The Analysis of Nursing Students' Professional Value Perceptions and the Factors Affecting Their Selection of The Nursing Profession[*],[**]

Hemşirelik Bölümü Öğrencilerinin Meslek Seçimini Etkileyen Faktörlere Göre Profesyonel Değer Algılarının İncelenmesi[*],[**]

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the relationship between nursing students' selection of profession and their professional value perceptions.

Designed as a descriptive and correlational study, the research was conducted with the participation of 322 nursing students. Research data were collected by using the Personal Information Form, the Nursing Career Decision Scale, and the Nurses' Professional Values Scale-Revised.

It was found that there was a statistically significant moderately positive relationship between nursing students' Nursing Career Decision Scale and Nurses' Professional Values Scale-Revised scores. Factors affecting the selection of profession affect the professional value perceptions and increase congruence with professional values.

There is a statistically significant relationship between congruence with professional values and factors affecting the selection of profession. It is discerned that the congruence with professional values increases particularly when the profession is selected on the basis of the NCDS sub-scale of "Vocational Congruency".

Keywords: Nursing profession, Nursing student, Profession choice, Professional value

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ÖZ

Bu çalışma, hemşirelik öğrencilerinin meslek seçimleri ile mesleki değer algıları arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Tanımlayıcı ve ilişki arayıcı bir araştırma olarak tasarlanan araştırma, 322 hemşirelik öğrencisinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma verileri Kişisel Bilgi Formu, Hemşirelikte Meslek Seçimi Ölçeği ve Hemşirelerin Mesleki Değerleri Ölçeği- Revize Edilerek toplanmıştır.

Hemşirelik öğrencilerinin Hemşirelikte Meslek Seçimi Ölçeği ile Hemşirelerin Mesleki Değerler Ölçeği-Revize puanları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı orta düzeyde pozitif bir ilişki olduğu bulunmuştur. Meslek seçimini etkileyen faktörler, mesleki değer algılarını etkilemekte ve mesleki değerlerle uyumu artırmaktadır.

Meslek seçimini etkileyen faktörler ile profesyonel değerlere uyum arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bir ilişki bulunmaktadır. Özellikle "Mesleki Uygunluk" alt boyutuna göre meslek seçimi yapıldığında profesyonel değerlere uyumu artırdığı görülmektedir

Anahtar Sözcükler: Hemşirelik mesleği, Hemşirelik öğrencileri, Meslek seçimi, Profesyonel değer

INTRODUCTION

The origin of professions dates back to the period when the human being produced in a specific field, which was more than needed but would be of use to other human beings, and the human being met other needs by exchanging the product with other human beings' products (Kuzgun, 2019, p.2). The profession is *"the service that should be offered by the individual to earn a living, requires intensive know-how based on research, experiment, and the practice process, has ethical principles/ codes, has duties, authorities, and responsibilities prescribed by law, has an autonomous construct, and is provided in return for a specific monetary gain"* (Şentürk, 2013, p.1). Profession selection affects decisions also in other parts of our lives because it determines the person's income, friend selection, dressing style, influence on society, and lifestyle. So that a person can succeed in a profession, the person needs to be prepared for the profession physically and mentally and select the profession voluntarily (Alkaya et al., 2017).

Certain factors affect the selection of the nursing profession as in the case of other professions. These factors are can be summarized as follows; *the ease of finding a job and economic reasons* (financial issues, financial gains, high salaries, and so on) (Wu et al., 2015; Seval & Sönmez, 2020), *recommendations made by the family, inner circle, and others in favor of the nursing profession* (Wu et al., 2015; Marcinowicz et al., 2016), *the perception of nursing as an ideal job and coincidence* (reluctance to fail to enter a university program, the level of score obtained from the university matriculation exam, wrong department choice in the university matriculation exam, and so on) (Kırağ, 2015; Marcinowicz et al., 2016; Özveren et al., 2017).

Other factors are as follows; *the desire to help people* (Cisinska & Cisinska, 2014; Wilkes et al, 2015; Türk et al. 2018)*, the interest in the health sector* (Arrigoni et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2015)*, the aspiration to be a university graduate and the opportunity to pursue an academic career* (Jirwe ve Rudman, 2012; Kırağ 2015)*, the possibility of self-expression* (the appropriateness of the profession to the individual's ego, the possibility of self-expressing better in the nursing profession) (Arrigoni et al., 2014; Olğun & Adıbelli, 2020), and *others* (the thinking that the nursing is a sacred profession, the societal prestige of the profession, advantages of the profession, the professional prestige, enjoying wearing a nurse uniform, and so on) (Ensari & Alay, 2017; Özdelikara et al., 2016; Tosunöz et al., 2019; Mckenna et al., 2023).

