The Relationship between Nurses Nepotism Perceptions and Job Motivation*

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* The study is a graduate thesis.

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to determine the relationship between nurses' perceptions of nepotism and their job motivation. **Method:** A descriptive and correlational design was applied for the study. The sample size was calculated as 198 with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. The data of this study were collected by the researcher from 266 nurses between January 2023 and September 2023. Personal Information Form"," Nepotism Scale" and "Nurse Job Motivation Scale "were used as data collection tools. In order to conduct the research, ethics committee approval and informed voluntary consent form were obtained from the participants. **Results:** When the findings are examined, the Nepotism Scale scores of the participants in the study are 4.75±1.07. Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores are 61.38±9.58. When the relationships between the two scales are examined, there is a statistically significant low level negative relationship between the Nepotism Scale general scores, Promotion Nepotism, Transactional Nepotism subscale: According to the results of the findings in this study, reducing nepotism in the nursing profession will increase the job motivation of nurses.es scores and Nurse Job Motivation Scales scores. **Conclusion:** According to the results of the findings in this study, reducing nepotism in the nursing profession will increase the job motivation of nurses. Nurse managers should create a merit-based work environment for nurses and conduct transparent processes especially during promotion stages.

Keywords: Nepotism, Job Motivation, Nurse.

Hemşirelerin Nepotizm Algılarının İş Motivasyonları ile İlişkisi

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışmada hemşirelerin nepotizm algılarının iş motivasyonları ile ilişkinin belirlenmesi amaçlandı. **Gereç ve Yöntem:** Çalışma, tanımlayıcı-ilişki arayıcı tasarımdadır. Örneklem büyüklüğü %95 güven düzeyi ve %5 hata payı ile 198 olarak hesaplandı. Bu araştırmanın verileri Ocak 2023/Eylül 2023 tarihleri arasında araştırmacı tarafından 266 hemşireden toplandı. Veri toplama aracı olarak "Kişisel Bilgi Formu", "Nepotizm Ölçeği" ve "İş Motivasyon Ölçeği" kullanıldı. Araştırmayı gerçekleştirebilmek için etik kurul onayı ve katılımcılardan bilgilendirilmiş gönüllü onam formu alındı. **Bulgular:** Bulgular incelendiğinde çalışmaya katılan kişilerin Nepotizm Ölçeği puan ortalaması 4,75±1,07'dir. Hemşire İş Motivasyonu Ölçeği toplam puan ortalaması ise 61,38±9,58'dir. İki ölçek arasındaki ilişkiler incelendiğinde ise Nepotizm Ölçeği genel puanları, Terfide Nepotizm İşlem Nepotizmi alt boyut puan ortalamaları ile Hemşire İş Motivasyonu Ölçeği puanları arasında istatistiksel olarak anlamlı düşük düzeyde negatif yönlü ilişki bulunmaktadır. **Sonuç:** Bu çalışmadaki elde edilen bulguların sonuçlarına göre, nepotizmin hemşirelik mesleğinde azaltılması hemşirelerin iş motivasyonlarını artıracaktır. Yönetici hemşireler, hemşirelerin çalışma ortamlarını liyakat temelli oluşturmalı ve özellikle terfi aşamalarında şeffaf süreçler yürütmelidirler.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Nepotizm, İş Motivasyonu, Hemşire.

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INTRODUCTION

In order for hospitals, which are one of the most important service organisations of society, to job efficiently and effectively, it is important that they are managed by professional managers with a corporate culture that is far from individualism. Executive nurses who act in accordance with ethical principles should be involved in the management of nursing services, which are the foundation service area of hospitals. It is known that the unethical behaviour of executive nurses negatively affects patient care and nurses' job performance (Keselman, 2012; Öztürk, 2018). One of the most important concepts shown amongst unethical managerial behaviours in the literature is nepotism (Çetin, 2019; Öztürk, 2018). Favouritism is defined as "the employer's or manager's preferential treatment of certain people due to emotional commitments and obligations" (Öztürk, 2018). Nepotism, on the other hand, can be defined as exhibiting favouritism and behaviour to other people whom the person in authority feels close to, such as family members, relatives, fellow citizens, etc., in matters such as recruitment, promotion and distribution of tasks (Biber, 2016). Although there are many types of favouritism, one of the most important is nepotism. Nepotism is "the provision of privileged opportunities at job by a person based solely on kinship ties or people he/she is close to, regardless of factors such as talent, skill, educational status and success (Özler and Gümüştekin, 2007). Although nepotism can be seen in all countries, it is more common in countries where traditional relations and ties are intense (Bolat et al., 2017). When the international literature is examined it can be seen that nursing studies on this subject are generally carried out in countries like Saudi Arabia, Iran and Egypt (Hosseinabadi-Farahani et al., 2023, Abdelghany Mohamed and Hosny Abdel-Hafez., 2021, Shubayra et al., 2022).

