

Professional values gained in postgraduate nursing education from the perspectives of master's and doctorate graduates: A mixed-methods study

Nazik Yalniz MSc, PhD Student^{1,4}  | Emine Şenyuva BSN, PhD, Associate Professor²  |
Ümran Görügen MSc, Lecturer³ 

¹Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa, Institute of Graduate Studies, Istanbul, Turkey

²Nursing Education Department, Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa Florence Nightingale Nursing Faculty, Istanbul, Turkey

³Department of Medical Services and Techniques, Istanbul Topkapi University Plato Vocational School, Istanbul, Turkey

⁴Permanent address: Instructor/Lecturer, Nursing Education Department, Akdeniz University Nursing Faculty, Antalya, Turkey

Correspondence

Emine Şenyuva, Associate Professor, Istanbul University-Cerrahpaşa Florence Nightingale Nursing Faculty, Nursing Education Department, Istanbul, Turkey.
Email: esenyuva@iuc.edu.tr

Abstract

Aim: To determine the professional values of graduates of master's and doctoral programs in nursing and their views on the contribution of postgraduate education to their professional values.

Background: In postgraduate education, which is an important catalyst of professional identity development, a professional is expected to specialize in a field, get into more depth professionally, internalize professional values, and reflect and strengthen these values. To shed light on this expectation, more information is needed to assess the impact of postgraduate education on professional values.

Methods: A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was used. Data were collected for the quantitative part of the study for 385 graduates of postgraduate nursing education programs in Turkey who were selected using the snowball sampling method, while the maximum variation sampling method was used to collect data from 12 individuals for the qualitative part of the study. The Nurses Professional Values Scale (NPVS) and a Semi-Structured Interview Form were used to collect data in October-December 2022. The quantitative data obtained in the study were analyzed using the SPSS software, and the qualitative data were analyzed using the MAXQDA software.

Results: The mean total NPVS score of the participants was 130.32 ± 21.34 (possible range: 31–155). Among all dimensions, the highest mean score of the participants was in the caring dimension, followed by professionalism and activism. There were significant differences in the NPVS total and subscale scores of the participants based on their views on the contributions of age, institution where they worked, marital status, position at work, and postgraduate education to the acquisition of professional values. In the qualitative dimension of the study, two main themes were identified. One of these themes was the theme of professional values in postgraduate nursing education that covered the categories of professional values gained through postgraduate education, professional values that a nurse who has completed postgraduate education should have, and professional values in postgraduate nursing education. The second theme was the theme named recommendations for providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education. The integration of data from both components indicated that the qualitative interviews enriched the quantitative findings.

Conclusion: It was concluded that postgraduate nursing education programs contribute greatly to the professional values of graduates and strengthen their professional values.

This is an open access article under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/), which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2024 The Authors. *International Nursing Review* published by John Wiley & Sons Ltd on behalf of International Council of Nurses.

Implications for nursing and health policy: For the future of nursing, increasing professional strengths and visibility is significantly associated with professional values. This situation requires nurses with strong professional values. Graduate education programs in nursing should be developed in this direction and focus on development of professional values.

KEYWORDS

Nursing, postgraduate education, postgraduate nursing education, professional values, values

INTRODUCTION

Scientific, technological, cultural, and economic developments and transformations in today's uncertain and complex world, significantly affect social and individual values. In a globalized and dizzying world, it is possible for members of various professions to find meaning and better guide their own path by refocusing on professional values. This situation gradually increases the importance of postgraduate education programs, where professional identity development continues, and it requires these programs to be structured in a way that provides professional values (Hampton et al., 2022; Yoder-Wise, 2021).

Values are the entirety of common thoughts, objectives, principles, and beliefs that guide the individual by affecting their behaviors, decisions, and preferences, lay the foundation for their behaviors and decisions, and prepare the grounds for their perceptions and judgments of their environment (Dündar et al., 2019; Kozikoğlu & Bekler, 2019). *Professional values* are guiding principles that provide direction to professional practices of the members of a profession and qualities valued by the members of the profession. They reflect beliefs, criteria or standards, and expectations related to professional behaviors that contribute to the display of ideal behaviors required by the profession and the prevention of forbidden patterns or unapproved behaviors. *Professional values in nursing* are the beliefs and ideas that ensure the adaptation of nurses to present and future changes and developments, the individuality and integrity of healthy/ill individuals, as well as the provision of quality nursing care (healthcare), make their professional strengths increase/become visible, and guide their individual and professional behaviors (Dönmez & Özsoy, 2018; Poorchangizi et al., 2019). These values constitute the basis of quality nursing care, guide the communication between the healthy individual or the patient and the team, decisions, and solutions for ethical problems, strengthen professional identity, and enable the definition of a common nursing ideology and mission, the process of making sense of professional practices, and the creation of a common language among nurses. Professional values in nursing are stated as altruism, aesthetics, equality, freedom, human dignity, justice, and honesty, and these values of nurses have the nature of being a guide for "value-oriented" interactions, decision-making, and practices (American Nurses Association, 2015; International Council of Nurses, 2021; Rose et al., 2018).

One of the most important factors that play a significant role in helping nurses gain professional values, which have a significant place in the individual and professional lives of nurses, is *education* (İbrahimoğlu et al., 2020; Poorchangizi et al., 2019). Therefore, the integration of professional values into nursing education is a necessity for the present and future status of nursing (Poorchangizi et al., 2019). This requirement necessitates the shaping and development of professional values in the process of professional socialization starting from the first year of nursing education (Ekiz Erim & Çevirme, 2018; Kaya et al., 2018; Dönmez & Özsoy, 2018). However, there is often a gap between educational practices at universities and evidence-based knowledge (Basu, 2020), today's nursing education mostly focuses on theoretical knowledge and skills, evaluations are made based on knowledge, affective gains are not given enough emphasis, and evidence-based educational practices should be used (Keçeci & Demiray, 2017; Şenyuva, 2018). In fact, it is expected of nursing education to socialize members of the profession, prepare them for life and the profession, and help them gain/develop professional values.

As an important phase of education, postgraduate education (master's/PhD) is significant in terms of the individual and professional development of the members of a profession. According to the International Council of Nurses (ICN), based on postgraduate education in the context of a minimum of a master's or doctoral degree, the graduate acquires additional in-depth knowledge, critical thinking skills, and decision-making skills that pave the foundation for an advanced level of practice and decision-making (International Council of Nurses, 2020). During this development process, the professional also adopts and internalizes professional values and reflects these values in treatment, nursing care, education, research, and management (İlter, 2020; Kızılkaya & Öner, 2017; Satır & Murat, 2021; Shafakhah et al., 2018). Within the scope of the Bologna Process work that started in Turkey in 1999, the Turkey Higher Education Competencies Framework (THECF) operations was initiated in line with the European Union (EU) Competency Framework. In the context of these efforts, standards of knowledge, skills, and competencies related to master's and PhD programs have been created. Professional values are emphasized as one of the significant competencies that those who graduate from these programs should have, and these competencies are specified as "being able to observe and supervise, having societal, scientific, cultural, and ethical values in issues related to their field, and teaching these values" at the master's

degree level and as “being able to contribute to the solution of societal, scientific, cultural, and ethical problems encountered in areas related to their field and supporting the development of these values” at the PhD level. These competencies related to the professional values that graduates of master’s and doctoral programs have been defined by the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) in the field of “Academic and Professional Standards in Health Education” as “[graduates] observe ethical values in collecting, recording, interpreting, and reporting data related to the field of health and teach these values. They are aware of the importance of ethical principles and ethics boards for the individual and society, and they act ethically” (Council of Higher Education, 2021). The Guideline for Basic Competencies in Nursing issued by the Turkish Ministry of Health in 2021 also includes professional values among criteria related to professionalism in nursing as “[nurses] carry out nursing care and practices according to professional values/ethical codes” (General Directorate of Health Services, 2021). All these efforts indicate that having nurses gain professional values not only in undergraduate education but also in postgraduate education is highly important.