Just as in the case of all professions, professional values that guide professional behaviors in nursing will be better understood and absorbed if the nursing profession is consciously selected in a way to assure that the profession is well-suited to talents/personal characteristics. Thus, nurses who are satisfied with the profession, have high-level motivation, and provide good quality service by exercising the profession in the best manner will be raised (Poorchangizi et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2022; Xie et al., 2023). In the studies examined in the literature, it was determined that students who like the nursing profession have higher perceptions of professionalism and profession than those who do not (Karadağlı, 2016; Arkan, Sarıgöl Ordin, & Öztürk Haney, 2019; Peksoy et al., 2020; Elmalı, 2020). In addition, the results of the study may be important since there is only one study in the literature on this subject and it will determine the nurse they may want to be in the future in terms of students' professional value perceptions according to the factors affecting them.

METHODS

Aim

The research aims to identify the relationship between nursing students' selection of profession and their professional value perceptions.

Study Design

This research was designed as a descriptive and correlational study.

Research Sample

The research was conducted at the Department of Nursing of the Faculty of Health Sciences of Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University in western Turkey from 30 January 2021 to 11 October 2021. The research population is composed of 422 students enrolled at the aforementioned department of nursing. Convenience sampling method was used due to the fact that there

are courses that teach professional values at the school and the Covid 19 pandemic. A sample was not specifically selected from the population, rather, including the entire population in the sample was targeted in the research process. In this respect, the sample was comprised of 322 students who agreed to participate in the research. The sample represented 76.3% of the entire research population.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire serving as the data collection tool in the research was composed of three parts and had a total of 59 questions/statements. The online questionnaire contained the Personal Information Form, the Nursing Career Decision Scale, and the Nurses' Professional Values Scale-Revised. The questionnaire form that was prepared in the online format by using Google Forms was sent to nursing students by e-mail, and hence, the research data made up of participant nursing students' answers were collected online.

Data Collection Tools

Personal Information Form

The first part of the online questionnaire had the Personal Information Form that had 16 questions about the participant's sociodemographic characteristics (student's gender, age, class year, family type, parents' education levels, parents' employment status, student's income level, and high school type) and nursing-related characteristics (the status of voluntarily selecting the department of nursing, the status of being satisfied with the department of nursing, the status of liking the nursing profession, reasons for selecting the nursing profession, the status of having any family member who is a health worker, and views held about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing).

Nursing Career Decision Scale (NCDS)

The scale was developed in 2005 by Zysberg and Berry to identify nursing students' reasons for selecting the nursing profession (Zysberg & Berry, 2005). Önler and Saraçoğlu (2010) performed the validity and reliability study for the scale in Turkish (Önler & Saraçoğlu, 2010). The Turkish form of the scale, the NCDS, had 17 items. Designed as a Likert-type scale, the NCDS was composed of two sub-scales, "Vocational Congruency" (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17) and "Survival Needs" (6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13). Each NCDS item is rated by the respondent from 0% (The factor had no effect on my selection of the nursing profession at all) to 100% (This is the most significant factor for me to select the nursing profession). Total scores obtained by a respondent from the overall NCDS and its two sub-scales are divided by the number of questions in the NCDS and the respective sub-scales, and thus, the final scores obtained by the respondent from the overall NCDS and its sub-scales are calculated. Score intervals do not have a particular meaning as the NCDS is not a scale designed to identify any of the respondent's characteristics. As per the scores obtained from the NCDS and its sub-scales, respondents' reasons for selecting the nursing profession are compared on the basis of independent variables. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.79 for the NCDS (α=0.79).

Nurses' Professional Values Scale-Revised (NPVS-R)

The NPVS was developed by Weis and Schank (2000) as a Likert-type scale to identify nurses' and nursing students' professional value perception levels (1- not important, 2- slightly important, 3- important, 4- very important, 5- extremely important). Firstly, Orak and Alpar (2012) performed the validity and reliability study in Turkish for the 44-item long form of this scale (Orak & Alpar, 2012). As Weis and Schank (2009) revised the NPVS, the number of NPVS items fell to 26 (Weis & Schank, 2009). Acaroğlu (2014) adapted the revised version of the NPVS to Turkish, and the Turkish form of the NPVS-R had content validity (CVI=0.95) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficient=0.96) (Acaroğlu, 2014). Minimum and maximum scores to be obtained from the NPVS-R are respectively 26 and 130 points. A high score obtained by a respondent from the NPVS-R shows that the respondent has strong congruence with professional values. As the score obtained from the NPVS-R increases, the respondent's professional value perception level increases. The NPVS-R has no reverse-coded item. The original version of the NPVS-R had no sub-scale, however, Acaroğlu set forth that the NPVS-R had three factors [Factor 1: Caring (items 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25), Factor 2: Professionalism (items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 26), and Factor 3: Trust (items 1, 2, 3)].

