

## PROFESSIONAL SELF-CONCEPT AND ATTITUDES OF PARENTAL PARTICIPATION OF PEDIATRIC NURSES

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### **Abstract**

It was aimed to evaluate the relationship between professional self-concept pediatric nurses units and attitudes of parental participation. This study was conducted with 87 nurses worked in pediatric units in two hospitals in Zonguldak-Turkey between January-April 2019. "Personel Information Form", "Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses" and "Parent Participation Attitude Scale" were used. There was a positive correlation between the total score of the nurses from the Parental Participation Attitude Scale and the Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses and its subscales such as professional satisfaction ( $p=0.004$ ), professional competence ( $p=0.002$ ), professional attitude and skill ( $p=0.000$ ) subscales and total score ( $p=0.000$ ). Nurses' attitudes respect parental participation are affected by professional self-concept. It was thought that family-centered care can be increased by increasing professional self-concept in nurses by providing the participation of nurses in more trainings and scientific studies.

**Keywords:** Pediatric nursing, self concept, family-centered nursing, child, family

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Family-centered care approach is one of the main philosophies of pediatric nursing. This approach assumes that the child is the most valuable and most caring individual of the family. It acknowledges that the existence of the family is unavoidable regardless of the place and conditions in the care of the child. Family-centered care practices are important for reducing anxiety in both children and families due to hospitalization and medical interventions (Aykanat Girgin & Bilgen Sivri, 2015: 683; Çavuşoğlu, 2018: 344; Öztürk & Ayar, 2014: 315).

Parental participation is one of the care initiatives among family-centered care practices. It is easier for the child to cope with painful situations by parental participation. The fear of children is diminishing. The treatment can be completed and shorter duration of discharge can be planned. Most importantly, the frequency of hospitalization decreases as family confidence increases (Çavuşoğlu, 2018: 315; Kim, Jung, Yu, & Park, 2015: 778; Özkan & Taş Arslan, 2017: 355).

In the studies conducted, it was reported that there may be negative aspects as well as the positive side of the parental participation in the care of

the child (Aydın, 2018: 19; Boztepe & Kerimoğlu Yıldız, 2017: e12175). In particular, these studies have been mostly studies on health professionals' views on parental participation (Boztepe & Kerimoğlu Yıldız, 2017:e12175; Curley et al., 2012: 1133; Scalford et al., 2013: 353). Curley et al. (2012) concluded that physicians' had viewed parental involvement in pediatric intensive care units negatively affects medical attempts and decision-making. Similarly, Alemdar et al. (2017: 1) reported that parental participation increased the workload of nurses. Scalford et al. (2013: 353) emphasized that parents reflected their anxiety to their children and therefore children experience more anxiety and pain.

Parental participation may cause an ethical distress because of the parents of legal guardians of children, especially in cases where critical decision-making is required (Aydın, 2018: 19). In addition, since nurses consider care as one of the basic and professional roles of nursing, it is stated that parental involvement is not favorable (Aykanat, 2014: 683; Boztepe & Çavuşoğlu, 2009: 11; Boztepe, 2009: 88). At this point, the nurses should benefit from professional knowledge skills and experience in order to be able to observe the benefit of the child and the family ethically (Aydın, 2018: 19).

Professional self-knowledge encompassed the level of knowledge, beliefs, and perception that affected a person's roles and behaviors (Fagermoen, 1997: 434; Ghadirian, Salsali, & Cheraghi, 2014: 1). In the literature review, it was seen that the studies about nurses' professional self-concept had been frequently examined in terms of demographic characteristics and majority ethic concepts (Parandavar, Rahmanian, & Badiyepymaie Jahromi, 2015: 82; Sabancıoğulları, Doğan, & Bircan, 2011: 16; Sabancıoğulları & Doğan, 2014: 11). In the literature review conducted during the preparation of this study, we did not find any study examining the effect of pediatric nurses on the attitudes of professional self-concept towards family-centered care. This study was carried out in an analytical design in order to examine the effect of professional self-concept of nurses working in pediatrics units on family centered care in two hospitals.

## **2. METHODS**

### **2.1. The sample of the study**

This study population consisted of all nurses working in pediatric units in two hospitals. The number of nurses working in pediatric units in two hospital was 98. The sample size of this study was calculated on "Raosoft" (<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>) (N=98). 79 nurses were enough. 87 nurses were included in this study.

**Personel Information Form:** Nurses' age, education level, working time, such as the form where the features are questioned.

**Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses (PSCSCN):** Sabancıoğulları, Doğan and Bircan (2011) developed this scale to determine the level of professional self-concept of clinical nurses,. The scale has three subscales: "Professional satisfaction", "professional competence" and "professional attitudes and skills. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale was reported to be 0.87. The increase in parasites states that nurses' professional self-concept is positive and good (Sabancıoğulları et al., 2011). In the study, Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.87.

**Parent Participation Attitude Scale (PPAS):** This scale was developed by Yıldırım (2008) in order to determine the level of attitudes of working

nurses to the care of parents of their children. The validity and reliability studies were conducted by the same people. The scale has 23 items and rating as follows: 1. Strongly disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Uncertain, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly agree, The Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be 0.67 in the validity and reliability study of the scale (Özbodur-Yıldırım, 2008). Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.68 in this study.

## 2.2. Procedure

This study was conducted by the researchers between April and January 2019. The data were collected by face to face interview technique by the researchers when the nurses were available in hospitals.

## 2.7. Ethics

Ethical approval was obtained from Zonguldak Bülent Ecevit University Human Research Ethics Committee with the approval number 07.12.2018-467 before starting this study. In addition, written consent was obtained from the institutions and nurses from the institutions where the study will be conducted.