It has been stated that the perceptions of undergraduate students regarding professional values become more positive as their class years increase (İbrahimoglu et al., 2020; Poorchangizi et al., 2019), nurses develop more positive perceptions of professional values as their education levels rise, they attribute more importance to the individuality of the patient in the care they provide, professional values vary according to education levels, and education has a significant effect on professional values (Bleda et al., 2020; Dündar et al., 2019; Erbil & Aslan Kaya, 2019; Erkuş & Dinç, 2018; Gassas & Salem, 2022; Kantek et al., 2017; Kavradım et al., 2019; Dönmez & Özsoy, 2018; Shafakhah et al., 2018; Sibandze & Scafide, 2017; Türe & Demirsoy, 2018). However, studies on the effects of education, which has a significant contribution to the development of the professional values of nurses, have not become prevalent yet, and there is an insufficient number of studies focusing on the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values in the context of the profession of nursing (Hampton et al., 2022; İlaslan et al., 2021; Yelekçi & Koca Kutlu, 2020).

Although much has been learned about the importance of graduate education in nursing, more information is needed to evaluate the impact of graduate nursing education on professional values. While critical situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic and social inequalities experienced recently on a global scale suggest that nurses should re-focus on their professional values, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) reiterates in its Fundamental Principles that the focus of nursing education should be on professional values (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2021). This is because professional values form the basis of nursing care and practices, as well as interactions with healthy individuals and patients, increase the quality of care, raise professional satisfaction by providing individual and holistic care, and thus, guide the provision of qualified healthcare services.

Considering this situation along with the recent COVID-19 pandemic, chaotic developments, and changes in the profiles of healthy individuals and patients, it becomes more important for nurses, who are the pioneers of care, to have professional values and reflect these values to patient care to provide qualified care to patients with different cultures in an increasingly complex healthcare system (Gassas & Salem, 2022, Bleda et al., 2020; Sibandze & Scafide, 2017; Kaya & Boz, 2017).

This study is important in terms of determining the professional values of graduates of postgraduate nursing education programs and their views on providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education, as well as revealing data that will shed light on these education programs.

METHODS

Objective

This study focused on professional values from the perspectives of graduates of master’s and doctoral programs in nursing. It was aimed to determine the professional values of graduates of master’s and doctoral programs in nursing and their views on the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values. The research questions were as follows:

- How do nursing professionals with postgraduate degrees perceive professional values?
- What are the factors affecting the professional values of these individuals?
- What are their experiences/opinions about gaining professional values through postgraduate education programs in nursing?

Research paradigm

The qualitative part of the mixed method was based on the interpretive paradigm, an approach that aims to understand and explain the inner-subjective world of individuals directly from their subjective perspectives. The quantitative part of the study was compatible with postpositivism because it utilized natural science methods to study its subject areas, including a questionnaire, statistical analyses, tests, and measurements based on knowledge (Günbayı, 2020).

Design

In this study, the convergent parallel mixed design was used. The convergent design is an approach in which quantitative and qualitative data and results are collected, analyzed, and merged. A subtype of this method, the parallel-databases design involves two parallel sets of data, quantitative and qual-

itative sets, that are collected independently and gathered only at the stage of interpretation (Günbayı, 2020).

Population and sample

The population of the study covered all graduates who had completed postgraduate nursing education in Turkey. According to 1994–2020 data, the number of graduates who completed postgraduate nursing education in Turkey was 12,244 (CoHE, 2022; Kocaman & Arslan Yürümezoğlu, 2015). The sample size required to conduct the study was determined to be at least 385 with the OpenEpi program in a confidence interval of 95%. Snowball sampling is effective in identifying individuals or situations that can be a rich source of information about the problem that is focused on in a study. In this study, snowball sampling was used to access rich sources of information (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021).

The inclusion criteria were having graduated from a postgraduate nursing program (master/PhD) and voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study. Those who completed postgraduate programs other than nursing and doctoral students in integrated programs (doctorate program following a master's program) were excluded from the study.

The participants of the quantitative part of the data collection process were asked if they volunteered to participate in individual interviews, and those who were voluntary were determined. In determining the participants with whom individual interviews would be held, the maximum variation sampling method, which is a qualitative sampling method, was utilized. This method was selected to maximize the diversity of the participants in the study and make it possible to investigate situations that were expected to provide abundant data (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2021). Care was taken to choose individuals working in different institutions and with different characteristics in terms of age, gender, marital status, educational status, and job position.

Twelve (12) individuals volunteered to participate in the individual interviews (Information Form-1). Data saturation was reached after interviewing 12 participants and therefore, interviews were terminated.

Data collection tools

The quantitative data of the study were collected using Information Form-1, a Form for Ranking Professional Values Based on Their Priority, and the Nurses Professional Values Scale (NPVS) on the Google Forms platform. The form consisted of three parts.

Part 1 included **Information Form-1**. The form was developed by the researchers in line with the relevant literature (Dündar et al., 2019; Poorchangizi et al., 2019; Sibandze & Scafide, 2017; Yelekçi & Koca Kutlu, 2020). There were 9 questions related to characteristics of the participants and their

views on postgraduate education and providing nurses with professional values.

Part 2 included the **Form for Ranking Professional Values Based on Their Priority (PVPO)**. As a result of a review of ethical values in the profession of nursing, seven essential values were determined as follows: altruism, aesthetics, equality, freedom, human dignity, justice, and honesty. The participants were requested to order these seven essential values according to the importance of each value for them from the most important to the least important (Şahin Orak & Ecevit Alpar, 2012).

Part 3 included the **Nurses Professional Values Scale (NPVS)**. The scale was developed by Darlene Weis and Mary Jane Schank and was adapted to Turkish by Şahin Orak and Ecevit Alpar (2012). The scale has five subscales, which are human dignity, responsibility, activism, safety, and autonomy. The scale items are scored on a 5-point Likert type system from the most important (5) to the least important (1). The minimum and maximum scores to be obtained from the scale are 31 and 155. An increase in scores indicates more importance attributed to professional values by the respondent. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total scale was reported as 0.95 (Şahin Orak & Ecevit Alpar, 2012). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the scale in this study was determined to be 0.98.

The qualitative data of the study were collected using Information Form-2 and the Semi-Structured Interview Form.

Information Form-2: The form was developed by the researchers by reviewing the relevant literature (Dündar et al., 2019; Poorchangizi et al., 2019; Sibandze & Scafide, 2017; Yelekçi & Koca Kutlu, 2020). There were six questions in the form inquiring about the descriptive characteristics of the participants.

