

RESEARCH / ARAŞTIRMA

Investigation of the Relationship Between Professional Self-Esteem and Caring Behaviors in Nurses: A Correlational Study

Sedat ÜNLÜ¹, Şefika Dilek SARIKAYA², Nalan GÖRDELES BEŞER³¹ Kayseri Şehir Hastanesi, Kayseri, Türkiye. **ORCID:** 0000-0002-6157-9138² Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Semra ve Vefa Küçük Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi, Hemşirelik Bölümü, Nevşehir, Türkiye. **ORCID:** 0000-0002-2761-4665³ Niğde Ömer Halisdemir Üniversitesi, Zübeyde Hanım Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi, Hemşirelik Bölümü, Niğde, Türkiye. **ORCID:** 0000-0001-6054-0437

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between professional self-esteem and caring behaviours among nurses.**Material and Methods:** A descriptive-correlational design was employed. The study was conducted with 505 nurses in a city hospital between October and December 2021. Data were collected using a Descriptive Information Form, the Professional Self-Esteem Scale (PSES), and the Caring Behaviors Inventory-24 (CBI-24). The relationship between professional self-esteem and caring behaviours was examined using Pearson's correlation analysis, and linear regression analysis was employed to determine whether professional self-esteem had an impact on caring behaviours. The significance level was accepted as $p < 0.05$ in the analysis of the data.**Results:** The nurses' mean scores were 95.86 ± 15.20 from the PSES and 5.14 ± 0.69 41 from the CBI-24, and there was a significant relationship between their professional self-esteem and the level of caring behaviors ($p = 0.001$). It was found that the nurses had moderate-level professional self-esteem and that their perception of the quality of patient care was high. A one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem levels increased the level of caring behaviors significantly by 0.009 times.**Conclusion:** This study revealed that positively developed professional self-esteem would positively affect caring behaviors. Therefore, it is recommended that policies and programs that will improve nurses' professional self-esteem be developed and implemented.**Keywords:** Caring behaviors, nurse, professional self-esteem.

Hemşirelerde Mesleki Benlik Saygısı ile Bakım Davranışları Arasındaki İlişkinin Belirlenmesi: İlişkisel Bir Çalışma

ÖZET

Amaç: Araştırmanın amacı hemşirelerde mesleki benlik saygısı ile bakım davranışları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesidir.**Gereç ve Yöntem:** Araştırmada tanımlayıcı-ilişkisel araştırma deseni kullanıldı. Araştırma Ekim-Aralık 2021 tarihleri arasında bir şehir hastanesinde 505 hemşire ile yürütüldü. Veriler Hemşire Tanıtıcı Bilgi Formu, Mesleki Benlik Saygısı Ölçeği (MBSÖ) ve Bakım Davranışları Ölçeği-24 (BDÖ-24) kullanılarak toplandı. Mesleki benlik saygısı ile bakım davranışları arasındaki ilişkinin belirlenmesi pearson korelasyon katsayısı analizi ile, mesleki benlik saygısının bakım davranışları üzerinde etkisi olup olmadığının belirlenmesi lineer regresyon analizi ile yapıldı. Verilerin değerlendirilmesinde anlamlılık düzeyi $p < 0,05$ kabul edildi.**Bulgular:** Hemşirelerin MBSÖ'nden ortalama $95,86 \pm 15,20$ puan, BDÖ-24'nden ortalama $5,14 \pm 0,69$ 41 puan aldıkları ve mesleki benlik saygısı ile bakım davranışları düzeyi arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu belirlendi ($p = 0,001$). Hemşirelerin orta düzeyde mesleki benlik saygısına sahip oldukları ve hasta bakım kalitesi algılama düzeylerinin yüksek olduğu saptandı. Hemşirelerin mesleki benlik saygısındaki bir birim artışın bakım davranışları düzeyini 0,009 kat anlamlı düzeyde artırdığı belirlendi.**Sonuç:** Bu araştırma olumlu yönde gelişmiş mesleki benlik saygısının bakım davranışlarını pozitif yönde etkileyeceğini ortaya koymuştur. Bu nedenle hemşirelerin mesleki benlik saygılarını geliştirecek politikalar ve programların geliştirilmesi ve uygulanması önerilmektedir.**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bakım davranışları, hemşire, mesleki benlik saygısı.

