

Original Article

## Personality and Job Satisfaction among Nurses: The Mediating Effect of Contextual Performance

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### Abstract

**Background:** Employees who work beyond their definition of duty and show performance above expectations are a necessity for successful institutions. If the employee does his/her job well and adds something onto this, that employee needs to be rewarded. But how do personal (e.g. character) or institutional (e.g. job satisfaction) factors change this performance?

**Purpose:** This study was performed in order to determine the effects of personality characteristics and job satisfaction on contextual performance in nurses who work at hospitals.

**Methods:** This study was planned as a descriptive study. Nearly 500 nurses were reached in two hospitals, one public and the other private. The scale for contextual performance, which was developed by the researcher, was used as well as the 50 item short form of the 5 factor personality test for personality measurements and the Minnesota job satisfaction scale for job satisfaction.

**Results:** When the socio demographic characteristics, personality characteristics, and job satisfactions of the participants were examined, some employment characteristics, the agreeableness subdimension and job satisfaction were found to have effects on contextual performance.

**Conclusions:** Contextual performance is a desired result in nurses and hospitals need to pay attention to this parameter in both job applications and reward distribution. Contextual performance can be increased during job applications by checking personality characteristics and it can be increased during employment by achieving job satisfaction. This study will help hospitals improve and support their human resources departments.

**Keywords:** Nurse, contextual performance, personality, job satisfaction, hospital

### Introduction

Today, managers both observe the skills of employees and consider their interest in participating in activities necessary to the institution. Employees who succeed at difficult tasks by their determination gain importance over those who continuously cause problems and show no patience. Employees who are inclined to teamwork, open to helping each other, and are committed to the corporate rules increase the dynamism of the institution.

Employees who feel themselves a part of the organization they work in and combine the aims of the institution with their own purposes will, of course, have a great importance to the

effectiveness of the organization (Dogan & Ozdevecioglu, 2009). Within this context, when evaluating job performance, not only the fulfillment of tasks but also the positive behavior shown by the employee while doing those tasks should be taken into consideration. Borman and Motowidlo (1993) stated that the focus in employment applications and research was only on one part of job performance, while contextual performance, which they believed was another part of performance that influences institutional effectiveness, was not a point of focus at all. Additionally, behavior such as volunteering, helping, obeying the rules, and supporting the aims of the organization can be ignored. Through these behaviors, the institutional, social, and

physiological environment, where technical ability is a mandatory function, can be supported. All of these behaviors, which also affect technical ability, are termed *contextual performance* (Bergman et al., 2008; Motowidlo, 2000).

Behaviors that support contextual performance include institutional support, task-job support, and personal support. Institutional support is based on loyalty, commitment, and the rules that support the organization. Task-job support is based on behaviors that exceed the requirements of the job and maximize performance, while personal support is based on human relations, such as helping colleagues (Greenslade & Jimmieson, 2007).

### **Background**

Health service is a team job, and contextual performance is very important in teamwork. Interpersonal assistance, commitment to the job, and taking initiative—all these show contextual performance and enable teams to function more effectively. The common characteristic of many teams is the necessity of teamwork. Information sharing and mutual help are seen as necessary skills for efficient team performance (Le Pine et al., 2000). Studies which examine the continuity of patient care have shown that patient satisfaction was higher in services where nurses work together for routine care, compared to institutions which provide care according to traditional systems. This shows that, when nurses show contextual performance behavior and help each other, patient satisfaction increases. When there is a distinction between tasks and contextual performance, a theoretical basis for the measurement of patient care performance arises (Greenslade & Jimmieson, 2007).

Workplace behaviors are generally a function of knowledge, skill, and talent, and they vary according to jobs. Contextual behaviors are functions of other characteristics, such as personality and motivation, and are common across many jobs. In regard to contextual performance, where task definitions are less meaningful, teamwork is standard, and behaviors such as altruism, volunteering, and commitment are shown have become increasingly more important for institutional performance (Reilly & Aronson, 2009).