Semi-Structured Interview Form: The form was developed by the researchers in line with the relevant literature (Shafakhah et al., 2018; Sibandze & Scafide, 2017) to determine the views of the participants on providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education. The following questions formed the basis of the interviews:

- What is/are your reason(s) for pursuing postgraduate education in nursing?
- What are your most important individual values that determine your perspective on life and goals, influence your decisions, reflect your beliefs, and form your principles?
- What are your most important professional values that guide your professional perspective and nursing care practices and shed light on your roles and responsibilities?
- What are your opinions on the professional values that a nurse with postgraduate education should have?
- What are your opinions on postgraduate education providing professional values?
- What are the factors that you think are effective in gaining/developing these values during postgraduate education?
- What are your suggestions about gaining/developing professional values through postgraduate education?

Data collection

The data were collected from the participants in October–December 2022 after obtaining ethics committee approval. The data collection form, which included Information Form-1, PVPO, and NPVS, was transferred to the electronic environment by the researchers using the Google Forms platform, and the link to the form was sent to all participants via e-mail or social media networks. To determine whether the questions were suitable for the objectives of the study, a pilot study was conducted with a total of 10 participants chosen randomly. An informed consent text was included in the form. Participants could automatically send their answers to us after completing the online questionnaire. A link reminder was sent after the first link. The participants had the right to refuse to participate. There was no time limit for completing the questionnaire, which took approximately 10 minutes for each participant to fill out. Once the targeted sample was reached, access to the form was terminated. IP restriction was applied to the data collection form to prevent repeated responses.

In this context, care was taken to choose individuals working in different institutions and with different characteristics as per age, gender, marital status, educational status, and positions.

During the qualitative data collection phase, the participants who agreed to contribute to individual interviews were contacted, and the date and time of the interviews were determined. Additionally, a link to the Zoom platform (a video conferencing platform), was sent to each participant separately to record their opinions regarding the questions accurately and completely. Online face-to-face interviews were conducted with the approval of the interviewees. During the interviews, first, Information Form-2 was applied to the participants, and then, the questions included in the Semi-Structured Interview Form were asked. Interviews were conducted until data saturation was reached, and the duration of each interview varied from 30 to 75 minutes. Furthermore, the interview was recorded by obtaining the consent of the interviewee to ensure that their views were collected accurately and completely.

Data analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows 25.0 software. Data refinement was performed, and the results are presented as descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, min-max values, mean, standard deviation). In the comparisons of the quantitative data with normal distribution, independent-samples *t* test was used for the differences between two independent groups, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used for comparing more than two groups. In cases where there was a difference, post hoc tests were carried out with Bonferroni correction to identify the group causing

the difference. The level of statistical significance was set at $P < 0.05$.

For the analyses of qualitative data, the audio recordings obtained from the interviews were transcribed. Then, the transcribed data were transferred to the MAXQDA software (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019). An inductive approach was adopted in the analysis of the data transferred to MAXQDA. The data were read repeatedly, and preliminary codes were created. The codes that were interrelated were gathered under themes. Throughout the process of data analysis, the researchers held regular meetings to discuss and compare emerging findings. Associations, similarities, and differences among all concepts were carefully identified during the analyses of the interview material. The interviews were reviewed comprehensively and in depth by the researchers together to reveal the main themes and related categories. An expert was consulted about the data analysis process. Then, the themes that were obtained were explained in clear language that the readers could comprehend, and the findings were interpreted to make sense of them.

Trustworthiness/rigor

In qualitative research, “validity” is related to the accuracy of scientific findings, and “reliability” is related to the repeatability of these findings. In this regard, the following steps were followed to increase the validity and reliability of this study.

In the context of validity, to ensure credibility, the researcher was allowed to establish a professional relationship with the participants and ensure that they expressed themselves freely. The data obtained from the interviews were used as direct quotes. To ensure confirmability, the researchers came together and reached a consensus at every stage of data analysis. To ensure transferability, a purposive sampling method was used, and the inclusion criteria for the participants are reported. Additionally, the data analysis and quotation procedures are explained from different perspectives. To ensure dependability, expert opinions were taken regarding the suitability of the interview questions. All data obtained in the interviews were transcribed directly by the researcher. Verbatim quotations were taken from the interviews without making any comments. Lastly, the data were saved to enable future audits (Günbayı, 2018; Stenfors et al., 2020).

Ethical aspect of the study

Ethical approval for the study was received from an ethics committee (numbered KA EK-609 and dated 05.10.2022), and the procedures in this study followed the tenets of the Declaration of Helsinki. Written permission to use the scale was obtained from N. Şahin Orak. Finally, the participants who took part in the individual interviews were explained that the interviews would be recorded, and their consent was obtained.

RESULTS

Quantitative data

43.1% of the participants worked at hospitals, while 53.8% worked at educational institutions. The mean age of the participants was 37.32 ± 7.86 years. 84.7% were female, 67.3% were married, 70.1% had master's degrees, and 29.9% had PhD degrees.

51.2% of the participants were academics, while 48.8% were nurses. Among the nurse participants, 25% were bedside/service nurses, 19.7% were service supervising nurses, and 18.6% worked as specialty nurses. The mean professional experience of the participants was 9.84 ± 7.83 years.

Eighty-one percent of the participants stated that postgraduate education contributed a lot to nurses in terms of gaining professional values, 16.9% expressed that it contributed partially, while 2.1% stated that it did not contribute at all.

The participants ranked the given professional values based on priority as human dignity (63.9%), justice (36.4%), honesty (26.2%), freedom (22.1%), equality (34.8%), altruism (19.7%), and aesthetics (24.9%).

The mean total NPVS score of the participants was 130.32 ± 21.34 . Their mean subscale scores were 46.90 ± 8.11 for human dignity, 28.86 ± 5.04 for responsibility, 20.94 ± 3.69 for activism, 16.56 ± 2.94 for safety, and 17.05 ± 2.91 for autonomy.

The mean total NPVS scores and the mean human dignity, activism, and safety subscale scores of the participants varied significantly with respect to the institutions where they worked ($P < 0.05$). The mean total NPVS scores and the mean human dignity, activism, and safety subscale scores of the participants who worked at educational institutions were found to be higher than the scores of the participants who worked at hospitals (Table 1).

The mean total NPVS scores and the mean human dignity, activism, safety, and autonomy subscale scores of the participants varied significantly based on their age ($P < 0.05$). The mean human dignity subscale score of the participants in the 35–39 age group was higher than the mean scores of those in the 40–44 age group and those who were 45 years old or older. The mean responsibility subscale score of the participants in the age group of 35–39 was higher than the mean score of those who were 40–44 years old. The mean activism subscale score of the participants in the age group of 30–34 was higher compared to the mean score of those in the age group of 40–44. The mean safety subscale scores of the participants in the age groups of 30–34 and 35–39 were higher than the mean score of those in the age group of 40–44. The mean autonomy subscale scores of the participants in the age groups of 30–34 and 35–39 were higher than the mean score of those who were 45 years old or older. Finally, the mean total NPVS score of the participants in the age group of 35–39 was higher than the mean score of those in the age group of 40–44 (Table 1).

