

Original Article

Correlation between the Occupational Professionalism Level and Intercultural Sensitivity of Pediatric Nurses: Case of Turkey

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Abstract

Background: Professional behaviors enable people, who they take care of, positive changes and increase the quality of care provided by extending the roles and responsibilities of the nurses. One of the noteworthy components of the professional approach of pediatric nurses is that it provides culture-sensitive care.

Objectives: This study was conducted to determine the correlation between the occupational professionalism level and intercultural care approach of pediatric nurses in Turkey.

Methods: The cross-sectional study was carried out with 236 nurses working in the pediatric clinics of two hospitals in the eastern Turkey. The data of the study were collected via the "Introductory Information Form", "Nurses' Professional Values Scale" and "Intercultural Sensitivity Scale".

Results: The pediatric nurses who took part in the study had higher mean professional values scores (166.85 ± 25.03) and moderate mean intercultural sensitivity scores (73.84 ± 7.02). There was a correlation between the professional values and intercultural sensitivity scores of the pediatric nurses in a positive direction.

Conclusions: It is seen that the courses included in the undergraduate education are effective on the professional values and intercultural sensitivities of nurses. Professional values facilitate knowing, understanding and empathizing with patients from different cultures. Nurses as members of a profession may provide equality for all individuals to reach treatment and care via the qualities of intercultural nursing.

The pediatric nurses had a higher level of professional values and a moderate level of intercultural sensitivity. Therefore, increase of their cultural sensitivity will increase the quality of pediatric care. Pediatric nurses' awareness of professional values and procurement of culture sensitive care to patients from different cultures may increase the quality of patient care. Thus, it is crucial that awareness be raised in them concerning these matters.

Keywords: Pediatric nursing, professionalism, intercultural sensitivity, culture, nursing.

Introduction

Professionalism is a set of criteria that makes a profession a profession. Providing a high standard of service requires to be a professional (Çelik & Erdem, 2019). In rapidly changing health care services, nurses with a high level of professionalism are needed (Çelik, Keçeci & Bulduk, 2011).

Professional nurses are those who have high autonomy, commit to ethical principles, and can follow the current developments (Çelik, Ünal & Saruhan, 2012). Professional behaviors enable people, who they take care of, positive changes and increase the quality of care provided by extending the roles and responsibilities of the nurses (Can &

Hisar, 2019). Therefore, professionalism in nursing is essential in terms of taking the profession further (Beydag & Arslan, 2008).

Pediatric nursing, which is one of the specialties of the nursing profession, is responsible for providing care for the child and his/her family in all developmental periods (Cavusoglu, 2013). The patient's beliefs, traditions and customs are a part of nursing care. Pediatric nurses will be able to provide quality nursing care only through having professional nursing approaches. In order for the profession of nursing to provide care in line with cultural needs, it is crucial to train culturally competent nurses (Ozturk & Oztas, 2012).

Migration rates gradually increase in the world and in Turkey and the large part of the migrating community comprises children. This causes pediatric nurses to provide care to patients from different cultures (GIGIM, 2018; Karatas & Erdemir, 2018; UNHCR, 2019). It is thus noteworthy for nurses to know the cultural properties of the child and her/his family and provide care accordingly (Ozturk & Ayar 2018).

The studies conducted have demonstrated that culture-sensitive care applications in pediatric clinics will remove especially communication problems, facilitate compliance to treatment and increase the child and parent satisfaction (Betancourt, 2002; Valizadeh et al., 2017; Wilson et al., 2004).

Another study found that the parents of children hospitalized in pediatric clinics expect nurses to perceive intercultural differences and provide culture-specific nursing care (Tavallali, Kabir & Jirwe, 2014). Culture-specific nursing care requires respecting individuals' religious beliefs, traditions and customs, life styles and world views. Therefore, children and families from every culture will be able to benefit from nursing care equally (Karakus et al., 2013).

One of the noteworthy components of the professional approach of pediatric nurses is that it provides culture-sensitive care (Bayik, 2008; Ozturk & Ayar 2018; Tavallali, Kabir & Jirwe, 2014). Pediatric nurses should be able to understand the patients properly, determine their needs, plan and apply their care accordingly and provide

effective care, in a professional sense within the frame of a culture-sensitive approach (Maatta, 2006; Yuksel Kacan & Orsal, 2020).

This study was conducted to determine the correlation between the occupational professionalism level and intercultural care approach of pediatric nurses.

Method

Design: This cross-sectional study were made between January and December 2018, Turkey's eastern regions.

Sampling and participants: The population of the study consisted of nurses working in the pediatric clinics of two hospitals located in a province in the eastern regions of Turkey. The universe of the study was composed of 274 nurses working in the pediatric clinics of the ministry of health and the university hospital. Since all the nurses were targeted to be reached, sample selection was not made. 24 of the nurses did not want to participate in the study, and 12 were on leave. In the end, 236 nurses were included in the study. The study used the post power analysis G* Power program (version 3.1.9.2, University of Dusseldorf, Dusseldorf, Germany) in determining whether the sample number was adequate or not. The Post-power analysis found the power of the study ($1 - \beta$) to be 97% when the statistical significance of the bidirectional hypothesis test alpha was set as 5%, the confidence interval 95% and the influence quantity 25%.