Personality encompasses the whole of the structural and dynamic characteristics seen in the responses of an individual to situations. In other words, personality represents the permanent characteristics of an individual that separate him or her from others (Dede, 2009). In a study conducted on personality, based on the adjectives present in the vocabulary, five strong factors were found to emerge, and many personality concepts were stated to be possible to conceptually organize into the framework of these five factors. The five factor personality model is defined as consisting of the dimensions of extraversion, emotional stability, conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness (Goldberg, 1990). Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) found personality characteristics to be related to contextual performance and experience to be related to task performance.

Job satisfaction is defined as one's positive or negative value judgment regarding his or her job or employment status (Christian et al., 2011). It has two subdimensions, which are internal and external satisfaction. Internal satisfaction consists of satisfaction factors related to the internal quality of the job, such as success, recognition, approval, the job itself, job responsibilities, and mission changes caused by promotion. External satisfaction consists of factors related to the job environment, such as management policy, management, supervision style, manager, work conditions, relations with subordinates, and remuneration.

Job satisfaction is related both to task performance, as it is officially defined by the institution, and contextual performance, which is not officially defined, but is important to the sufficiency and efficiency of the institution. The correlation of job satisfaction with contextual performance is higher than its correlation with task performance. An individual who is pleased with the behavior of employers or superiors towards himself or herself will often volunteer to do more than the tasks defined by the institution. Thus, it can be assumed that volunteering emerges as a result of satisfaction and means an increase in contextual performance, which would contribute to the overall performance of the institution (Ostroff, 1992). George and Brief (1992) have also stated that a positive mood in the workplace incentivizes contextual performance.

For nurses, the determination of contextual performance and the variables affecting it are important with regard to improving patient care quality. Although there are many studies in literature concerning contextual performance, the number of studies on nurses is sparse. The research questions of this study, which was performed in order to fill this void in literature, are the following:

- What is the contextual performance level of nurses working in hospitals?
- Do the contextual performance levels of nurses' change according to sociodemographic characteristics?
- Is there a relationship between the personality characteristics of nurses and their contextual performance?
- Is there a relationship between the job satisfaction of nurses and their contextual performance?

## Methods

### Study Design and Sampling

The aim of this descriptive and methodological study is to examine the relationship between the contextual performances of hospital nurses, their personal characteristics, and their job satisfaction. The study was conducted in one private and one university hospital in Istanbul, Turkey, and all of the nurses who worked in the hospitals and agreed to participate in the study were included in the sample.

### Data Collection

A contextual performance scale (CPS) to show the contextual performances of nurses was developed by the researcher according to scale development standards (forming an item pool, presenting for expert views, pretesting, administering validity and reliability tests, etc.). The scale consisted of 45 items and two subdimensions (personal support and organizational support) (Cronbach- $\alpha$  = 0.97).

In order to determine the personality characteristics and job satisfaction of the nurses, the 50 item short form of the five factor personality test with five subdimensions developed by Goldberg (1990), the 20 item Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale with two subdimensions developed by Weiss et al. (1967), and the questionnaire for sociodemographic

characteristics developed by the researcher were applied to 500 nurses.

### Data Analysis

The dependent variables of the study consisted of the contextual performance score averages, which were found to have two subdimensions (personal support and organizational support), while the independent variables consisted of sociodemographic characteristics, personality characteristics, and job satisfaction. For scale development, the dependent variable group's *t*-test, Pearson moments multiplication correlation analysis, explanatory and confirmatory factor analysis, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient were used for statistical analysis. Numbers and percentages were used for the demographic characteristics of the nurses, while averages, standard deviation, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for independent groups (Tukey's honest significant difference [HSD] test for advanced analysis), the independent group's *t*-test, and the Pearson correlation analysis were used for scale evaluation.

### Ethical Considerations

Before the study, written ethical consent was obtained from the ethical boards of both the private hospital and the university hospital. Moreover, all of the participants gave verbal consent prior to participating in the study.