The mean NPVS total and all subscale scores of the participants differed significantly with respect to their marital status ($P < 0.05$). All mean scores of the participants who were single were significantly higher than the mean scores of those who were married (Table 1).

The mean NPVS total and all subscale scores of the participants differed significantly with respect to their sectors ($P < 0.05$). All mean scores of the participants who worked as academicians were higher than the mean scores of those who worked as nurses (Table 1).

The mean NPVS total and all subscale scores of the participants differed significantly with respect to their views on the contribution of postgraduate education to the acquisition of professional values ($P < 0.05$). All mean scores of the participants who stated that postgraduate education contributed a lot to the acquisition of professional values were higher than the mean scores of those who expressed that it partially contributed (Table 1).

Qualitative data

The mean age of the participants who took part in the individual interviews was 39.4 ± 7.98 years (min: 28, max: 51), 91.6% of them were female, 8.4% were male, 58.3% had master's degrees, and 41.7% had PhD degrees. Their mean professional experience was 14.08 ± 9.98 years (min: 1, max: 29). While 41.6% of the participants worked at universities, 50% worked at hospitals, and 8.4% worked at a provincial directorate of health. 58.3% of the participants were nurses, while 41.7% were academicians (Table 2).

The responses of the participants to the questions in the individual interviews revealed two themes and three categories.

- Professional values in postgraduate nursing education
- Recommendations for providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education (Table 3).

Professional values in postgraduate nursing education

The views of the participants on the *contribution of postgraduate nursing education to professional values* were in parallel with individual values. Therefore, the values that the participants adopted were commonly coded within the framework of professional values. Accordingly, this main theme covered the categories presented in Table 3.

Professional values gained through postgraduate education

The professional values which the participants expressed the most regarding the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values were determined to be honesty, being individual-oriented, justice-equality, ethics, respect for human dignity, mercy, empathy, and not inflicting any harm.

TABLE 1 Comparison of the NPVS total scale and subscale mean scores of the participants based on their descriptive characteristics ($N = 385$)

| Variables | | Human dignity ±SD | Responsibility ±SD | Activism ±SD | Safety ±SD | Autonomy ±SD | TOTAL ±SD |
|--|--|---------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Institution of employment | Hospital ¹ | 45.66 ± 8.32 | 28.36 ± 5.04 | 20.33 ± 3.67 | 16.22 ± 2.85 | 16.79 ± 2.99 | 127.36 ± 21.54 |
| | Educational institution ² | 48.08 ± 7.49 | 29.32 ± 4.86 | 21.49 ± 3.51 | 16.89 ± 2.90 | 17.31 ± 2.76 | 133.10 ± 20.06 |
| | Other ³ | 43.92 ± 12.25 | 27.75 ± 7.34 | 20.00 ± 5.62 | 15.58 ± 4.25 | 16.17 ± 4.04 | 123.42 ± 32.71 |
| Test value | | 5.045*** | 1.992*** | 5.025*** | 3.115*** | 2.081*** | 4.038*** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.007* | 0.138 | 0.007* | 0.045* | 0.126 | 0.018* |
| Bonferroni | | 2 > 1 | | 2 > 1 | 2 > 1 | | 2 > 1 |
| Age | 29 or younger ¹ | 47.94 ± 7.84 | 29.21 ± 5.28 | 21.44 ± 3.69 | 16.76 ± 2.89 | 17.43 ± 2.84 | 132.79 ± 21.30 |
| | 30–34 ² | 47.73 ± 7.45 | 29.40 ± 4.77 | 21.51 ± 3.41 | 16.90 ± 2.80 | 17.47 ± 2.67 | 133.01 ± 19.95 |
| | 35–39 ³ | 48.76 ± 7.45 | 29.82 ± 4.76 | 21.36 ± 3.66 | 17.05 ± 2.80 | 17.55 ± 2.72 | 134.54 ± 19.90 |
| | 40–44 ⁴ | 44.67 ± 8.19 | 27.58 ± 4.96 | 19.72 ± 3.69 | 15.42 ± 2.90 | 16.30 ± 2.85 | 123.68 ± 20.76 |
| | 45 or older ⁵ | 44.71 ± 9.06 | 27.84 ± 5.23 | 20.28 ± 3.84 | 16.34 ± 3.16 | 16.22 ± 3.26 | 125.39 ± 23.30 |
| Test value | | 4.235*** | 2.879*** | 3.516*** | 3.411*** | 4.064*** | 3.980*** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.002* | 0.023* | 0.008* | 0.009* | 0.003* | 0.004* |
| Bonferroni | | 3 > 4, 3 > 5 | 3 > 4 | 2 > 4 | 2 > 4, 3 > 4 | 2 > 5, 3 > 5 | 3 > 4 |
| Gender | Female | 46.94 ± 8.28 | 28.86 ± 5.21 | 20.96 ± 3.80 | 16.66 ± 3.02 | 17.05 ± 2.99 | 130.46 ± 21.99 |
| | Male | 46.71 ± 7.15 | 28.85 ± 4.01 | 20.86 ± 3.03 | 16.05 ± 2.42 | 17.07 ± 2.47 | 129.54 ± 17.48 |
| Test value | | 0.197** | 0.020** | 0.177** | 1.457** | -0.045** | 0.305** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.884 | 0.984 | 0.860 | 0.146 | 0.964 | 0.761 |
| Marital status | Single | 48.22 ± 7.78 | 29.82 ± 5.14 | 21.62 ± 3.67 | 17.07 ± 2.88 | 17.54 ± 2.72 | 134.27 ± 20.79 |
| | Married | 46.26 ± 8.21 | 28.39 ± 4.93 | 20.61 ± 3.67 | 16.32 ± 2.94 | 16.81 ± 2.98 | 128.40 ± 21.38 |
| Test value | | 2.235** | 2.622** | 2.523** | 2.376** | 2.306** | 2.550** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.026* | 0.009* | 0.012* | 0.018* | 0.022* | 0.011* |
| Education status | Master's degree | 46.50 ± 8.31 | 28.74 ± 5.11 | 20.86 ± 3.81 | 16.50 ± 2.98 | 17.01 ± 2.95 | 129.61 ± 21.92 |
| | PhD degree | 47.85 ± 7.59 | 29.14 ± 4.87 | 21.13 ± 3.41 | 16.72 ± 2.86 | 17.14 ± 2.84 | 131.98 ± 19.91 |
| Test value | | -1.499** | -0.710** | -0.650** | -0.688** | -0.383** | -0.996** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.135 | 0.478 | 0.516 | 0.492 | 0.702 | 0.320 |
| Position/sector | Nurse | 45.36 ± 8.58 | 28.31 ± 5.22 | 20.26 ± 3.80 | 16.10 ± 2.94 | 16.73 ± 3.08 | 126.76 ± 22.39 |
| | Academician | 48.38 ± 7.36 | 29.38 ± 4.81 | 21.60 ± 3.47 | 17.01 ± 2.88 | 17.36 ± 2.71 | 133.73 ± 19.74 |
| Test value | | -3.717** | -2.087** | -3.625** | -3.082** | -2.102** | -3.243** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.000* | 0.038* | 0.000* | 0.002* | 0.036* | 0.001* |
| Professional experience | 5 years or shorter | 47.34 ± 8.38 | 29.17 ± 5.31 | 21.26 ± 3.83 | 16.71 ± 3.07 | 17.29 ± 2.97 | 131.77 ± 22.46 |
| | 6–10 years | 47.16 ± 7.52 | 28.76 ± 4.84 | 21.04 ± 3.68 | 16.67 ± 2.85 | 17.10 ± 2.79 | 130.73 ± 20.26 |
| | 11 years or longer | 46.24 ± 8.26 | 28.60 ± 4.88 | 20.53 ± 3.53 | 16.32 ± 2.87 | 16.76 ± 2.93 | 128.44 ± 20.87 |
| Test value | | 0.728*** | 0.484*** | 1.422*** | 0.705*** | 1.203*** | 0.887*** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.483 | 0.617 | 0.242 | 0.495 | 0.301 | 0.413 |
| Contribution of postgraduate education to the acquisition of professional values | Contributed a lot ¹ | 47.38 ± 7.83 | 29.37 ± 4.73 | 21.18 ± 3.51 | 16.75 ± 2.81 | 17.23 ± 2.83 | 131.91 ± 20.46 |
| | Contributed partially ² | 45.14 ± 9.06 | 26.74 ± 5.79 | 19.89 ± 4.38 | 15.86 ± 3.40 | 16.28 ± 3.24 | 123.91 ± 24.34 |
| | Did not contribute at all ³ | 42.50 ± 8.72 | 26.38 ± 5.50 | 20.38 ± 3.62 | 14.88 ± 2.75 | 16.38 ± 2.50 | 120.50 ± 19.27 |
| Test value | | 3.305*** | 8.642*** | 3.390*** | 3.872*** | 3.142*** | 4.738*** |
| <i>P</i> | | 0.038* | 0.000* | 0.035* | 0.022* | 0.044* | 0.009* |
| Bonferroni | | 1 > 2 | 1 > 2 | 1 > 2 | 1 > 2 | 1 > 2 | 1 > 2 |