Ethics Approval Statement

Permissions to use the NCDS and the NPVS-R for data collection in the current research were received by e-mail from relevant researchers. The ethical endorsement for the research was obtained from the Health Sciences Non-Invasive Research Ethics Committee of Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, and the official permit to collect research data was received from the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University. In the data collection stage, information about the research was given to nursing students, and also, a box to be clicked by the respondent to confirm participation in the research was included in the online questionnaire, and hence, in compliance with ethical rules, it was ensured that nursing students included in the research expressed that they consented to participate in the study.

Data Analysis

The Number Cruncher Statistical Systems (NCSS) software was used in the statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, median, frequency, percentage, minimum, and maximum) were utilized in the evaluation of research data. Whether quantitative data were normally distributed was assessed by using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Student-t test, One-way analysis of variance was used for data analysis that was suitable for normal distribution, and Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal Wallis test, Spearman correlation was used for data analysis that was not suitable for normal distribution. Spearman's correlation analysis was utilized in the evaluation of correlations between quantitative variables. In the research, the statistical significance was identified if the p-value was below 0.05 ($p<0.05$).

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RESULTS

Of all participant nursing students had a mean age of 20.73±2.04 years and nursing students, 86.6% were female and 13.4% were male. Of all participant nursing students, 23% were first-year students, 34.5% were second-year students, 18% were third-year students, 24.5% were fourth-year students. Also, 82.3% of the students were members of nuclear families, 68.9% of the students' mothers were primary school graduates, 52.8% of the students' fathers were primary school graduates, 32% of the students' fathers were high school graduates, 83.5% of the students' mothers did not work, 69.3% of the students' fathers worked, 30.7% of the students' fathers did not work, and 75.2% of the students had incomes equaling their expenses. Besides, of all participant nursing students 72% were graduates of general high schools or Anatolian high schools while 18.3% were graduates of health vocational high schools (Table 1).

Next, of all participant nursing students, 58.1% said that they voluntarily selected the department of nursing, 68.3% told that they were satisfied with the department of nursing, 72.7% stated that they liked the nursing profession. Besides, of all participant nursing students, 46.% said that they selected the nursing profession because they liked it whilst 66.5% told that they selected it due to the job security, 36.3% put forward that they selected it as their families requested them to do so, 44.7% asserted that they selected it as they desired to help people. Moreover, 50% of nursing students stated that they had a family member working for the health sector. Lastly, of all participant nursing students, 55.6% said that they had a positive view about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing whilst 36.6% set forth that they had a partially positive view and 7.8% stated that they had a negative view (Table 2).

Besides, in the research, mean scores obtained by nursing students from the overall NCDS and its "Vocational Congruency" and "Survival Needs" sub-scales were identified successively as 59.22±17.88, 64.73±21.16, and 49.14±19.62 points. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall NCDS and its "Vocational Congruency" and "Survival Needs" sub-scales were calculated consecutively as 0.900, 0.919, and 0.747 (Table 3).

Moreover, in the research, mean scores obtained by nursing students from the overall NPVS-R and its "Trust", "Professionalism", and "Caring" factors were found respectively as 108.43±17.87, 12.30±2.25, 32.39±6.07, and 63.74±10.56 points. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall NPVS-R and its Trust, Professionalism, and Caring factors were calculated successively as 0.971, 0.811, 0.923, and 0.959 (Table 4).