1. Introduction

Having a profession congruent with one's personality traits, interests, and abilities and developing a positive attitude toward the profession ensures that the individual is satisfied with his/her profession and lives a happy life (1). Professional self-esteem is the most significant element of an individual's personality and professional identity development (2).

Professional self-esteem has been defined as the judgment of worthiness that a person develops toward their profession. This concept is a measure of how important and valuable an individual sees their profession. In addition, professional self-

esteem has been referred to as a prerequisite for professional adaptation and satisfaction (3). While individuals who have a profession that is consistent with their personality are expected to be successful and productive, it is known that those who have a profession that is inconsistent with their personality may experience problems such as conflict and dissatisfaction (4). If individuals are not satisfied with their profession, their professional success decreases (5). It has been stated in the literature that individuals with high professional self-esteem make plans to develop their careers, are responsible, are more successful, and have higher job satisfaction (6,7). Nurses, whose

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Corresponding Author

Şefika Dilek SARIKAYA, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Semra ve Vefa Küçük Sağlık Bilimleri Fakültesi, Hemşirelik Bölümü, Nevşehir, Türkiye.

E-posta: sdguven@nevsehir.edu.tr ORCID: 0000-0002-2761-4665

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primary service area is human health, too, greatly benefit from professional self-esteem to be successful and productive in their profession. Well-developed professional self-esteem is very critical in providing reliable and quality patient care (4). Therefore, nurses' adequate adoption of their profession and their appreciation of it will increase the quality of the nursing service provided. Some studies have shown that positively developed professional self-esteem can positively impact and contribute not only to individuals themselves, but also to their colleagues, the individuals they provide care for, and their profession (8,9).

Nursing is a profession based on interpersonal interactions where individuals' care needs are met holistically (10). Care is a concept specific to nursing, constituting the essence of the nursing profession and based on mutual trust. Care is fundamental and indispensable for nursing, and it includes human-to-human actions, which involve caring behaviors (10,11). Caring behaviors can be defined as all activities that nurses do and say while providing care for individuals (12). Nurses' effective use of caring behaviors and communication skills contributes positively to the recovery of the individual receiving care (13).

Today, it is definitely known that nurses' role in the health system is important and that they are an indispensable member of the healthcare team (4,14). While they fulfil these roles and responsibilities, having positive professional self-esteem and using caring behaviors effectively can accelerate individuals' recovery processes and increase the quality of the nursing care provided. With the increase in the quality of nursing care, the length of hospital stay can be shortened, thereby reducing costs.

The concepts of professional self-esteem and caring behaviors have been examined separately in the literature (6,8,10-12,15), and no study on the examination of these concepts together has been found. As can be understood from the literature, it has become necessary to examine these two concepts, which are extremely important for the nursing profession, together. It is thought that the results of the research will provide data for studies on strengthening the professional self-esteem of nurses and will be useful in developing suggestions that will increase the quality of nursing care.

This research was conducted to determine the relationship between professional self-esteem and caring behaviors in nurses.

In line with all this information, we sought answers to the following questions in our research:

1. What is the level of nurses' professional self-esteem?
2. What is the level of nurses' caring behaviors?
3. Is there a relationship between nurses' professional self-esteem and caring behaviors?
4. Does nurses' professional self-esteem affect their caring behaviors?

2. Material and Method

2.1. Type of the Research

A descriptive-correlational research design was used.

2.2. Setting of the Study

The research was conducted with nurses working in a city hospital in a province in the Central Anatolia Region of Türkiye between October and December 2021.