* $P < 0.05$; **Independent-samples t test; ***one-way ANOVA.

TABLE 2 Descriptive characteristics of the participants ($N = 12$)

| Code | Institution | Age | Gender | Postgraduate education program completed | Professional experience | Position |
|------|-------------------------------|-----|--------|--|-------------------------|-------------|
| P1 | RTH* | 49 | Female | Master's | 17 years | Nurse |
| P2 | RTH* | 28 | Female | Master's | 7 years | Nurse |
| P3 | State University | 28 | Female | Master's | 7 years | Academician |
| P4 | State University | 46 | Female | Master's | 28 years | Academician |
| P5 | State University | 51 | Male | PhD | 29 years | Academician |
| P6 | Foundation University | 33 | Female | Master's | 3 years | Academician |
| P7 | UH** | 41 | Female | PhD | 20 years | Nurse |
| P8 | State University | 38 | Female | Master's | 3 years | Academician |
| P9 | UH** | 44 | Female | PhD | 21 years | Nurse |
| P10 | RTH* | 37 | Female | Master's | 11 years | Nurse |
| P11 | Private Hospital | 32 | Female | Master's | 1 year | Nurse |
| P12 | Provincial Health Directorate | 46 | Female | Master's | 22 years | Nurse |

*RTH: Research and Training Hospital.

**UH: University Hospital.

TABLE 3 Themes and categories identified based on the views of the participants on the contribution of postgraduate nursing education to the provision of professional values to nurses

| Theme | Category |
|---|---|
| 1. Professional values in postgraduate nursing education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Professional values gained through postgraduate education ■ Professional values that a nurse who has completed postgraduate education should have ■ Contribution of postgraduate education to professional values |
| 2. Recommendations for providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education | |

"It provided a deeper perspective, and thus, I was able to internalize professional values such as justice, honesty, and human dignity." (P3)

"Respect; firstly, self-respect and respect for individuals/society. My professional values are also based on respect. Respect for the right to life of others, recognizing people as individuals... Postgraduate education enabled me to approach people with this understanding." (P8)

"It helped me gain autonomy. We studied the basic concepts of individuals, diseases, and nursing in detail, and our values related to these concepts such as ethics, morality, justice, love for humans, freedom, equality, and privacy developed more." (P11)

Professional values that a nurse who has completed postgraduate education should have

The professional values expressed the most by the participants were having ethical values, autonomy, privacy, respect, honesty, and empathy.

"An expert member of the profession all individual and professional values of whom are fortified in integration with the spirit and philosophy of F. Nightingale..." (P4)

"Those who gain awareness in terms of many areas such as human values and professional ethics develop a perspective and evaluate situations more critically..." (P6)

"Those who add new values to ethical principles and professional values adopted in undergraduate education, improve existing ones, and most

importantly, provide more sensitive care and have autonomy..." (P9)

Contribution of postgraduate education to professional values

The professional values expressed the most under the category of the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values were determined to be an increasing awareness of professional values, strengthening professional bonds, the integration of values and professionalism, and the improvement of nursing roles and functions.

"I think it made significant contributions in terms of understanding the philosophical aspect of the profession, autonomy, and professionalism. I added new ones to my professional values." (P1)

"It allowed me to recognize and adopt professional values more and become professional." (P5)

"It strengthened my professional bonds and improved my values." (P10)

Recommendations for providing nurses with professional values through postgraduate education

The most frequently expressed recommendations of the participants under this theme were increasing educational quality/the contribution of the educator, promoting postgraduate education, expanding the scope of research, paying importance to professional values education, organizing activities aiming at gaining professional values, increasing the cooperation between the school and the clinic, and using active learning methods regarding values.

"I believe making postgraduate education popular will actually contribute to the development of professional values. ... If ethical values and professional values are emphasized in these programs, or if they become compulsory, it will be more effective." (P8)

"Postgraduate education should be intertwined with the clinical field, and the academy and the clinic should feed one another." (P6).

"I recommend the creation of settings such as peer discussions between those receiving postgraduate education and the members of the profession." (P7)

"A postgraduate program that focuses on the affective domain should be developed." (P1)

"I think there should be facilitating procedures and encouraging factors. I also believe that the number of nurses with postgraduate degrees should be increased." (P2)

"I think educators should contribute to students by acting as role models of professional values, because a professional value that is not put into action cannot be adopted through theoretical knowledge." (P9)

DISCUSSION

All participants stated that they had high levels of awareness of professional values and that the practice of professional values in postgraduate nursing education is necessary.

The number of postgraduate students in the Higher Education Information Management System has increased over the last decade, the number of students who continue or have completed their master's degree is higher than the number of those who continue or have completed their doctoral studies, and women have a higher rate of applying to postgraduate education programs (CoHE, 2022). In this study, the majority of the participants were female, had master's degrees, and worked as academic. This finding can be attributed to the reflection of the presence of more women than men in the profession of nursing in postgraduate education and the likelihood of nurses to prefer an academic life following their postgraduate education.