Data collection instruments: The research data were obtained by using the Introductory Information Form, Nurses' Professional Values Scale (NPVS), and Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS). Introductory information form. In this form prepared by the researchers, the characteristics of the nurses such as education level, gender, age, marital status, total working time are asked. Nurses' professional values scale (NPVS). Weis & Schank, (2000) developed the scale and the validity, and reliability study in Turkish was conducted by Şahin Orak and Alpar (Şahin Orak & Alpar, 2012).

The scale consists of 44 items and 11 subscales, and it is scored as a five-point Likert type (very important: 5; not important: 1). The total score of the scale varies between 44- 220. The high score

indicates that nurses give more importance to professional values and ethical issues (Şahin Orak & Alpar, 2012). The Cronbach Alpha value of the scale is .95. In this study, Cronbach Alpha coefficient is found as .96.

Intercultural sensitivity scale (ISS). The scale was developed by Chen & Starosta (2000), and the validity and reliability study in Turkish was conducted by Bulduk et al. (Bulduk, Tosun & Ardiç, 2011).

The scale consists of 24 items and five sub-dimensions. Sub-dimensions of the scale are groups as responsibility in communication, respect for cultural differences, self- confidence, enjoyment in communication, and carefulness in communication. Items 2, 4, 7, 9,12, 15, 18, 20, and 22 of the scale are reverse coded. The lowest total score that can be obtained from the scale is 24, and the highest total score is 120. In the study of Bulduk et al., Cronbach Alpha coefficient is calculated as .72. In this study, Cronbach Alpha coefficient is found as .74.

Data collection: Prior to the data collection process, the nurses were informed on the aim of the study. Data collection tools were handed out to the nurses in the sample. The data was collected via the paper-and-pencil technique. Data collection was carried out within the working hours of the nurses (between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.). It took about 15 minutes to complete all the data forms.

Data analysis: The data were evaluated on a computer. In order to evaluate quantitative data, mean, standard deviation were used, while the number and percentage test was used to evaluate the qualitative data. Shapiro Wilk normality test was used to determine whether the quantitative data show similar distribution or not. T-test and One Way ANOVA tests for independent groups

showing normal distribution and Kruskal Wallis, Mann-Whitney-U tests for the data that did not show normal distribution were used. The relationship between the two scales was evaluated by Pearson Correlation test. In the study, $p < 0.05$ was considered statistically significant.

Ethics: Before starting the research, ethical approval (2017/24-12 dated and numbered) was obtained from scientific research and publication ethics committee and written permission were obtained from the hospitals where the study would be conducted. The nurses participating in the study were informed about the purpose and duration of the study and their consents were obtained.

Results

It is found that 54.7% of the pediatric nurses participating in the study are between the ages of 29-39, 93.6% are women, and 74.2% have a bachelor's degree. It is determined that 53.8% of the nurses work in university hospitals, 28.4% of them work in the profession for 6-11 years, and 50% of them are working as pediatric nurses for 0-5 years (Table 1).

It was determined that the NPVS total mean score of the pediatric nurses was 166.85 ± 25.03 and their professional values were higher. It was determined that the ISS total mean score of the nurses was 73.84 ± 7.02 and their intercultural sensitivity was moderate (Table 2).

Comparing the NPVS total mean score and ISS total mean score of the pediatric nurses; there was a statistically significant correlation between in a positive direction (Table 3). As the professional values score of the nurses increases, their intercultural sensitivity score increases.

Table 1. Descriptive Characteristics of Pediatric Nurses

Characteristics	Classification	n (%)
Age	18-28	61 (25.89)
	29-39	129 (54.7)
	40-50	46 (19.5)
Gender	Male	15 (6.4)
	Female	221(93.6)
Education Status	High School	7 (3.0)
	Associate's Degree	34 (14.4)
	Bachelor's Degree	174 (73.7)
	Postgraduate	21 (8.9)
The organization that s/he works	University Hospital	127 (53.8)
	Ministry of Health Hospital	109 (46.2)
Time of employment in the profession	0-5 years	63 (26.7)
	6-11 years	67 (28.4)
	12-17 years	63 (26.7)
	18-23 years	27 (11.4)
	24-29 years	16 (6.8)
Time of employment in pediatric clinics	0-5 years	118 (50.0)
	6-11 years	69 (29.2)
	12-17 years	35 (14.8)
	18-23 years	14 (5.9)
TOTAL		236 (100)

Table 2. Scores Obtained from NPVS and ISS and Means

	Min-Max Score	Mean±SD
NPVS	100-220	166.85±25.03
ISS	50-102	73.84±7.02

Table 3. Comparison of NPVS and ISS Total Score Means

	ISS	
NPVS	r	0.176
	p	0.007

Discussion

Professional values guide the care behaviors of nurses. Human-oriented quality care is based on ethical values and codes (Godbold & Lees, 2013; Iacobucci et al., 2013; Ilaslan et al., 2020; Ludwick & Silva, 2000). American Nurses Association (ANA) and International Council of Nurses (ICN) suggest that nursing values are built on ethical values, primarily such as human honor, altruism, equality, justice and honesty (Shaw & Degazon, 2008). ICN indicates that all standards of intercultural nursing are built on human rights and social justice concepts (Douglas et al., 2014).