Working people want to be managed with justice, they evaluate the reward they receive at the end of their efforts and reflect it positively or negatively on individuals and managers. It is known that nepotism has negative effects in many areas, such as organisational commitment and organisational justice in all organisations (Alper Ay and Oktay, 2020; Serfraz et al., 2022). There are studies revealing the relationship between nepotism and job satisfaction in nurses (Abdelghany Mohamed and Hosny Abdel-Hafez, 2021; Shubayra et al., 2022). In addition, there are non-nursing studies showing that favouritism causes serious harm not only to employees but also to businesses and the economy and may relate to job satisfaction (Abdalla et al., 1998; Daskin et al., 2015; Wibawanto et al., 2020).

Motivation is defined as individuals acting voluntarily and making efforts to achieve a goal. Motivation is related to the individual's desire and effort to do work, to work, to get results (Koçel, 2020). There are many factors which affect employees' motivation. One of the most important factors affecting the motivation of

working people can be defined as economy and other socio-psychological factors such as authority, unity of purpose, communication and physical working conditions (Özcan et al., 2023). In studies examining the factors affecting the motivation levels of nurses, their participation in managerial decisions (Uğur and Duz, 2017), appreciation of job done, understanding of fair discipline, adequacy of knowledge and experience for the job (Hakmal et al, 2012). Powerlessness and lack of authority, violence, lack of support for nurses, centralised management in hospitals, physician-centred culture, lack of facilities and a lack of a clear nursing job have been found to be related to nurses' job motivation. Nurses' motivation levels must be high in order to provide quality health services (Gümüş and Eryiğit, 2023). There are studies in the literature showing that nepotism affects work motivation (Wibawanto et al., 2020). But no study revealing this relationship specifically for the nursing profession has been found. For this reason, the study was conducted to determine the relationship between nurses' nepotism perception levels and their job motivation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study type

The research was conducted as a descriptive and relationship-seeking study to determine the relationship between nurses' perceptions of nepotism and their job motivation.

Setting and sampling

The research was conducted in two hospitals, a training and research hospital and a state hospital, located in a province in Duzce, between January 2023 and September 2023 (N:404). When the sample calculation was made, the sample size was calculated as 198 with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. No sample selection was made in the research and the study was completed with 266 nurses who agreed to participate in the study working in two hospitals between January and September 2023. In this research 65.84% of the area was reached. The strength of the study, which was completed with 266 people, was calculated using the G*Power package program from the hypothesis of the relationship between Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores and Nepotism Scale scores. The effective width of this study was found to be 0.162. Accordingly, the strength of the study completed with 266 people was found to be 84.75% with an effective width of 0.162 and a significance level of 0.05.

Data collection tools

Personal data form

It is a 7-question form that includes the Individual and professional characteristics of the participants (age, gender, education, type of hospital, work department, length of service in the profession, length of service in current department) (Alper Ay and Oktay; 2020 Daskin et al., 2015; Orhan and Ergeç, 2021).

Nepotism scale

The 'Nepotism Scale' was developed by (Abdalla et al., 1998) to measure employees' perceptions of

nepotism. It was later adapted to Turkish by (Asunakutlu and Avcı, 2010). The scale consists of three subscales: Nepotism in Promotion, Nepotism in Transactions and Nepotism in the Recruitment Process, and includes fourteen questions. The scale is seven-point Likert type. The scale is evaluated in the following manner; 'Totally Disagree' is 1 point, 'Mostly Disagree' is 2 points, 'Partly Disagree 'is 3 points, 'Undecided' is 4 points, 'Partly Agree' is 5 points, 'Mostly Agree' is 6 points and 'Totally Agree' is 7 points. Questions numbered 1-5 on the scale are Nepotism in Promotion, questions 6-11 are Transaction Nepotism and question 14 is regarding Nepotism in the Recruiting Process. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of is 0.86. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of this study is 0.95.

