

SPECIAL PAPER

**Goal Orientation and Professional Commitment of Nurses in Malaysia:
A Conceptual Analysis**

Ong Choon Hee, DBA

College of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia

Correspondence: Ong Choon Hee, College of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Malaysia.

Email: ongchoonhee@gmail.com

Abstract

Introduction: In the wake of nurses shortage and realizing the importance of professional standard in nursing care, professional commitment has been regarded as one of the important factors in providing high level of healthcare services and retaining nurses in their profession. According to the goal orientation theory, goal orientation is perceived as individual's dispositions towards engagement and commitment. Hence, it is believed that if nurses possess the suitable goal orientation, it will certainly assist them in enhancing their professional commitment.

Aim: The aim of this paper is to provide a conceptual analysis of goal orientation and professional commitment of nurses in Malaysia. This paper is guided by goal orientation theory in the process of establishing the proposed theoretical framework.

Results: Our conceptual analysis suggests that learning goal orientation and performance-approach goal orientation will be positively related to nurses' professional commitment whereas performance-avoidance goal orientation will be negatively related to nurses' professional commitment.

Research Implications: This study provides an avenue to future researchers to examine nurses' professional commitment by using goal orientation as the predictor. It also offers suggestion to the healthcare managers to identify their nurses' goal orientation so that training programs can be designed to provide motivation and guide them to achieve the desired professional commitment.

Keywords: learning goal orientation, performance goal orientation, performance-approach, performance-avoidance, professional commitment, nurses.