It was determined by Erkuş and Dinç (2018), Türe and Demirsoy (2018), Dündar et al. (2019), and Gassas and Salem (2022) that education level was an effective factor on the professional values of nurses. In this study, the vast majority of the participants expressed that postgraduate education contributed a lot to their acquisition of professional values. This finding in parallel with the results of the aforementioned studies can be interpreted as that the participants were aware of the importance of postgraduate education in terms of providing nurses with professional values and knew about its role as a bridge.

It has been stated that values that are prioritized may vary from culture to culture, and in this regard, values that are prioritized in Turkey were determined as trust and justice by Erkuş and Dinç (2018), one such value in Iran was found as protecting the confidentiality of patients by Poorchangiz et al. (2017), and those in Iraq were identified as human dignity, social justice, and freedom by Al-Banna (2017). Additionally, the basic professional values perceived by nurses were determined to be human dignity by Martin et al. (2019) and Bleda et al. (2020). Kaya and Boz (2017) also stated that professional values were affected by individual values,



and identifying individual and professional values adopted by nurses and helping them know themselves increased their understanding of professional values. Asiandi et al. (2021) noted a significant difference in the caring, activism, and professionalism scores of nurses based on their education levels. In this study, the participants ranked the given professional values based on their priority for them as human dignity, justice, honesty, freedom, equality, altruism, and aesthetics. In the qualitative dimension of the study, it was also determined that individual and professional values were in parallel with each other, and the most frequently mentioned values were honesty, respect, being individual-oriented, justice, ethics, and respect for human dignity in this order. This result, which showed similarity to the literature, and the support of the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study for each other suggested that the participants primarily considered the individuality of the healthy individual or patient in their perceptions of professional values, and they were aware of professional values.

High levels of adoption of professional values have been found in nurses by Çetinkaya Uslusoy et al. (2017), Erkuş and Dinç (2018), Zengin et al. (2018), Dünder et al. (2019), Yelekçi and Koca Kutlu (2020), and Uslu and Kızılkaya (2021). Ng et al. (2016) determined that postgraduate nursing education increased the professional behaviors and self-respect of nurses, it encouraged them in terms of clinical decision-making, this situation was reflected on their attitudes and increased the quality of patient care, it raised their knowledge levels, and, thus, increased their self-confidence and supported their acquisition of professional values. In a study conducted to determine the relationship between the attitudes of nurses toward the profession and their professionalism, Tarhan et al. (2016) found that nurses who received postgraduate education adopted professional values and attitudes better. In this study, the participants had a high mean total NPVS score. Hampton et al. (2022) assessed the professional values of students who were enrolled in various Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) specialty programs, and they found the total professional values score of their participants to be 118.30 ± 14 in such challenging times. Additionally, in the qualitative dimension of our study, it was expressed by the participants that postgraduate education positively contributed to their development of professional values. Giardino and Hickey (2020) reported themes focused on the perceptions of students regarding the impact of their DNP education experience reflected in their professional development through their journey in the program, and the students stated that the DNP program was the catalyst that helped them grow and transform their professional identity. Considering this finding along with the information that professional values are learnable, improvable, and reinforced through continuous training, it can be argued that postgraduate nursing education had a significant contribution to the acquisition of professional values, and it enabled the participants to have strong professional values.

Although there are studies in the literature which stated that age did not have any effect on professional values (Erkuş

& Dinç, 2018; Uslu & Kızılkaya, 2021), there are also studies which determined that age affected professional values (Çetinkaya Uslusoy et al., 2017; Poorchangizi et al., 2017; Tuna & Şahin, 2021). Moreover, in addition to studies which demonstrated that as age increased, the importance attached to professional values decreased (Cheng et al., 2015), there also exist studies in which the adoption of professional values in participants under the age of 33 years was found to be low (Skela-Savič & Kiger, 2015). In this study, it was determined that the adoption of professional values by the participants who were younger than 40 years old was higher than the adoption of these values by the participants who were 40 years old or older. This result can be interpreted as that the participants under the age of 40 had a higher level of awareness regarding professional values, while burnout levels increased in the participants over the age of 40 years along with professional experience. Thus, their perspectives of professional values were negatively affected.

Çetinkaya Uslusoy et al. (2017) reported that married nurses had higher scores of professional values, while Poorchangizi et al. (2017) determined that marital status did not affect professional values significantly. In this study, it was found that the mean total NPVS and all subscale mean scores of the single participants were higher than the mean scores of the married participants. Despite these discrepancies in the literature, this result can be attributed to the possibility that the single participants focused more on the profession and were more interested in postgraduate education.

In studies conducted to determine the professional values of instructors, it was reported that academician nurses had strong professional values (López-Pereira & Arango-Bayer, 2017; Dönmez & Özsoy, 2018). Similarly, in this study, the professional value adoption rates of the academician participants working at educational institutions were determined to be high. This result was in parallel with the statements obtained in the qualitative part of the study which showed that instructors displayed the professional values they possessed and that this had a strong effect on increasing awareness of the issue. Considering all these findings, it can be claimed that the identity of these participants as educators was reinforced through postgraduate education, and this was positively reflected in their professional values. However, it is thought that reasons such as the workload of postgraduate nurses, especially those working in hospitals, and inadequate administrative support may have an impact on their professional values. In particular, nurse managers have the responsibility to create a healthy working environment, establish and encourage a positive nursing culture, be role models and manage the socialization process, due to the duties and authorities they have. For this reason, institutional and administrative support is needed for nurses in postgraduate education to develop and maintain professional values, regardless of the institutions they work in.

Uslu and Kızılkaya (2021) stated that the educational levels of nurses created a significant difference in their NPVS "responsibility" subscale scores. Yelekçi and Koca Kutlu (2020) reported that nurses who received postgraduate education

had higher professional value scores compared to those who did not. Similarly, Zengin et al. (2018) determined that the adoption of professional values by more educated nurses was higher, and education level was a significant factor. In this study, the number of participants who stated that postgraduate education contributed a lot to their acquisition of professional values was found to be higher than those who stated that it contributed partially. In the qualitative dimension of the study, the contribution of postgraduate education to access to current information and knowledge synthesis was expressed, and it was recommended to develop educational programs in this regard and promote postgraduate education. Hence, in line with these results that were consistent with the relevant literature, it can be stated that postgraduate education is an important factor in terms of providing nurses with professional values, and it strengthens individual and professional development.

In some studies, gender, education status, or professional experience (Uslu & Kızılkaya, 2021) did not affect professional values significantly. On the other hand, other studies reported that gender (Fernández-Feito et al., 2019; Uslu & Kızılkaya, 2021), education status (Çetinkaya Uslusoy et al., 2017; Dündar et al., 2019; Uslu & Kızılkaya, 2021), and professional experience (Çetinkaya Uslusoy et al., 2017; Erkuş & Dinç, 2018; Poorchangizi et al., 2017) are significantly effective on professional values. In this study, no significant relationship was identified between the professional values of the participants and their gender, education status, or professional experience. In line with this result, it can be suggested that gender, educational status, and professional experience are variables that are unrelated to professional values.

Strengths and limitations

The integration of data from mixed-method components indicated that qualitative interviews enrich quantitative findings. The chosen method proved to be fruitful in achieving the aim of the study. The results of this study are limited to the self-reports of the participants, but a mixed-methods design was employed in the study, it provided a variety of quantitative and qualitative data, and the study was conducted with a large sample from Turkey.

CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to determine the professional values of graduates of master's and doctoral programs in nursing and their opinions on the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values. The results indicated a high level of adoption of professional values among the participants. Participants thought postgraduate education contributed a lot to their professional values, they ranked their priority professional values as human dignity, justice, and honesty, they scored the highest in the human dignity subscale among

professional values, and their views/beliefs regarding the contribution of age, institution of employment, marital status, sector, and postgraduate education to the acquisition of professional values were effective on professional values. Consequently, postgraduate nursing education programs contribute greatly to the professional values of graduates and strengthen their professional values.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NURSING AND HEALTH POLICY

It is important that members of the profession, especially nurses with postgraduate education, play a catalytic role in strengthening the current and future status of the profession of nursing, have strong professional values, and understand the power of their voice and influence as leaders in the profession in all areas from nursing education to clinical, research, community, social justice, and health policies. To make a difference in this direction, it is of critical importance to reveal the strengths and opportunities of nurses, ensure that they internalize individual and professional values, and guide them toward leadership goals for development for nursing educators, researchers, practitioners, and leaders. In line with these results, to strengthen the contribution of postgraduate education to professional values in addition to specialty knowledge gained in this education process, it can be recommended:

- To include the professional values that graduates are expected to acquire and internalize in the goals, missions, and vision of postgraduate nursing education programs (master's and doctoral programs),
- To include courses/topics on professional values in the structuring of graduate curricula,
- To organize activities and include subjects aiming at providing nurses with professional values in postgraduate nursing education,
- To increase the cooperation between the faculty and application areas in postgraduate nursing education programs,
- To organize continuous training activities emphasizing professional values and the importance of professional values, and increase awareness,
- To conduct more research with broad samples on the importance of the subject,
- To have an active role in decision-making mechanisms and be role models,
- To provide institutional and administrative support and cooperation according to the institutions where graduate nurses work in this regard.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Study design: NY, EAŞ, ÜG; data collection: NY, ÜG; data analysis: NY, ÜG; study supervision: EAŞ; manuscript writing: NY, EAŞ, ÜG; critical revisions for important intellectual content: NY, EAŞ.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors are grateful to the nurses who participated in this study.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

No conflict of interest has been declared by the author(s).

FUNDING INFORMATION

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

ETHICAL STATEMENT

Akdeniz University Medical Faculty Clinical Research Ethics Committee of a state university (numbered KAEK-609 and dated 05.10.2022).

ORCID

Nazik Yalviz MSc  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7770-2869>

Emine Şenyuva BSN, PhD  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8855-6692>

Ümran Görügen MSc  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4089-3408>

REFERENCES

- Al-Banna, D.A. (2017) Core professional and personal values of nurses about nursing in Erbil city hospitals: a profession, not just career. *Nurse Care Open Acces J*, 2(6), 169–173. <https://doi.org/10.15406/ncoaj.2017.02.00056>
- American Nurses Association. (2015) Code of ethics with interpretative statements. Silver Spring. <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/Code-ofEthics-For-Nurses.html>
- American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2021) The essentials: core competencies for professional nursing education. <https://www.aacnursing.org/Portals/42/AcademicNursing/pdf/Essentials-2021.pdf>
- Asiandi, A., Erlina, M., Lin, Y.H. & Huang, M.C. (2021) Psychometric evaluation of the nurses professional values scale-3: Indonesian version. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public*, 18(16), 8810. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18168810>
- Basu, M. (2020). Importance of research in education (October 2, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3703560> or <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3703560>
- Bleda, S., Alvarez, I. & Prat, M. (2020) The perceptions of professional values among students at a Spanish Nursing School. *Healthcare*, 8, 74. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare8020074>
- Cheng, F., Meng, A. & Jin, T. (2015) Correlation between burnout and professional value in Chinese oncology nurses: a questionnaire survey. *International Journal of Nursing Science*, 2(2), 153–157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijnss.2015.04.004>
- Çetinkaya Uslusoy, E., Pash Gürdoğan, E. & Aydınlı, A. (2017) Professional values of Turkish nurses: a descriptive study. *Nursing Ethics*, 24(4), 493–501. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733015611072>
- Council of Higher Education. (2021). Türkiye yükseköğretim yeterlilikler çerçevesi. <http://tyyc.yok.gov.tr/>
- Council of Higher Education. (2022). Yükseköğretim bilgi yönetim sistemi. <https://istatistik.yok.gov.tr>
- Dönmez, R.Ö. & Özsoy, S.A (2018) The professional values of academics at a nursing faculty. *Journal of Education and Research in Nursing*, 15(3), 147–153. <https://doi.org/10.5222/head.2018.147>
- Dündar, T., Özsoy, S., Toptaş, B. & Aksu, H. (2019) Professional values and influencing factors in nursing. *Journal of Ege University Nursing Faculty*, 1, 11–19.
- Ekiz Erim, S. & Çevirme, A. (2018) Is the awareness of the personal and professional values important in nursing? *Journal of Anatolia Nursing and Health Sciences*, 21(4), 279–284.
- Erbil, N. & Aslan Kaya, N. (2019) Student nurses' professional values and affecting factors. *Ordu University Journal of Nursing Studies*, 2(3), 150–159.
- Erkuş, G. & Dinç, L. (2018) Turkish nurses' perceptions of professional values. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 34(3), 226–232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.07.011>
- Fernández-Feito, A., Basurto-Hoyuelos, S., Palmeiro-Longo, M.R. & García-Díaz, V. (2019) Differences in professional values between nurses and nursing students: a gender perspective. *International Nursing Review*, 66(4), 577–589. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inr.12543>
- Gassas, R. & Salem, O. (2022) Factors affecting nurses' professional values: a comprehensive integrative review. *Nurse Education Today*, 118, 105515. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2022.105515>
- Giardino, E.R. & Hickey, J.V. (2020) Doctor of nursing practice students' perceptions of professional change through the DNP program. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 36(6), 595–603. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2020.08.012>
- Günbay, I. (2018) Developing a qualitative research manuscript based on systematic curriculum and instructional development. *European Journal of Social Sciences Studies*, 3(3), 125–153. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1463223>
- Günbay, I. (2020) Knowledge-constitutive interests and social paradigms in guiding mixed methods research (MMR). *Journal of Mixed Methods Studies*, 1, 44–56. <https://doi.org/10.14689/jomes.2020.1.3>
- General Directorate of Health Services. (2021) Hemşirelikte temel yetkinlikler Kılavuzu (I. Baskı). <https://www.thder.org.tr/uploads/files/Temel-Yetkinlikler-Klavuzu.pdf>
- Hampton, D., Heath, J. & Rayens, M.K. (2022) Strengthening professional values of doctoral-level nursing students. *SAGE Open Nursing*, 8, 23779608221126359. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23779608221126359>
- International Council of Nurses. (2021) The ICN code of ethics for nurses-revised 2021. https://www.icn.ch/system/files/2021-10/ICN_Code-of-Ethics_EN_Web_0.pdf
- International Council of Nurses. (2020) Guidelines on advanced practice nursing. https://www.icn.ch/system/files/documents/202004/ICN-APN%20Report_EN_WEB.pdf
- İbrahimoğlu, O., Mersin, S., Saray Kılıç, H. & Kahraman Bayrak, B. (2020) Professional values of nursing students in Turkey. *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 13(2), 878.
- İlaslan, E., Geçkil, E., Kol, E. & Erkul, M. (2021) Examination of the professional values of the nurses and the associated factors. *Perspectives in psychiatric care*, 57(1), 56–65. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ppc.12524>
- İlter, İ. (2020) Exploring registered teachers' attitudes towards postgraduate education. *PAU Journal of Education*, 49, 263–292. <https://doi.org/10.9779/pauefd.488580>
- Kantek, F., Kaya, A. & Gezer, N. (2017) The effects of nursing education on professional values: a longitudinal study. *Nurse Education Today*, 58, 43–46. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2017.08.004>
- Kavradım, S.T., Akgün, M., Özer, Z. & Boz, İ. (2019) Perception of compassion and professional values in nursing students: a cross-sectional multivariate analysis from Turkey. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 41, 102652. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.102652>
- Kaya, A. & Boz, İ. (2017) The development of the professional values model in nursing. *Nursing Ethics*, 26(3), 914–923. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733017730685>
- Kaya, H., Küçük Yüceyurt, N., Şenyuva, E. & Ulupınar, S. (2018) Value based nursing education. *Journal of Human Sciences*, 15(3), 1727–1738. <https://doi.org/10.14687/jhs.v15i3.5269>
- Keçeci, A. & Demiray, A. (2017) Hemşirelik eğitiminde dönüşüm: Kanıtla dayalı eğitim. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Hemşirelik Fakültesi Dergisi*, 4(3), 65–73
- Kızılkaya, M. & Öner, H. (2017) An analysis on the opinions of nursing students about their doctoral education. *Journal of Youth Researches*, 5(1), 159–169.
- Kocaman, G. & Arslan Yürümezoğlu, H. (2015) Situation analysis of nursing education in Turkey: nursing education with numbers 1996–2015. *Jour-*