Nurse job motivation scale
'Nurse Job Motivation Scale' is a scale developed by (Engin, 2016) to measure the job motivation of nurses. The scale is triple Likert type and consists of 25 questions in total. The scale has no sub dimensions.' I agree' statement is evaluated as 1 point, 'Partly Agree' is evaluated as 2 points and 'I Agree" is evaluated as 3 points. The maximum obtainable score from the scale is 75 and the minimum is 25. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of is 0.85. The Cronbach alpha reliability value of this study is 0.91.

Data collection method
Before collecting the research data, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants by the researcher, general necessary information was given and both verbal and written consent was obtained. The data of the study was collected from nurses who agreed to participate in the study between January 2023 and September 2023, using the Personal Information Form, Nepotism Scale and Nurses Job Motivation Scale. The data collection process was carried out by the researcher during the nurses' rest hours and whenever they were available. Nurses who did not want to participate in the study during the data collection phase and who were on sick leave or other leave were not included in the study.

Analysis of data
The study data consists of information from 266 people. Analyses were made using the IBM SPSS Statistics 26 package programme. When evaluating the study data, frequencies were given for categorical variables, and descriptive statistics were given numerical variables.
Kolmogorov–Smirnov test results were examined for normality assumptions of numerical variables and it was seen that the variables were not normally distributed. For this reason, non-parametric statistical methods were used in the study. Relationships between two independent numerical variables were interpreted with Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient. In the analyses, statistical significance was interpreted at the 0.05 level.

RESULTS
The personal and professional characteristics of nurses who participated in the study are listed (Table 1). It can be seen in Table 1 that 79.7% of the people who participated in the study are female and 75.2% have a bachelor's degree.56.8% job in state hospitals and 43.2% in training and research hospitals. The average and standard deviation of people's age 31.45±8.08, occupation length 8.97±8.63 and years in present department 4.41±5.48.

Table 1. Individual and professional characteristics (n=266).

		(n)	(%)
Gender	Male	54	20.3
	Female	212	79.7
Education	Health High School	13	4.9
	Assc.degree	42	15.8
	Bachelor's degree	200	75.2
	Masters /PhD.	11	4.1
Type of hospital	Teaching and Research hospital	115	43.2
	State Hospital	151	56.8
Work department	Operating theatre	32	12.1
	Emergency	54	20.3
	Wards	67	25.2
	Intensive Care Unit	69	25.9
	Other departments	44	16.5
(Mean.±SD)			
Age		31.45±8.08	
Length of service in the profession		8.97±8.63	
Length of service in current department		4.41±5.48	

SD: Standard deviation.

When Table 2 is examined, the Nepotism Scale scores of the participants in the study are 4.75±1.07. The mean and standard deviation of the Nepotism in Promotion subscale scores are 4.05±1.67, while the Transactional Nepotism subscale is 3.65±1.55 and the Recruitment

Nepotism subscale is 3.63±1.90. The mean and standard deviation of Nurses Job Motivation Scale scores are 61.38±9.58. (Table 2)

Table 2. Descriptive findings regarding the nepotism scale and nurse job motivation scale (n=266).

	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
Nepotism Scale	4.75	1.07	4.85	2.1	6.3
Promotion Nepotism	4.05	1.67	4.40	0.0	6.0
Transactional Nepotism	3.65	1.55	3.83	0.0	6.0
Recruitment Nepotism	3.63	1.90	3.83	0.0	6.0
Nurse Job Motivation Scale	61.38	9.58	63.00	28	75

Min: Minimum Max: Maximum SD: Standard Deviation

There is a statistically significant, low level negative relationship between Nepotism Scale scores and Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores ($r=-0.162$, $p<0.01$) in Table 3. There is a statistically significant low level negative relationship between Promotion Nepotism scores and Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores ($r=-0.228$, $p<0,01$). There is a statistically significant low level negative relationship between Transactional Nepotism scores and Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores ($r=-0.132$, $p<0,01$). There is no statistically significant relationship between Nurse Job Motivation Scale scores and Nepotism in Recruitment process scores ($r=-0.099$) (Table 3).

Table 3. Examination of the relationship between nepotism scale scores and nurse job motivation scale scores (n=266).