### Results

When the sociodemographic characteristics of the nurses who participated in the study were examined, it was found that 90% were female, 55% had bachelor's degrees, 57.6% were single, 66% worked in the public hospital, 34.8% worked in surgical units, and 66.4% were service nurses. The nurses had an average age of  $30.4 \pm 7.5$  years, 54.2% had a 0–3 year work duration at their institutions, 64.4% had a 40 or fewer hours per week work schedule, and 47.4% did not work in shifts. A minority, 40.8%, of the nurses was found to have a daily rest of 0–30 min, and 31.4% cared for 1–5 patients per day.

The contextual performance level of the nurses participating in the study was found to be above average, with the personal support subdimension being better than the organizational support subdimension. Thus, it can be said that nurses were more willing to help their friends.

When the job satisfaction levels of the nurses were examined through the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Scale, they were found to have medium levels of job satisfaction, with their internal satisfaction score averages being higher than their external satisfaction score averages. According to those results, it can be said that the employees achieved more satisfaction with regard to factors regarding the quality of the job,

such as success, approval, and job responsibility; they felt less satisfied with job environment factors, such as institutional policies, management policies, managers, and working conditions. When the subdimension scores of the five factor personality test were examined, the nurses were found to possess the characteristics of conscientiousness and agreeability.

**Table 1. The relationship between the contextual performance scale scores of the nurses and their personality characteristics scores n=(500)**

5 Factor Personality test	Contextual Performance Scale (Total)		CPS Sub dimensions			
			Personal support		Organizational Support	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
<b>1.Extraversion</b>	.26	.000	.24	.000	.24	.000
<b>2. Agreeableness</b>	<b>.52</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.56</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.42</b>	<b>.000</b>
<b>Conscientiousness</b>	.44	.000	.44	.000	.39	.000
<b>4.Stability</b>	.28	.000	.27	.000	.25	.000
<b>5. Openness</b>	.37	.000	.34	.000	.35	.000

**Table 2. The relationship between the contextual performance scale scores of the nurses and their job satisfaction scores (n=500)**

5 Factor Personality Test	Contextual Performance Scale (Total)	CPS Subdimensions					
		Personal support		Organizational Support			
		r	p	r	p		
<b>Minnesota Satisfaction Scale</b>	<b>Job</b>	.52	.000	.46	.000	.51	.000

**Table 3. The effect of variables on the contextual performance total scores of the nurses: Regression analysis results (n=500)**

Variables	B	SD	Beta ( $\beta$ )	T	p	95% Confidence interval	
(fixed)	-.236	.253		-.932	.352	-.734	.262
Job satisfaction	.015	.002	.315	8.799	.000	.012	.019
Agreeableness	.249	.055	.191	4.500	.000	.140	.358
Openness	.205	.049	.152	4.159	.000	.108	.302
Task	.107	.027	.150	3.961	.000	.054	.160
Conscientiousness	.162	.046	.141	3.542	.000	.072	.252
Hospital type	-.142	.047	-.115	-3.055	.002	-.234	-.051
Age	.009	.003	.112	2.628	.009	.002	.015
Stability	.080	.034	.080	2.356	.019	.013	.146
Education level	.051	.023	.081	2.205	.028	.006	.097
Number of Shifts	.007	.004	.070	1.734	.084	-.001	.015
Marital Status	.078	.046	.066	1.701	.090	-.012	.168

**Table 4. The effect of variables on the contextual performance scale personal support sub dimension scores of the nurses: Regression analysis results (n=500)**