- nal of Higher Education and Science*, 5(3), 255–262. <https://doi.org/10.5961/jhes.2015.127>
- Kozikoğlu, İ. & Bekler, Ö. (2019) Determining teachers opinions about professional values. *Journal of Values Education*, 17(38), 171–206. <https://doi.org/10.34234/ded.517186>
- Kuckartz, U. & Rädiker, S. (2019) *Analyzing qualitative data with MAXQDA*, Cham: Springer.
- López-Pereira, A. & Arango-Bayer, G. (2017) Professional values of nurse lecturers at three universities in Colombia. *Nursing Ethics*, 24(2), 198–208. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0969733015584400>
- Martin-Ferreres, M.L., Pardo, M.Á.D.J., Porras, D.B. & Moya, J.L.M. (2019) An ethnographic study of human dignity in nursing practice. *Nursing Outlook*, 67(4), 393–403. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2019.02.010>
- Ng, L., Eley, R. & Tuckett, A. (2016) Exploring factors affecting registered nurses' pursuit of postgraduate education in Australia. *Nursing & Health Science*, 18(4), 435–444. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nhs.12289>
- Poorchangizi, B., Farokhzadian, J., Abbaszadeh, A., Mirzaee, M. & Borhani, F. (2017) The importance of professional values from clinical nurses' perspective in hospitals of a medical university in Iran. *BMC Medical Ethics*, 18(1), 20. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-017-0178-9>
- Poorchangizi, B., Borhani, F., Abbaszadeh, A., Mirzaee, M. & Farokhzadian, J. (2019) The importance of professional values from nursing students' perspective. *BMC Nursing*, 18, 26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-019-0351-1>
- Rose, T., Nies, M.A. & Reid, J. (2018) The internalization of professional nursing values in baccalaureate nursing students. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 34(1), 25–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2017.06.004>
- Satır, G. & Murat, M. (2021) Determination of nursing students' attitudes towards graduate education: a private university sample. *Journal of Ege University Nursing Faculty*, 37(1), 59–67.
- Shafakhah, M., Molazem, Z., Khademi, M. & Sharif, F. (2018) Facilitators and inhibitors in developing professional values in nursing students. *Nursing Ethics*, 25(2), 153–164. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733016664981>
- Sibandze, B.T. & Scafide, K.N. (2017) Among nurses, how does education level impact professional values? A systematic review. *International Nursing Review*, 65, 65–77. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inr.12390>
- Skela-Savič, B. & Kiger, A. (2015) Self-assessment of clinical nurse mentors as dimensions of professional development and the capability of developing ethical values at nursing students: a correlational research study. *Nurse Education Today*, 35(10), 1044–1045. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2015.04.003>
- Stenfors, T., Kajamaa, A. & Bennett, D. (2020) How to ... assess the quality of qualitative research. *The Clinical Teacher*, 17(6), 596–599. <https://doi.org/10.1111/tct.13242>
- Şahin Orak, N. & Ecevit Alpar, Ş. (2012) Validity and reliability of the nurses' professional values scale's Turkish version. *Journal of Marmara University Institute of Health Sciences*, 2(1), 522–531.
- Şenyuva, E. (2018) Intergenerational differences in the personal and professional values of nurses. *Nursing Ethics*, 25(7), 939–950. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969733018784688>
- Tarhan, G., Kılıç, D. & Yıldız, E. (2016) Investigation of the relationship between attitudes towards the nursing profession and occupational professionalism. *Gülhane Medical Journal*, 58, 411–416. <https://doi.org/10.5455/gulhane.176909>
- Tuna, R. & Şahin, S. (2021) The effect of professional values of nurses on their attitudes towards caregiving roles. *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, 27(1), e12879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijn.12879>
- Türe, Y.A. & Demirsoy, N. (2018) Professional values of nurses working in a public hospital and factors affecting these values. *The Journal of Academic Social Science*, 66, 108–120. <https://doi.org/10.16992/ASOS.13450>
- Uslu, Ö. & Kızılkaya, M. (2021) Determining the professional values of nurses. *Journal of Health and Nursing Management*, 8(2), 192–202. <https://doi.org/10.5222/SHYD.2021.28290>
- Yelekçi, E. & Koca Kutlu, A. (2020) Comparison of values the professional of nurses who are and do not take graduate education. *Journal of Health and Nursing Management*, 7(2), 261–270. <https://doi.org/10.5222/SHYD.2020.52533>
- Yıldırım, A. & Simsek, H. (2021) *Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri*, 8th edition. Seçkin Yayınevi.
- Yoder-Wise, P.S. (2021) From VUCA to VUCA 2.0: surviving today to prosper tomorrow. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 42(1), 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.NEP.0000000000000774>
- Zengin, M., Yayan, E.H., Yıldırım, N., Akın, E., Avşar, Ö. & Mamiş, E. (2018) Effect of professional values upon professional attitudes of pediatric nurses. *Archives of Health Science and Research*, 5(3), 316–323. <https://doi.org/10.17681/hsp.324725>

How to cite this article: Yalınız, N., Şenyuva, E. & Görügen, Ü (2024) Professional values gained in postgraduate nursing education from the perspectives of master's and doctorate graduates: a mixed-methods study. *International Nursing Review*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1111/inr.12980>