2.3. Population and Sample of the Research

The population of the study consisted of 1,050 nurses working in the inpatient services of a city hospital. The minimum sample size of the study was calculated as 505 subjects by using the sampling of the known population formula, based on a significance level of 0.05, a confidence interval of 95%, a standard deviation of 10, and a margin of error of 0.2. During the study, nurses who could be reached, were not on leave, and agreed to participate in the study were determined using the simple random sampling method. The names and surnames of all nurses in the population of the study were given a number and written on a list, and randomly drawn to the sample. The research was completed with 505 nurses who worked in the hospital where the study was conducted, participated in the research voluntarily, were not nurse managers, worked in the inpatient ward for at least one year, and filled out the data collection tools completely. According to a calculation on G*Power (version 3.1.9.4) software, the power of the test was found to be $p = 0.9983381$ (99.8%).

2.4. Data Collection

The data of the study were collected through face-to-face interviews in the departments where the nurses worked. After the nurses were given the necessary explanations, they were asked to fill out the data collection forms and put them in a sealed envelope. The application time of the forms took approximately 15-20 minutes. The survey forms were collected immediately after they were filled out.

2.5. Data Collection Tools

The study data were collected using a Nurse Descriptive Information Form, the Professional Self-Esteem Scale (PSES), and the Caring Behavior Inventory-24 (CBI-24).

2.5.1. Nurse Descriptive Information Form

Consisted of questions about nurses' sociodemographic, work, and professional characteristics.

2.5.2. The Professional Self-Esteem Scale (PSES)

Developed by Arıca in 1999, this scale was created to measure the professional self-esteem of individuals who were aged ≥ 17 years and had received vocational training in a field or practiced a profession. The scale consists of 30 questions, including 14 positive and 16 negative items. The total score is obtained by summing the scores given to each item. Total scores range between 30 and 150. As the score obtained from the scale increases, the professional self-esteem levels of individuals also increase. In the validity and reliability study of the scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.93 (3). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was calculated as 0.86.

2.5.3. The Caring Behaviors Inventory-24 (CBI-24)

The inventory, which was developed by Wolf in 1981 and revised by Wolf et al. in 1994, was rearranged by Wu, Larrabee and Putman in 2006 as 24 items and 4 sub-dimensions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found to be 0.82 (16). The validity and reliability tests of the scale were conducted by Kurşun and Kanan in 2012 in our country. The CBI-24 consists of four sub-dimensions, namely assurance, knowledge and skills, respectful, and connectedness, and 24 items. The total scale score is obtained by dividing the total score of the 24 items by 24, and the sub-dimension scores are obtained by dividing the total item score of the sub-dimension by the number of items on that factor. High scale scores indicate that the level of perceived care quality is high. In the validity and reliability study of the scale, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was estimated as 0.94 (13). In this

Table 1. Nurses' mean scores professional self-esteem scale and caring behaviors inventory-24 (n=505)

Scale	Med (Min-Max)	Mean±SD
PSES	96.00 (44.00-138.00)	95.86±15.20
CBI-24 Total	5.30 (2.00-6.00)	5.14±0.69
CBI-24 assurance sub-dimension	5.25 (1.75-6.00)	5.13±0.77
CBI-24 knowledge and skills sub-dimension	5.60 (1.60-6.00)	5.43±0.70
CBI-24 respectful sub-dimension	5.16 (2.00-6.00)	5.06±0.76
CBI-24 connectedness sub-dimension	5.00 (2.00-6.00)	4.97±0.78

PSES, Professional Self-Esteem Scale; CBI-24, Caring Behaviors Inventory-24; Med, median; Min, minimum values; Max, maximum values

study, the Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was calculated as 0.97.

2.6. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the research were transferred to the computer and analyzed in the IBM SPSS Statistics 27 program. In the evaluation of the descriptive characteristics, numbers, frequency distributions, means and standard deviation values, and maximum and minimum values were utilized. The mean scores, standard deviations, median, range, maximum, and minimum values of the PSES and CBI-24 and their sub-dimensions used in data collection were calculated from the obtained data. The Cronbach's alpha values of the PSES and CBI-24 and their sub-dimensions were estimated with a reliability analysis. The normality of the data was determined with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. It was observed that the skewness and kurtosis values of the PSES and CBI-24 and its sub-dimensions were within the normal distribution limits (+2.0; -2.0). The relationship between professional self-esteem and care behaviors was examined with Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis. Linear regression analysis was employed to determine whether professional self-esteem affected caring behaviors. In the evaluation of the data, the significance level was accepted as $p < 0.05$.