Variables	B	SD	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t	p	95% Confidence interval	
(fixed)	-.365	.263		-1.388	.166	-.883	.152
Agreeableness	.372	.054	.299	6.934	.000	.266	.477
Job satisfaction	.011	.002	.233	6.392	.000	.007	.014
Task	.105	.026	.154	4.080	.000	.054	.155
Openness	.166	.047	.129	3.492	.001	.072	.259
Age	.010	.003	.129	3.001	.003	.003	.016
Conscientiousness	.121	.044	.110	2.726	.007	.034	.208
Number of Shifts	.009	.004	.097	2.372	.018	.002	.017
Marital Status	.107	.044	.095	2.445	.015	.021	.193
Weekly Work Hours	.008	.003	.089	2.577	.010	.002	.014
Stability	.060	.033	.063	1.819	.069	-.005	.124

**Table 5. The effect of variables on the contextual performance scale organizational support sub dimension scores of the nurses: Regression analysis results (n=500)**

Variables	B	SD	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t	p	95% Confidence interval	
(fixed)	-.515	.305		-1.688	.092	-1.114	.085
Job satisfaction	.021	.002	.364	9.709	.000	.017	.026
Conscientiousness	.246	.053	.178	4.625	.000	.141	.351
Openness	.282	.061	.175	4.609	.000	.162	.402
Task	.110	.034	.128	3.259	.001	.044	.176
Hospital type	-.174	.059	-.117	-2.926	.004	-.290	-.057
Education level	.084	.030	.111	2.839	.005	.026	.142
Stability	.109	.043	.091	2.519	.012	.024	.194
Age	.008	.004	.086	2.199	.028	.001	.015

When the sociodemographic characteristics and the contextual performance score averages of the nurses were compared, the score averages were found to be higher in those above 30 years of age, those who had master's degrees, and those who were married. When the employment characteristics were examined, score averages were found to be higher in those who worked at the private hospital, those who had manager positions, those who had more than eight years of experience, those who didn't work in shifts and worked only during the day, those who had at least one hour of downtime, those who worked at polyclinics, and those who did not provide patient care.

When the relationship between the contextual performance scale scores of the nurses and their personality characteristics scores was examined, a medium level relationship with the extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional balance, and openness subdimensions was found, and a strong relationship with the agreeableness subdimension was found.

In addition, a strong statistically significant positive relationship between the general job satisfaction score and the CPS total and organizational support subdimension scores, and a medium level statistically significant positive relationship between the personal support

subdimension scores and general job satisfaction scores were found.

Additionally, a multiple regression analysis was performed in order to evaluate the effect of the variables which were found to affect the contextual performance total, personal support, and organizational support subdimension scores of the nurses. The variables affecting the total scale score most were, respectively, job satisfaction, the agreeableness and openness subdimensions, task type, and the conscientiousness subdimension. The variables affecting the personal support subdimension score most were, respectively, the agreeableness subdimension, job satisfaction, task type, the openness subdimension, and age. The variables affecting the personal support subdimension score most were, respectively, job satisfaction, the conscientiousness and openness subdimensions, task type, and hospital type.

### Discussion

In our results, the contextual performance score averages were found to be higher in those above 30 years of age, those who had master's degrees, and those who were married. When the employment characteristics were examined, score averages were found to be higher in those who worked at the private hospital, those who had manager positions, those who had more than

eight years of experience, those who didn't work in shifts and worked only during the day, those who had at least one hour of downtime, those who worked at polyclinics, and those who did not provide patient care. In the relationship between sociodemographic characteristics and contextual performance; since contextual performance includes behaviors such as sharing experiences, helping newcomer colleagues, etc., it is an expected result for contextual performance to increase with age (Albar Marin & Garcia-Ramirez, 2005; Amarnah et al., 2010; Ng & Feldman, 2008). The fact that nurses who were currently in graduate studies exhibited contextual performance with regard to both their colleagues and the institution may be related to the difficulty of both studying and working at the same time. When employees have to study, they may need someone to work in their stead or change shifts with, so they may want to help the workers in the unit. Additionally, the employee exhibiting organizational support may result from the fact that the institution supports the graduate study. In a study by *Dogan & Ozdevecioglu* (2009), an increase in contextual performance was reported with increasing education levels. For the relationship between the employment characteristics and contextual performance, studies that show relationships with type of hospital, experience, and type of employment exist (Al-Ahmadi, 2009; Sturman, 2003; Wright & Bonett, 2002). For example, since private hospitals put patient satisfaction in the forefront and form their organizational culture around that, contextual performance characteristics would be more evident there (Basu et al., 2012). Additionally, both the workload and working hours in private hospitals are high in Turkey, so behaviors such as helping colleagues and sharing experiences can be seen more often (Ozkan et al., 2013).

