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Short communication

Prediction of Nurses' Professional Ethics based on Organizational Commitment, Work Engagement and Organizational Justice

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Abstract

Introduction: The research aim was predicting the nurses' professional ethics based on organizational commitment, work engagement and organizational justice.

Material & Methods: In the descriptive study of correlational type, from nurses working in the hospitals of Ahvaz city in 2023-year number of 320 nurses were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling method. Data were collected by questionnaires of professional ethics, organizational commitment, work engagement and organizational justice and analyzed by Pearson's correlation coefficients and multiple regression.

Results: The results showed that organizational commitment, work engagement and organizational justice had a positive and significant correlation with nurses' professional ethics ($P<0.01$). Also, organizational commitment, work engagement and organizational justice could significantly predict 35 percent of the changes in nurses' professional ethics ($P<0.001$).

Conclusion: According to the results of this study, it is necessary to design and implement programs to improve nurses' professional ethics by promoting organizational commitment, work engagement and organizational justice.

Keywords: *Professional Ethics, Nurses, Organizational Commitment, Work Engagement, Organizational Justice*

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INTRODUCTION

Professional ethics are a fundamental element in all professions, including health-related professions, and their observance by nurses plays an important role in improving the health and satisfaction of patients and causes nurses to perform their professional activities in a desirable manner [1]. Observing professional ethics is essential in all professions, but observing it is more essential in the nursing profession. Because their ethical behavior plays an important role in returning and improving the health of patients [2]. Professional ethics is a set of principles, values, and job standards that determine the correctness and incorrectness of the behavior of organizational members [3]. One of the concepts related to professional ethics is organizational commitment [4], which refers to the need, desire, and obligation to continue employment in the organization with three components: affective commitment (the individual's emotional and emotional attachment to the organization), continuance commitment (the desire to stay in the organization due to receiving organizational rewards or avoiding the costs of leaving the organization), and normative commitment (the

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feeling of duty and obligation to stay in the organization as an effective member) [5]. Organizational commitment indicates an individual's interest and heartfelt desire to continue working in the organization, an individual's interest in investing in and serving the organization, and fulfilling one's responsibilities and duties to the organization [6]. Research results indicated a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment and professional ethics [4, 7]. Another concept related to professional ethics is work enthusiasm [8], which, as a construct derived from the positive psychology approach, is a positive and satisfying mental state accompanied by a high level of energy and attachment to the job [9]. Work enthusiasm has three components: cognitive (how employees perceive and think about work and the organization), emotional (how employees feel about work and the organization), and behavioral (performing purposeful behaviors in order to achieve organizational goals) [10]. Research results indicated a positive and significant relationship between work enthusiasm and professional ethics [8, 11]. One of the concepts related to professional ethics is organizational justice [12], which as one of the important concepts of organizational ethics refers to individual or collective judgments about the justice or ethical issues of the organization [13]. One of the most important and valuable concepts of any organization is the perception and judgment of employees about the fairness of decisions, procedures, interactions, and relationships in the workplace [14]. Research results indicated a positive and significant relationship between organizational justice and professional ethics [12, 15]. Considering the above-mentioned materials, the aim of this study was to predict the professional ethics of nurses based on organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, and organizational justice.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This was a descriptive correlational study. The population of the present study was all nurses working in hospitals in Ahvaz in 2023, and 320 nurses were selected using a multi-stage cluster sampling method. In this sampling method, first, 3 hospitals (Imam Khomeini, Naft, and Abuzar) were randomly selected from among the hospitals in Ahvaz, and then nurses from some departments were randomly selected from each hospital. The research implementation process was as follows: first, the necessary coordination for conducting the research was made with the Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz Branch and hospitals in Ahvaz, and then sampling was carried out from among different hospitals in Ahvaz, and finally sampling was carried out from among different departments of each hospital. The importance and necessity of the research were explained to the selected nurses and they were assured of observing ethical considerations and standards. Finally, they were thanked for participating in the research and asked to respond to the research instruments.

Professional Ethics Questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Cadozier with 16 items; So that there were five options from one to five to answer each item. The questionnaire score was calculated by the sum of the item scores and a higher score indicates more desirable professional ethics. The face validity of the professional ethics questionnaire was confirmed by experts and its reliability was calculated by the Cronbach's alpha method as 0.87 [16]. In Iran, the reliability of this tool was reported as 0.84 by the Cronbach's alpha method [17].

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Allen & Meyer with 24 items; so that there were seven options from one to seven to answer each item. The questionnaire score was calculated by the sum of the item scores and a higher score indicates greater organizational commitment.

The construct validity of the organizational commitment questionnaire was examined using exploratory factor analysis and the results indicated the existence of three factors: affective commitment, continuum commitment and normative commitment, and its reliability was calculated by the Cronbach's alpha method as 0.82 [18]. In Iran, the reliability of this tool was reported as 0.79 using Cronbach's alpha [19].

Work engagement questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Salanova & Schaufeli with 17 items; so that there were five options from one to five to answer each item. The score of the questionnaire was calculated by the sum of the item scores and a higher score indicates greater work engagement. The validity of the work engagement questionnaire was calculated through the content validity ratio of 0.66 and its reliability was calculated by Cronbach's alpha method as 0.85 [20]. In Iran, the reliability of this tool was reported as 0.96 using Cronbach's alpha method [21].