2.7. Research Variables

The independent variable of the research was professional self-esteem level, and the dependent variable was caring behaviors.

2.8. Ethical Consideration

Before the research data were collected, ethical approval was obtained from Non-Interventional Clinical Research and Publication Ethics Committee of the Rectorate of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University (date: 13.07.2021 and number: 2100036390). Written permission was obtained from the Medical Specialization Education Board of the hospital where the research was conducted (date: 17.08.2021 and number: 53). During the data collection phase, nurses who were included in the sample and agreed to participate in the research were informed about the study, and their verbal and written consent was obtained.

3. Results

It was determined that the average age of the nurses participating in the study was 33.15 ± 8.10 , 71.9% were female, 61% were married, 38.1% had worked in the profession for 1-5 years, 40.2% worked in internal units, and 78.8% worked in a mixed (night and day) setting.

Nurses' mean scores were 95.86 ± 15.20 (min.-max.: 44-138 and median: 96.00) from the PSES and 5.14 ± 0.69 (min.-max.: 2-6 and

median: 5.30) from the CBI-24. Their mean scores on the sub-dimensions of the CBI-24 were as follows: 5.13 ± 0.77 (min.-max.: 1.75-6 and median: 5.25) from the assurance sub-dimension, 5.43 ± 0.70 (min.-max.: 1.6-6 and median: 5.60) from the knowledge and skills sub-dimension, 5.06 ± 0.76 (min.-max.: 2-6 and median: 5.16) from the respectful sub-dimension, and 4.97 ± 0.78 (min.-max.: 2-6 and median: 5.00) from the connectedness sub-dimension (Table 1).

A positive and very low-level correlation was found between the total scores of the PSES and CBI-24 ($r = 0.197$; $p < 0.001$). When the relationships between the total score of the PSES and the sub-dimension scores of the CBI-24 were examined, it was determined that the total PSES score had a positive, very low, and significant relationship with the assurance sub-dimension score ($r = 0.186$; $p < 0.001$); a positive, very low, and significant relationship with the knowledge and skills sub-dimension score ($r = 0.150$; $p < 0.001$), a positive, very low, and significant relationship with the respectful sub-dimension score ($r = 0.179$; $p < 0.001$), and a positive, low-level, significant relationship with the connectedness sub-dimension score ($r = 0.202$; $p < 0.001$) (Table 2) of the CBI-24.

In the study, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between nurses' professional self-esteem and the level of caring behaviors ($R = 0.197$, $R^2 = 0.039$, $F(1, 503) = 20.352$, $p = 0.000$). The level of nurses' professional self-esteem explained 3.9% of the total variance in caring behaviors. It showed that the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 3.9% of the level of caring behaviors, and a one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem significantly increased the level of caring behaviors by 0.009 times ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3).

A significant relationship was detected between nurses' professional self-esteem variable and the assurance level of caring behaviors ($R = 0.186$, $R^2 = 0.035$, $F(1, 503) = 18.115$, $p = 0.000$). Nurses' professional self-esteem explained 3.5% of the total variance in the assurance level of caring behaviors. This meant that the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 3.5% of the assurance level of caring behaviors, and a one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem significantly increased the assurance level in care behaviors by 0.010 times ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3).