Furthermore, in the research, it was discerned that nursing students' NCDS "Vocational Congruency" sub-scale scores had statistically significant moderately positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores (r=0.452, p=0.001, p<0.01), "Trust" factor scores (r=0.403, p=0.001, p<0.01), "Professionalism" factor scores (r=0.434, p=0.001, p<0.01), and "Caring" factor scores (r=0.425, p=0.001, p<0.01). Also, it was found that nursing students' NCDS "Survival Needs" sub-scale scores

Table 1: The Breakdown of Nursing Students' Sociodemographic Characteristics

Variables		Min-Max (Median)
Age	*Min-Max (Median)*	18-35 (21)
	Mean±Sd	20.73±2.04 years
		n (%)
Gender	Female	279 (86.6)
	Male	43 (13.4)
Class year	First year	74 (23.0)
	Second year	111 (34.5)
	Third year	58 (18.0)
	Fourth year	79 (24.5)
Family type	Nuclear family	265 (82.3)
	Extended family	57 (17.7)
Mother's education level	Illiterate	26 (8.1)
	Literate	17 (5.3)
	Primary school	222 (68.9)
	High school	48 (14.9)
	University or higher education	9 (2.8)
Father's education level	Illiterate	2 (0.6)
	Literate	9 (2.8)
	Primary school	170 (52.8)
	High school	103 (32.0)
	University or higher education	38 (11.8)
Mother's employment status	Working	53 (16.5)
	Not working	269 (83.5)
Father's employment status	Working	223 (69.3)
	Not working	99 (30.7)
Income level	Income below expenses	61 (18.9)
	Income equaling expenses	242 (75.2)
	Income above expenses	19 (5.9)
High school type	General/Anatolian high school	232 (72.0)
	Science high school	16 (5.0)
	Health vocational high school	59 (18.3)
	Others	15 (4.7)

Table 2: The Breakdown of Nursing Students' Characteristics Related to the Nursing Profession

Nursing-related characteristics		n (%)
Voluntarily selecting the department of nursing	Yes	187 (58.1)
	No	26 (8.1)
	Partially	109 (33.9)
Being satisfied with the department of nursing	Yes	220 (68.3)
	No	14 (4.3)
	Partially	88 (27.3)
Liking the nursing profession	Yes	234 (72.7)
	No	12 (3.7)
	Partially	76 (23.6)
Reasons for selecting the nursing profession*	Liking the nursing profession	148 (46.0)
	Job security	214 (66.5)
	The family's request	117 (36.3)
	The desire to help people	144 (44.7)
	Having a family member/a person in the inner circle who sets an example	35 (10.9)
	The university matriculation exam score/The reluctance to fail to enter a university program	64 (19.9)
	Others*	11 (3.4)
Having any family member who is a health worker	Yes	161 (50.0)
	No	161 (50.0)
View about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing	Positive	179 (55.6)
	Partially positive	118 (36.6)
	Negative	25 (7.8)

* Sacred profession, the societal prestige of the profession, advantages of the profession, the professional prestige, enjoying wearing a nurse uniform, and so on. More than one choice was selected.

Table 3: The Breakdown of Nursing Students' NCDS Scores and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the NCDS and Its Sub-Scales

Scale and sub-scales	Number of items	Min-Max (Median)	Mean±Sd	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Vocational Congruency	11	3.64-100 (70)	64.73±21.16	0.919
Survival Needs	6	0-100 (50)	49.14±19.62	0.747
Overall NCDS	17	7.06-100 (63.53)	59.22±17.88	0.900

Table 4: The Breakdown of Nursing Students' NPVS-R Scores and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients for the NPVS-R and Its Factors

Scale and factors	Number of items	Min-Max (Median)	Mean±Sd	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Trust	3	6-15 (13)	12.30±2.25	0.810
Professionalism	8	16-40 (32)	32.39±6.07	0.923
Caring	15	30-75 (67)	63.74±10.56	0.959
Overall NPVS-R	26	52-130 (112)	108.43±17.87	0.971

Table 5: The Correlation Between Nursing Students' NCDS and NPVS-R Scores

			NCDS and its sub-scales		
			Vocational Congruency	**Survival Needs**	**Overall NCDS**
NPVS-R and its factors	**Trust**	r	0.403	0.157	0.355
		p	*0.001***	*0.005***	*0.001***
	Professionalism	r	0.434	0.313	0.446
		p	*0.001***	*0.001***	*0.001***
	Caring	r	0.425	0.228	0.404
		p	*0.001***	*0.001***	*0.001***
	Overall NPVS-R	r	0.452	0.260	0.437
		p	*0.001***	*0.001***	*0.001***

*r= Spearman's correlation coefficient; **p<0.01.*

had a statistically significant very weak positive relationship with their NPVS-R "Trust" factor scores (r=0.157, p=0.005, p<0.01) and statistically significant weak positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores (r=0.260, p=0.001, p<0.01), "Professionalism" factor scores (r=0.313, p=0.001, p<0.01), and "Caring" factor scores (r=0.228, p=0.001, p<0.01). Lastly, it was identified that nursing students' overall NCDS scores had a statistically significant weak positive relationship with their NPVS-R "Trust" factor scores (r=0.355, p=0.001, p<0.01) and statistically significant moderately positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores (r=0.437, p=0.001, p<0.01), "Professionalism" factor scores (r=0.446, p=0.001, p<0.01), and "Caring" factor scores (r=0.404, p=0.001, p<0.01) (Table 5).