		Nurse job motivation scale
Nepotism Scale	r	-.162**
	p	0.008
Promotion Nepotism	r	-.228**
	p	0.000
Transaction Nepotism	r	-.132*
	p	0.031
Recruitment Nepotism	r	-0.099
	p	0.108

r: Spearman's Rho Correlation Coefficient
*: $p<0.05$ **: $p<0.01$

DISCUSSION

According to the findings of this study, nurses in the hospital where this study was conducted perceive above-average nepotism. When national literature was examined, two studies investigating this issue were found (Orhan and Ergeç, 2021, Alper Ay and Oktay, 2020). In these two studies, it was determined that nurses' perceptions of nepotism were at an average level. It can be seen from the international literature that nepotism studies are examined more in developing countries (Hosseinabadi-Farahani et al., 2023, Abdelghany Mohamed and Hosny Abdel-Hafez., 2021). In a qualitative study with nurses in Saudi Arabia, stated that nurses experienced nepotism (Shubayra et al., 2022). In study conducted with nurses in Iran (Hosseinabadi-Farahani et al., 2023), that nurses stated they had experienced nepotism, in study with Egyptian nurses also stated that the majority of nurses perceive a high level of favouritism (Abdelghany Mohamed and Hosny Abdel-Hafez, 2021). Although favouritism can be seen in all countries, it is more common in countries where traditional relationships and ties are intense (Bolat et al., 2017). In study, nepotism rates were above average and this suggests that hospital managements engage in career management that is far from professional.

Additionally, nurses in this study perceived nepotism in promotion, nepotism in transactions and recruitment nepotism at an average level. When the results are examined, it is seen that favouritism is most perceived in promotion processes. In a study conducted in Turkey, nurses stated that the most important criterion taken into consideration in the promotion of nurses is having an acquaintance (Özlük and Ay, 2024). In another study, it was determined that one of the problems encountered by nurses in the promotion process was the lack of importance given to merit (Kahraman et al, 2020).

Motivation levels of nurses are important in order to provide nursing services at the desired standard and quality and to achieve the desired efficiency from nurses. In this study, the mean scores of the Nurse Job Motivation Scale is high. When the national literature is examined, there are many studies revealing the job motivation of nurses. When we look at the studies using the same scale as this study, the results can be said that they are similar to this study (Göktepe et al., 2020; Semerci and Seven, 2023). When the international literature is examined, there are many studies investigating the job motivation of nurses. In some studies, the level of work motivation has been shown to be high (Ayalew et al., 2021), while in others it has been shown to be at a moderate level (Abu Yahya et al., 2019).

Job motivation refers to an activity that can produce the best results and the driving force required for the individuals to achieve the results they want. This power can be affected by many factors (Ashmanand Gillies, 2023). In this study, where the relationship between nurses' perceptions of nepotism and their job motivation is examined, there is a statistically significant, low level negative relationship between 'Nepotism Scale' and the 'Nurse Job Motivation

Scale'. Moreover, there is a statistically significant low level negative relationship between Promotion Nepotism and Transactional Nepotism and the Nurse Job Motivation Scale. On the other hand, there is no statistically significant relationship between Nurse Job Motivation Scale and Nepotism in Recruitment Process scores.

When the national and international literature was examined, no study was found that revealed the relationship between nurses' perceptions of nepotism and their job motivation. However, in (Shurbayra et al., 2022)'s qualitative study with nurses, participants stated that favouritism affected their job motivation. Aside from nursing, different results are seen in studies conducted with other professional groups. While no relationship was found between nepotism and job satisfaction in the study by (Wibawanto et al., 2020), there are also studies that found a relationship between nepotism and motivation (Büte, 2015; Güneş and Akif, 2021).

This study showed that there was a low relationship between nurses' general nepotism perceptions, promotion and transaction nepotism perceptions and their job motivation. Although other studies show different results, there are studies similar to study which support that nepotism causes negative psychological and economic consequences on employees, prevents the institutionalisation of organisations and has negative effects on society (Karahan and Yılmaz, 2014). It is thought that the lack of a statistically significant relationship between Nepotism and Job Motivation in the Recruitment Processes may be due to the fact that this study was conducted in state hospitals where recruitment processes are carried out with a central examination.

Limitations

Since the research was conducted with nurses working in two state hospitals. Province, the data obtained is limited and cannot be generalised to all institutions and regions. Another limitation of the study is that the nepotism scale used in the study was not developed for health institutions.

CONCLUSION

According to the research results; there is a low level negative relationship between the nepotism perceptions of nurses and their work motivation. In line with these results; it is recommended that arrangements be made in health institutions in order to decrease the nepotism perceptions of nurses and increase their work motivation. Especially nurse managers should establish a promotion system that emphasizes merit in the management of nursing services. In addition, it is recommended that studies be conducted to develop nepotism or favouritism scales for nursing services in order to conduct more detailed studies in this area.

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