Results indicated a significant relationship between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the knowledge and skills level of caring behaviors ($R = 0.150$, $R^2 = 0.023$, $F(1, 503) = 11.580$, $p = 0.001$). Nurses' professional self-esteem explained 2.3% of the total variance in the knowledge and skills level of caring behaviors. This indicated that nurses' professional self-esteem significantly affected 2.3% of the knowledge and skills level of caring behaviors, and a one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem significantly increased the knowledge

Table 2. The relationship between nurses' professional self-esteem and caring behaviors

CBI-24 and sub-dimensions		PSES
CBI-24 Total	r	0.197
	p	0.000
CBI-24 assurance sub-dimension	r	0.186
	p	0.000
CBI-24 knowledge and skills sub-dimension	r	0.150
	p	0.000
CBI-24 respectful sub-dimension	r	0.179
	p	0.000
CBI-24 connectedness sub-dimension	r	0.202
	p	0.000

PSES, Professional Self-Esteem Scale; CBI-24, Caring Behaviors Inventory-24;
r, Pearson coefficient; p, significance level ($p < 0.001$)

and skills level of caring behaviors by 0.007 times ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3).

Another significant relationship was detected between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the respectful level of caring behaviors ($R=0.179$, $R^2=0.032$, $F(1, 503) = 11.580$, $p=0.000$). Nurses' professional self-esteem explained 3.2% of the total variance in the respectful level of caring behaviors. It showed that nurses' professional self-esteem significantly affected 3.2% of the level of respect in caring behaviors, and a one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem significantly increased the level of respect in caring behaviors by 0.009 times ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3).

Finally, the professional self-esteem variable of nurses was found to have a significant relationship with the connectedness level of caring behaviors ($R=0.202$, $R^2=0.041$, $F(1, 503) = 21.492$, $p=0.001$). Nurses' professional self-esteem explained 4.1% of the total variance in the connectedness level of caring behaviors.

This revealed that nurses' professional self-esteem significantly affected 4.1% of the connectedness level of caring behaviors, and a one-unit increase in their professional self-esteem significantly increased the connectedness level of caring behaviors by 0.010 times ($p < 0.001$) (Table 3).

4. Discussion

Professional self-esteem refers to the importance and value a person attaches to their profession. A high score on the PSES indicated high professional self-esteem, while a low score showed low professional self-esteem, and the total score that could be obtained from the scale varied between 30 and 150 (17). The average total scores of the PSES for nurses were reported as 97.00 ± 20.09 in the study by Cerit, Çıtak Bilgin, and Çıtak Tunç (14), 76.13 ± 20.69 in the study by Cerit and Evler (18), and 89.01 ± 11.97 in the study by Güven and Ünsal (20). The results of these studies indicate that nurses have a moderate level of professional self-esteem. In this study, it was determined that nurses received an average score of 95.86 from the PSES and had a moderate level of professional self-esteem. This result may be an indication that the nurses participating in the study had chosen a profession that was partially congruent with and relevant to their personality traits. Therefore, the necessary guidance can be provided to nursing candidates at the career selection stage, and the acquisition and discovery of professional identity in nursing education can be supported by teaching methods. Therefore, it can be suggested that nurses' professional self-esteem, which was at a moderate level in this study, should be developed in terms of safe patient care, positive professional satisfaction, and positive professional identity and image. There were studies in the literature showing nurses'

professional self-esteem at a high level (8,21-23). In addition, it has been stated that having high professional self-esteem is important in terms of providing reliable and quality patient care, professional satisfaction (6,8), and professional identity and image (19).

Care can be defined as a concept that is specific to nursing, constitutes the essence of nursing, and is based on interpersonal interaction and trust (9). According to Göçmen Baykara, nursing care is "a type of ethical and legal responsibility and supportive and defensive relationship that the nurse establishes to determine, decide, implement, and assess the care needs of an individual with an existing or potential physical, psychological, and social health problem and to bring the individual to a level where he/she can meet his/her own needs" (24). Caring behaviors are all the activities that nurses do or say while providing care for individuals (25). Watson reported that care could only be transferred through care behaviors based on caring awareness (26). The mean score of the CBI-24 Scale was found to be 5.26 ± 0.59 in Yakıt's study (11), 5.05 ± 0.55 in Çelik's study (12), 5.37 ± 0.54 in Işık's study (15), 5.56 ± 0.39 in Kolay's study (27), 5.36 ± 0.58 in Kızılırmak's study (28), and 5.21 ± 0.56 in Özparlak et al., study (29). The results of the studies in the literature indicate that nurses have a high perception of their caring behaviors. In this study, it was found that nurses' perception of patient care quality was high, their knowledge and skills in caring behaviors were at a very good level, and that assurance, respectful, and connectedness characteristics were at a good level. In the studies of Efil et al. (30) and Romero-Martin et al. (31), it was also found that the connectedness and respectful sub-dimensions had lower scores than the knowledge and skills sub-dimension. This result showed that nurses were aware that care was the reason for the existence of the nursing profession and exhibited caring behaviors accordingly.