Organizational justice questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by Colquitt with 18 items; so that there were five options from one to five to answer each item. The score of the questionnaire was calculated by the sum of the item scores and a higher score indicates greater organizational justice. The validity of the organizational justice questionnaire was examined using factor analysis, and the factor loading of all 18 items was higher than 0.40, and its reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha method as 0.91 [22]. In Iran, the reliability of this tool was reported as 0.89 using Cronbach's alpha method [23].

The data of this study were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficients and multiple regression with simultaneous model in SPSS software version 24.

RESULTS

In this study, 320 nurses participated, most of whom were women (73.13%) and had bachelor's degrees (67.81%). The results of the mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients of the variables of organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, organizational justice, and professional ethics of nurses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of the mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation coefficients of the research variables in nurses

Variables	Mean	SD	Organizational commitment	Work enthusiasm	Organizational justice	Professional ethics
Organizational commitment	95.83	15.24	1			
Work enthusiasm	63.84	10.68	0.18**	1		
Organizational justice	48.96	14.25	0.30**	0.36**	1	
Professional ethics	67.68	6.56	0.24**	0.56**	0.28**	1

**P<0.01

According to the results of Table 1, organizational commitment (r=0.24), work enthusiasm (r=0.56) and organizational justice (r=0.28) had a positive and significant correlation with nurses' professional ethics (P<0.01). The results of multiple regression with simultaneous model for predicting nurses' professional ethics based on organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, organizational justice is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of multiple regression with simultaneous model for predicting professional ethics based on organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, organizational justice in nurses

Variable	R	R^2	F	df1	df2	Sig.	Beta	t-values	Sig.
Organizational commitment							0.19	4.18	0.000
Work enthusiasm	0.59	0.35	57.59	3	316	0.000	0.57	11.71	0.000
Organizational justice							0.21	4.96	0.000

According to the results in Table 2, the variables of organizational commitment, work engagement, and organizational justice were able to significantly predict 35% of the changes in nurses' professional ethics, and according to the beta values, the contribution of work engagement was greater than that of other variables (organizational justice and organizational commitment) (P<0.001).

DISCUSSION

The first finding of the present study showed that organizational commitment had a positive and significant correlation with nurses' professional ethics, which was in line with the findings of studies [4, 7]. People with high organizational commitment are confident in their abilities and talents to perform job duties and perform all job activities and tasks in a desirable manner with the participation and cooperation of other employees. Also, they are more disciplined in their jobs, work longer in the organization, help other employees in performing job duties and have higher accuracy in performing job activities. As a result, with increasing organizational commitment, the level of nurses' professional ethics increases.

The second finding of the present study showed that work enthusiasm had a positive and significant correlation with nurses' professional ethics, which was in line with the findings of studies [8, 11]. The more people are interested and enthusiastic about their job, the more time they spend in the organization, the more enthusiasm they have for their job, and the more enjoyment they feel in the organization, to the point where they consider their job to be a part of their daily lives. Also, work enthusiasm has many positive consequences, and people with high work enthusiasm experience high levels of emotional attachment to their job and the organization in which they work, and such people have greater involvement, commitment, and interest in being in the organization and working in it, and they comply with organizational rules more often. As a result, with increasing work enthusiasm, the level of professional ethics of nurses increases.

The third finding of the present study showed that organizational justice had a positive and significant correlation with the professional ethics of nurses, which was in line with the findings of studies [12, 15]. The existence of organizational justice in the organization indicates the importance of the organization to the employees, and in such a situation, the employees also commit to the organization, and a two-way relationship is created between the organization and the employees, which plays an important role in improving the performance of the organization and the employees and creating a competitive advantage. Also, organizational justice has a positive effect on many employee behaviors, and if employees feel that the organization behaves fairly, they will be more motivated to their jobs and professions and comply with the organization's professional rules and regulations. As a result, with increasing organizational justice, the level of professional ethics of nurses increases.

The fourth finding of the present study showed that organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, and organizational justice were able to significantly predict the professional ethics of

nurses. Individuals with a need, desire, and obligation to continue working in the organization (nurses with high organizational commitment), individuals with a positive and satisfying state of mind with high energy and attachment (nurses with high work enthusiasm), and individuals with a perception of equality, impartiality, and non-discrimination (nurses with organizational justice) use adaptive coping strategies in their professional lives, are happier and more hopeful, face fewer challenges and tensions, and even when faced with them, they manage and resolve them alone or with the help of others. As a result, when these variables are simultaneously entered into the equation to predict nurses' professional ethics, it can be expected that they will play an effective role in predicting professional ethics.

The most important limitations of this study included the use of self-report instruments, the failure to achieve causal relationships, and the difficulty in conducting the research and completing the instruments due to specific hospital rules and regulations. Therefore, it is suggested that this research be conducted on other groups, including head nurses, physicians, etc., and its results be compared with the results of this study. It is also suggested that structural equation modeling analysis be used to obtain causal relationships between variables.

CONCLUSION

In general, the results of the present study showed that organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, and organizational justice had a positive and significant correlation with nurses' professional ethics, and the variables of organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, and organizational justice were able to significantly predict nurses' professional ethics. According to the results of this study, it is necessary to design and implement programs to improve nurses' professional ethics by promoting organizational commitment, work enthusiasm, and organizational justice.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research has a code of ethics from the Research Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Branch, with the ID IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1403.055.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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