DISCUSSION

In current study findings, reasons for selecting the nursing profession can be listed in descending order as in the following: the ease of finding a job, economic reasons, recommendations made by the family, inner circle, and others in favor of the nursing profession, the perception of nursing as an ideal job, the level of score obtained from the university matriculation exam, the desire to help people, the interest in the health sector, the aspiration to be a university graduate, the opportunity to pursue an academic career, and others (Table 2). The results obtained from the literature are consistent with the findings of the study (Arrigoni et al, 2014; Cisinska & Cisinska, 2014; Marcinowicz et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2015; Çingöl et al., 2020; Seval & Sönmez, 2020; Tosunöz et al., 2019; Mckenna et al., 2023). It is discerned that the nursing profession was selected mostly for economic reasons and economic opportunities and for reasons such as the level of score obtained from the university matriculation exam, the desire to help people, and the interest in the health sector.

In the research, of all participant nursing students, 58.1% said that they voluntarily selected the department of nursing (Table 2). In the relevant literature, it is observed that there are findings indicating that students selected the nursing profession voluntarily (Alkaya et al., 2017; Çingöl et al., 2020; Elmalı, 2020; Olğun & Adıbelli, 2020; Özdelikara et al., 2016; Özveren et al.,

2017; Seval & Sönmez, 2020). It is highly likely that it is a more common finding in research that students choose the nursing profession voluntarily for reasons such as their willingness to help people, their liking the profession, and their interest in health sciences.

In the research of all participant nursing students, 55.6% said that they had a positive view about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing (Table 2). In the current literature, it is discerned that findings more often stated that students had satisfaction with selecting the nursing profession (Karadağ et al., 2015; Atasoy & Ermin, 2016; Temel et al., 2018; Elmalı, 2020; Olğun & Adıbelli, 2020). It is considered that selecting the nursing profession voluntarily and willingly may have increased students' levels of satisfaction with the department of nursing.

In the research of all participant nursing students 72.7% stated that they liked the nursing profession (Table 2). Besides, in the current literature, it is put forward that students liked the nursing profession (Özveren et al., 2017; Öztürk Dönmez & Özsoy, 2016; Woo & Park, 2017; Temel et al., 2018). It is thought that students may have liked the nursing profession as they found the profession well-suited to them, had a positive viewpoint about the profession, enjoyed helping people, and could experience peace of conscience and spiritual comfort along with helping a human being.

In this study, 50% of the nursing students stated that they had family members working in the health sector (Table 2). Furthermore, upon the review of the relevant literature, it is discerned that students who had a family member working in the field of health more frequently selected the nursing profession and took such a family member as the role model (Alkaya et al., 2017; Özdelikara et al., 2016; Seval & Sönmez, 2020; Mckenna et al., 2023). Having a family member who is a nurse/health worker instills the student with a positive viewpoint about the field of health and draws the student's attention to the health sector, and alongside this attention and positive viewpoint, the presence of a health worker in the family can affect the result of the process of selecting the profession.

Besides of all participant nursing students, 55.6% said that they had a positive view about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing (Table 2). Next, in the relevant literature, it is identified that views held by students about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing were mostly partially positive or positive and moderately positive (Cho, Jung & Jang, 2010; Karadağ et al., 2015; Kulakçı et al., 2015; Gilvari, Babamohamadi, & Paknazar, 2022). Effects of the societal viewpoint, views of family, friends, and the inner circle, social media, and technology enable us to develop a perspective about each profession. It is discerned that, together with the process of the COVID-19 pandemic, a positive image of the nursing profession came into play and society had a more positive perspective about the profession.

Besides, in the relevant literature, there is only one study that used both scales simultaneously. In this respect, in the research that compared American and Turkish students, it was found that a large majority of nursing students had high-level professional values, and American students had higher levels of professional values. Also, it was identified that American students selected the nursing profession primarily on the basis of the NCDS sub-scale of "Vocational Congruency" whilst Turkish students selected the profession mainly on the basis of the NCDS sub-scale of "Survival Needs". However, the aforementioned study using both scales simultaneously did not analyze the correlation between students' NCDS and NPVS-R scores (Alkaya et al., 2017).