In this study, a positive and very low-level relationship was detected between nurses' mean scores on the total PSES and the total and all sub-dimensions scores of the CBI-24. Accordingly, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between the mean professional self-esteem scores of the nurses and their mean caring behavior scores. As the level of professional self-esteem increased, nurses' positive caring behaviors also increased. The professional self is extremely important in terms of the chosen profession and its development. The individual's life success is shaped by whether his/her identity matches his/her chosen profession. The more congruent the profession the individual has chosen with his/her personality is, the more successful the individual becomes in this job. This develops the professional self-image of the individual and gives them/her a professional character (32). Therefore, it can be considered that it is an expected situation that the increase in professional self-esteem in the individual will cause

Table 3. The effect of nurses' professional self-esteem level on caring behaviors (n=505)

Değişken		B	Standard Error	Beta	t	p
CBI-24 Total	Constant	4.278	0.195		21.924	0.000*
	PSES	0.009	0.002	0.197	4.511	0.000*
<i>R=0.197, R²=0.039, F_(1, 503) =20.352, p=0.000*</i>						
CBI-24 assurance	Constant	4.223	0.218		19.367	0.000*
	PSES	0.010	0.002	0.186	4.256	0.000*
<i>R=0.186, R²=0.035, F_(1, 503) =18.115, p=0.000*</i>						
CBI-24 knowledge and skills	Constant	4.769	0.199		23.989	0.000*
	PSES	0.007	0.002	0.150	3.403	0.001*
<i>R=0.150, R²=0.023, F_(1, 503) =11.580, p=0.001*</i>						
CBI-24 respectful	Constant	4.196	0.215		19.530	0.000*
	PSES	0.009	0.002	0.179	4.082	0.000*
<i>R=0.179, R²=0.032, F_(1, 503) =11.580, p=0.000*</i>						
CBI-24 connectedness	Constant	3.975	0.218		18.212	0.000*
	PSES	0.010	0.002	0.202	46.36	0.000*
<i>R=0.202, R²=0.041, F_(1, 503) =21.492, p=0.001*</i>						
PSES, Professional Self-Esteem Scale; CBI-24, Caring Behaviors Inventory-24; R/R ² , regression coefficients, F, Variance Analysis; B, Regression coefficient; t, Significance test for regression coefficients; p, significance level (p<0.001)						

positive professional behaviors. There was no study in the literature on the examination of professional self-esteem and caring behaviors together. Therefore, it is recommended that studies on the examination of the connection between these two variables be conducted.

In this study, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between nurses' professional self-esteem variable and the level of caring behaviors. In addition, nurses' professional self-esteem significantly affected 3.9% of the level of caring behaviors, and the increase in professional self-esteem augmented the level of caring behaviors. In the study conducted by Sabancıoğlu and Doğan in 2017, it was stated that nurses with positively developed professional self-esteem could positively affect and make contributions to the individuals they provide care for (19). Therefore, we can say that positively developed professional self-esteem positively affects caring behaviors. There was no study in the literature that directly showed that professional self-esteem affected caring behaviors. It is recommended that different and comprehensive studies be conducted on the reasons for this result. The meaning of the word assurance is "something to be trusted; the assumption of responsibility by one of the parties in an agreement; belief, assurance, guarantee, something put forward against the responsibility taken; a convincing word said to alleviate someone's doubts; pledge" (33). In this study, the assurance sub-dimension score average was determined as 5.43±0.70. In addition, it can be said that the assurance level in this study is similar to the assurance level in studies using the same scale (27,28,34,35). In this study, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the level of assurance of caring behaviors.