This study compared the professional values and intercultural sensitivity of pediatric nurses. It was determined that the pediatric nurses who took part in the study, had higher professional values (Table 2). Similar studies conducted in Turkey have also found that nurses have higher professional values (Ilaslan et al., 2020; Kaya et al., 2012; Ture Yilmaz & Demirsoy, 2018; Zengin et al., 2018).

In addition the studies measuring the professional values of nurses in different countries have acquired similar results (Brown et al., 2015; Jimenez- Lopez et al., 2016; Poorchangizi Farokhzadian, Abbaszadeh, Mirzaee, & Borhani, 2017; Skela-Savic et al., 2017). The literature results are in agreement with the result of our study. All schools providing nursing education at the level of bachelor

degree in Turkey, include lessons such as philosophy, of nursing, professional values, profession history and deontology (Council of Higher Education, 2020).

Additionally, a variety of trainings and meetings on ethics and values are organized after graduation (Cetinkaya Uslusoy, Pasli Gurdogan, & Aydinli, 2017; Ilaslan et al., 2020; Erkus & Dinc, 2018). In this context the result of our study is positive and important, because it reflects the professional values of nursing education in Turkey.

In the study the ISS mean score of the pediatric nurses was found to be moderate (Table 2). This result shows that the intercultural sensitivity level of the pediatric nurses who took part in the study, was moderate. A study conducted with postgraduate nurses in Texas found that the ISS mean score was higher (Marzilli, 2016).

Another study conducted with Taiwanese nurses found that the ISS mean score was moderate (Lin et al., 2015). Examining the studies conducted in Turkey; the ISS mean score of the nurses is mainly moderate (Karadag Arli & Bakan, 2018; Karakus et al., 2013; Kurtuncu et al., 2018; Uzun & Sevinc, 2015; Yilmaz et al., 2017).

In contradistinction to these results, the study conducted by Tanriverdi et al. with two different nurse groups mainly providing care to foreign national patients and Turkish patients, found that

the ISS mean score of the nurses in the Turkish group was lower, while the mean score of the nurses in the foreign national group was higher (Tanriverdi et al., 2019).

Examining the curriculum of the universities providing undergraduate and postgraduate education in Turkey; less than half of the universities include the Transcultural/Intercultural Nursing lesson in their curriculum (Council of Higher Education, 2020). It is possible to say that this condition affected our result.

Also it is reported that nurses who interact with individuals from different cultures, obtain more information about cultural differences and those who are exposed to cultural differences are more culturally sensitive (Jirwe, Gerrish & Emami, 2010; Tanriverdi et al., 2019; Valizadeh, et al., 2017). Fact that the sample group in this study comprised nurses generally providing care to Turkish patients, may have also affected our result.

This study is important because it supports the results of other studies conducted in Turkey, as well as the necessity and importance of intercultural nursing education. It was determined that the correlation between the NPVS mean score and ISS mean score of the pediatric nurses was significant in a positive direction. This result demonstrates that as the professional value of the pediatric nurses increases, their cultural sensitivity increases. We have encountered no similar study in the literature.

Professional values facilitate knowing, understanding and empathizing with patients from different cultures. Thus, the cultural beliefs and practices (religion, diet, individual care needs, communication, sense of trust) of the child and her/his family will be respected. Nurses as members of a profession may provide equality for all individuals to reach treatment and care via the qualities of intercultural nursing. Therefore, it is crucial for pediatric nurses to provide care considering the values and cultural existence of patients and families, in line with professional values.

Conclusion and Recommendation: This study demonstrated that pediatric nurses have higher professional values and moderate intercultural sensitivity. As professional values of nurses

increase, their cultural sensitivity increases. In line with these results; it is suggested that awareness of professional values be, raised in undergraduate and postgraduate trainings on nursing, trainings be organized for intercultural nursing.

The increasing migration rates and large number of children in migrating communities have increased the responsibility of nurses to give care to patients from different cultures in pediatric clinics. Taking the cultural applications of patients and their families into consideration is an important aspect of nursing care. In order for pediatric nurses to have professional nursing approaches and give care in line with cultural needs, it is crucial to train competent nurses.

Based on the study result, awareness should be raised in nurses concerning professional values as of their undergraduate study, trainings should be arranged for intercultural nursing and similar studies should be conducted in different and larger sample groups.

Limitations: This study was conducted with pediatric nurses in only one province in Turkey and its results can only be generalized to this population.

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