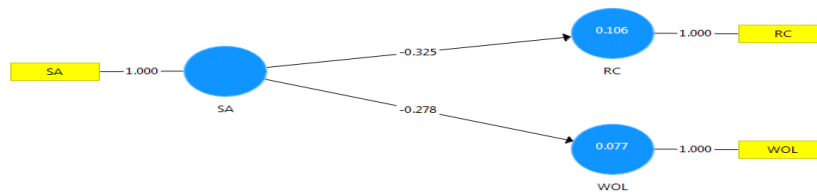


Figure 1.1 R. Square. Self-Awareness, Role Conflict and Work Overload

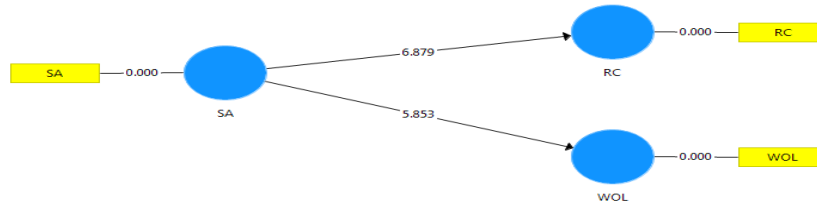


Table 1.0 path coefficient, T-Statistic and P-value for Self-Awareness, Role Conflict and Work Overload

*Path coefficient*

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
SA -> RC	-0.325	-0.325	0.047	6.879	0.00

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SA -> WOL	-0.278	-0.277	0.047	5.853	0.00

Table 1.0 results shows – 0.32 path coefficients, with T-statistic value of 6.8 with highly significant P-value of 0.000 in relationship of self-awareness with Role Conflict, which means one unit increase in self-Awareness there is 32% unit decrease in Role Conflict, the negative sign shows the inverse relationship between the two variables, having more than 2.0 T- statistics value and less than 0.05 P-value shows the relationship is highly significant. Same as the next results shows – 0.27 path coefficients, with T-statistic value of 5.7 with highly significant P-value of 0.000 in relationship of self-awareness with Work Overload which means one unit increase in self-Awareness there is 27% unit decrease in work overload, the negative sign shows the inverse relationship between the two variables, having more than 2.0 T- statistics value and less than 0.05 P-value shows the relationship is highly significant

*Table 1.1 R Square, T-Statistic and P-value for Self-Awareness, Role Conflict and Work Overload*  
R Square

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
<b>RC</b>	0.106	0.108	0.031	3.442	0.01
<b>WOL</b>	0.077	0.079	0.026	2.923	0.04

Table 1.1 With the R square of RC 0.11 means that 11 % the variance is explained by included variable (self- awareness) the P-value is less than the 0.05 (0.001) with T-statistic value 3.4 which is more than 2.0 show significant R square results. With the R square of WOL 0.07 means that 7% the variance is explained by included variables, (self- awareness) the P-value is less than 0.05 (0.005) with T-statistic value 2.9 which is more than 2.0 shows significant R square results.

The systematic diagram shows the same results as explained in above figure 1 and 1.1. The path coefficients value -0.325, -0.278 ( RC, WOL) and R Square values ( RC 0.11 and WOL 0.07) means that self-awareness explain the variance in RC, and WOL 11%, and 7% which means collectively self-awareness 18 % explained the two stressors that

contribute into work stress. The negative sign shows that the relationship is inverse, which means when one unit increase in independent variable (SA) there is decrease in dependent variables (RC and WOL).

### **Discussions and Conclusions**

Self-awareness is the fundamental dimension of emotional intelligence, which states the ability to be aware of self-consciousness and emotions. Role conflict is the conflict that is in contradiction to the job descriptions while performing one's role in the organization and work overload is the burden that employee performs extra work due to time pressures or less availability of the human resources for that job. Role conflict and work overload is considered the main contributor to the work-related stress. This study was performed in the hospitals on the nurses and medical staff of three major hospitals in district Peshawar, KP, Pakistan. The reason of choosing this sector was that nurses are the first line of defense against any emergency or dealing with the patients while the doctors arrived late to face the patients. The significance of this study increases as this is considered the first study on these variables under these circumstances. 361 samples were collected from three hospitals and adjutant nursing schools during their working hours from three shifts from the major's wards of the hospitals.

The results of the study proved that self-awareness inversely related to both the stressors. (role conflict and work overload) which means the more they are awareness of themselves can reduce the work stress caused by these stressors. Work stress is multi dimensions phenomena and multi stressors can contribute into work stress therefore it is recommended that different work stressors can be added to assess the effect and different sectors which are not yet explored or partially explored shall be the focus of future research. Other significant sectors which deal in life and death situations like fire fighters, rescue services, doctors, bomb disposal squads etc. shall be viewed in future research.

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