Our results showed that contextual performance is lower in enclosed spaces (surgical rooms) with dense work, while it is higher in places like polyclinics, which work during the day with no shifts and allow at least one hour of downtime to employees during the workday. We can see that, in parameters related to job satisfaction, contextual performance is affected as well (Edward et al., 2008). Lower contextual performance was seen in nurses who continuously care for patients compared to those in management positions. Additionally, those

who work at private hospitals show higher contextual performance compared to those who work in public hospitals. Mumford et al. (2000) have stated that experienced managers were better in skills related to social judgment. Managers show improvement in behaviors that reflect contextual performance because of their experience. Duration of employment in the institution is also related to job satisfaction. Those who have worked for eight or more years have an inclination to teach their colleagues about their experiences and help them, and they have fewer intentions of leaving their job, thus, exhibiting a higher contextual performance (Befort & Hatrup, 2003).

When the contextual performance levels of the nurses were examined, it was found that their personal support scores, which included helping colleagues, were higher than their organizational support scores. This may be related to organizational support being more related to job satisfaction and the job satisfaction of the nurses in our study being at medium levels. Additionally, in our study, the agreeableness and conscientiousness characteristics were found to be more prevalent among personality characteristics. Agreeableness can be related to personal support, and conscientiousness can be related to organizational support (Moscoso & Salgado, 2004).

When the effects of job satisfaction and personality characteristics on contextual performance were examined, job satisfaction was found to have a greater effect on agreeableness, which is a personality characteristic also affecting contextual performance. When people do not like their jobs, they quite often will continue doing whatever is necessary in the job, and their task performance may not be significantly affected. However, behaviors regarding contextual performance, which are tied to willingness, are affected. For example, an employee who does not have job satisfaction may be willing to help colleagues or perform additional duties because he or she does not want to work more than is necessary for the institution (Organ & Ryan, 1995). In a study by Van Scotter (2000), the contextual performance of employees with high job satisfaction was found to be higher. Edwards et al. (2008) have stated that there is a positive relationship between contextual performance and job satisfaction. In studies by Tsai and Wu (2010) and Krishnan et al. (2010),

positive relationships between job satisfaction and institutional citizenship behavior were found. In a study by Linn (2012), job satisfaction was found to affect contextual performance. Mohammed et al. (2002) and Le Pine and Van Dyne (2001) have stated that agreeableness was the indicator of contextual performance. In the relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance, when it is considered as to which types of individuals can be associated most readily with contextual performance, this situation may seem intuitive. For example, individuals who avoid conflict are agreeable individuals, and this may be associated with contextual performance behavior.

Hurtz and Donovan (2000) have stated that conscientiousness and emotional support were important indicators of task performance, interpersonal easing, and job dedication. Additionally, they have stated agreeableness to be a valid indicator in the interpersonal easing dimension. According to Shaffer and Shaffer (2005), there is a positive relationship between agreeableness and contextual performance. In addition, according to Gellatly and Irving (2001), extroversion is positively related to contextual performance. Agreeableness, on the other hand, is only positively related to contextual performance when autonomy is high.

### Conclusions

When the study results are examined, it can be said that contextual performance is affected by job satisfaction and personality characteristics. Contextual performance is a desired result in nurses and hospitals need to pay attention to this parameter in both job applications and reward distribution. Contextual performance can be increased during job applications by checking personality characteristics and it can be increased during employment by achieving job satisfaction.

### Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all the nurses who participated in this study.

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