Moreover, in the current research, it was found that nursing students' NCDS "Vocational Congruency" sub-scale scores had statistically significant moderately positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores, "Trust" factor scores, "Professionalism" factor scores, and "Caring" factor scores. As is discerned as per the NCDS "Vocational Congruency" sub-scale, the embracement of professional values will increase the congruence with professional values. Having strong congruence with professional values helps individuals internalize the values of the profession, and in turn, this internalization helps individuals acquire a professional identity. Thus, it is ensured that individuals who acquired a professional identity joined the professional life. As an implication, the quality of patient care would also have increased thanks to nurses who performed the nursing profession in the framework of professional values (Table 5).

Additionally, in the current research, it was identified that nursing students' NCDS "Survival Needs" sub-scale scores had a statistically significant very weak positive relationship with their NPVS-R "Trust" factor scores. Besides, it was discerned that nursing students' NCDS "Survival Needs" sub-scale scores had statistically significant weak positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores, "Professionalism" factor scores, and "Caring" factor scores. In the current research, even if it is found that selecting the profession on the basis of vocational congruency increased and facilitated the congruence with professional values more, selecting the profession on the basis of survival needs also affects the congruence with professional values (Table 5).

Lastly, in the current research, it was discerned that nursing students' overall NCDS scores had a statistically significant weak positive relationship with their NPVS-R "Trust" factor scores. Besides, it was identified that nursing students' overall NCDS scores had statistically significant moderately positive relationships with their overall NPVS-R scores, "Professionalism" factor scores, and "Caring" factor scores. Factors affecting the selection of profession have a statistically significant relationship with the congruence with professional values. Factors affecting the selection of profession affect professional value perceptions and increase congruence with professional values. It is discerned that the congruence with professional values increases particularly when the profession is selected on the basis of the NCDS sub-scale of "Vocational Congruency" (Table 5).

CONCLUSION

As per the review of participant students' characteristics related to the nursing profession, it was discerned that the majority of nursing students selected the department of nursing voluntarily and partially voluntarily, were satisfied with the department of nursing, liked the nursing profession, the half of the nursing students had a family member working in the health sector, and slightly more than half of the nursing students held a positive view about the nursing profession before entering the department of nursing. Upon the exploration of students' reasons for selecting the nursing profession, it was found that students selected the nursing profession mostly due to job security, and additionally, they selected the nursing profession as they liked the profession, they had the desire to help people, their families requested them to do so, and they had a matriculation exam score just high enough to enter the department of nursing. Furthermore, it was discerned that students obtained high scores from the NPVS-R. It can be put forward that students had high-level professional value perceptions. There is a statistically significant relationship between congruence with professional values and factors affecting the selection of profession. Factors affecting the selection of profession affect professional value perceptions and increase congruence with professional values. It is discerned that the congruence with professional values increases particularly when the profession is selected on the basis of the NCDS sub-scale of "Vocational Congruency".

Selecting the profession voluntarily and selecting a profession well-suited to the individual's interests, talents, and personality traits facilitate the learning process for the profession. Liking the university department helps to internalize lessons and adopt the values taught in lessons. Students liking their professions aim at becoming professionals in their respective fields, and they practice the profession willingly. This, in turn, is accompanied by professional satisfaction and professionalism. When the healthcare setting, the transformation of healthcare in the globalizing world, novelties introduced by technology to the field of health, and challenging conditions like the COVID-19 pandemic are all considered, professional nurses are required to have the skill in managing complicated ethical dilemmas so that they will give the deserved good quality care to each patient by paying attention to patient rights and nursing

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values. As in all professions that require professionalism, it can be said that having values in the nursing profession creates a common language and plays a key role in changing the society's perspective on the profession.

In the light of these findings, reinforcing professional values with practical training and trainings such as case scenarios, providing counseling to students in high school to make their choice of profession consciously, raising professional awareness to families with the trainings to be given due to the fact that families have an important role in choosing a profession, working with associations to positively affect the perspective of the society. It is recommended that more studies be conducted to determine the relationship between professional values and the choice of nursing profession. In addition, since there is no study in the related literature in which both scales are used simultaneously, it is thought that the findings obtained in this study will contribute to the literature.

LIMITATIONS

The limitation of this study is that research results relied solely on students, who studied at the Department of Nursing of the Faculty of Health Sciences of Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University and agreed to participate in the study, and the answers given by these students to the online questionnaire form.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from authors upon reasonable request.

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