It was also determined that the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 3.5% of the level of assurance of caring behaviors and that the increase in professional self-esteem multiplied the level of assurance of caring behaviors. This result showed that professional self-esteem significantly affected the assurance of care.

The knowledge and skills sub-dimension included issues directly related to care, such as demonstrating professional knowledge

and skills, knowing how to apply basic nursing interventions such as injection and intravenous applications, the ability to use tools and equipment related to care, and keeping patient information confidential (36). In this study, the knowledge and skills sub-dimension score average was determined as 5.43±0.70. In addition, it can be said that the assurance level in this study is similar to the assurance level in studies using the same scale (27,28,34,35). In this study, a significant relationship was detected between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the level of knowledge and skills of caring behaviors. It was also determined that the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 2.3% of the level of knowledge and skills of caring behaviors, and that the increase in professional self-esteem increased the level of knowledge and skills of caring behaviors. This result can be considered as an indicator that nurses were adequately aware of their basic roles and responsibilities related to care and demonstrated their professional knowledge and skills.

Respect is defined as "the feeling of love that causes careful, attentive, and moderate behavior toward someone or something due to their value, superiority, old age, usefulness, and sacredness and reverence, consideration, and hesitation to disturb others" (37). Nurses' respect for patients while providing care is a necessity of humanistic care. In this study, the respectful sub-dimension score average was determined as 5.06±0.76. In addition, it can be said that the assurance level in this study is similar to the assurance level in studies using the same scale (27,28,34,35). In this study, it was determined that there was a significant relationship between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the level of respectful caring behaviors. It was also found that the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 3.2% of the level of respectful caring behaviors, and that the increase in professional self-esteem increased the level of respectful caring behaviors. This result suggests that professional self-esteem affects the provision of care in a respectful and humanistic manner.

The sub-dimension of connectedness consisted of significant titles, such as educating or informing the patient, spending time with them, helping/supporting their development, being patient and understanding toward them, and ensuring their participation

in the planning of care (36). In this study, the connectedness sub-dimension score average was determined as 4.97 ± 0.78 . In addition, it can be said that the assurance level in this study is similar to the assurance level in studies using the same scale (27,28,34,35). In this study, a significant relationship was detected between the professional self-esteem variable of nurses and the level of connectedness of caring behaviors. Also, the professional self-esteem of nurses significantly affected 4.1% of the connectedness level of caring behaviors, and the increase in professional self-esteem increased the connectedness level of caring behaviors. Therefore, we can say that the positive development of professional self-esteem can positively affect the connectedness dimension of care.

4.1. Limitation

This study was conducted with nurses who were included in the sample between October and December 2021, among the nurses working in the city hospital where the research was conducted. This can be considered a limitation for generalizability. Another limitation may be that the data of this study were collected based on the self-reports of the participants.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, it was determined that the professional self-esteem level of nurses was moderate and their caregiving behaviors were high, and there was a positive and very low significant relationship between the professional self-esteem of nurses and their caregiving behaviors, and that the increase in the professional self-esteem level positively affected their caregiving behaviors. Our findings show that professional self-esteem is an important variable in improving caring behavior in nurses. Therefore, policies and programs that will improve nurses' professional self-esteem should be developed and implemented. There is also a need for qualitative studies in which the professional self-esteem and caring behaviors of nurses working in different institutions are comprehensively examined. In addition, future studies should be planned to evaluate the results of interventions that will increase nurses' professional self-esteem and improve their caregiving behavior.

6. Contribution to the Field

It is thought that the results of the research will provide data for studies on strengthening the professional self-esteem of nurses and will be useful in developing suggestions that will increase the quality of nursing care.

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest with any person and/or institution.

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