## 2.8. Evaluation of the data

SPSS 16.0 package program was used for statistical evaluation. The conformity of the numerical variables to the normal distribution was examined with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In descriptive statistics, mean  $\pm$  standard deviation (minimum-maximum) values for numerical data; The categorical data are expressed as numbers and percentages. Since the parametric test assumptions were not obtained in terms of numerical variables, Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis independent t-test and ANOVA were used in the comparison of the two groups. The results were evaluated with a 95% confidence interval and  $p < 0.05$  was considered significant.

## 3. RESULTS

When the descriptive characteristics of the nurses participating in the study were examined; 47 (54.0%) were 20-29 age, 63 (72.4%) were university graduates, 52 (59.8%) were married, 49 (56.3%) did not have children and 46 (52.9%) worked in a state hospital, 41 (47.1%) had a professional experience between 0-4 years, 32 (36.8%) currently work in neonatal intensive care, and 42 (48.3%) have been working in those units for 0-3 years.

**Table 1: Distribution of The Mean Scores of The Scales and Subscales of Nurses**

		Mean $\pm$ SD	Lowest Score	Highest score
<b>Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses</b>	<b>Professional Satisfaction</b>	14.75 $\pm$ 3.23	5	20
	<b>Professional Competence</b>	22.51 $\pm$ 2.80	15	28
	<b>Professional Attitude and Skills</b>	76.95 $\pm$ 7.38	62	92
	<b>Total score</b>	114.23 $\pm$ 11.33	93	140
<b>Parent Participation Attitude Scale</b>	<b>Total score</b>	80.32 $\pm$ 9.34	57	106

**Table 2: Comparison of The Scores of The Nurses From Professionalism Self-Concept in Clinician Nurses According to Descriptive Characteristics**

<b>Descriptive Characteristics</b>	<b>Professional Satisfaction Mean±SD (min-max)</b>	<b>Professional Competence Mean±SD (min-max)</b>	<b>Professional Attitude and Skills Mean±SD (min-max)</b>	<b>Total Mean±SD (min-max)</b>
<b>Education</b>				
High school	14.40±2.83(11-19)	23.10±2.99(18-26)	73.30±4.24(68-80)	110.80±6.79(101-119)
Two-year degree	14.62±2.97(11-19)	21.00±3.02(15-26)	74.25±7.61(62-86)	109.88±117.89(94-127)
Univesity	14.58±3.38(5-20)	22.49±2.73(17-28)	77.12±7.45(62-92)	114.21±11.51(93-140)
Master degree	17.33±1.50(15-19)	23.83±2.71(21-28)	84.83±4.75(80-92)	126.00±8.27(118-139)
Test;p değeri	KW:4.711;p:0.194	KW:4.063;p:0.255	<b>KW:10.306; p:0.016**</b>	F:0.451; p:0.717
<b>Marital statu</b>				
Married	15.09 ±3.42(5-20)	22.94±2.72(17-28)	78.55±7.25(62-92)	116.60±1.60(94-140)
Not married	14.25±2.89(8-19)	21.88±2.84(15-28)	74.57±7.01(62-89)	110.71±1.70(93-130)
Test; p	U:-1.554;p:0.120	U:-1.525;p:0.127	<b>U:-2.518;p:0.012**</b>	<b>t:2.441;p:0.017**</b>
<b>Having a child</b>				
Yes	15.55 ±3.30(5-20)	23.39±2,97 (17-28)	79.34±6.99(64-90)	118.29±11.76(94-140)
No	14.14 ±3.06(8-19)	21.83±2.49 (15-28)	75.10±7.21(62-90)	111.08±10.01(93-130)
Test; p	<b>t:2.056; p:0,043**</b>	<b>U:-2.691;p:0.007**</b>	<b>t:2.755; p:0.007**</b>	<b>t:3.084; p:0.003**</b>
<b>Hospital</b>				
State hospital	13.71±2.97(5-19)	21.95±2.89(15-28)	74,56±6.52(62-90)	110.24±9.43(93-130)
University hospital	15.92±3.13(8-20)	23.14±2.60(17-28)	79.63±7.45(62-90)	118.71±11.71(93-140)
Test; p	<b>U:-3.398; p:0.001*</b>	<b>U:-2.047;p:0.041</b>	<b>t:3.383; p:0.001*</b>	<b>t:3.730; p:0.000*</b>
<b>Pediatric unit</b>				
Emergency	15.23±3.46(8-19)	22.53±3.12(17-27)	74.92±6.04(68-82)	112.69±9.39(93-127)
Surgery	18.20±0.83(17-19)	22.53±1.94(21-26)	81.40±5.89(76-90)	123.00±7.87(115-133)
Oncology	18.00±1.41(16-20)	25.12±2.35(18-28)	87.87±3.09(85-92)	131.00±6.02(123-140)
Clinic	14.76±3.55(5-19)	22.84 ±2.19(18-26)	77.28±7.37(67-90)	114.88±11.36(110-132)
Neonatal	13.40±2.53(8-19)	21.71±2.97(15-28)	74.90±5.61(62-89)	110.03±8.16(93-125)
intensive care	13.25±2.62(11-17)			
Pediatric				
intensive care				
Test; p	<b>KW:24.427; p:0.000*</b>	20.50±2.51(17-23)	70.50±10.87(62-86)	104.25±15.10(94-126)
		<b>F:2.725; p:0.025**</b>	<b>F:6.956;p:0.000*</b>	<b>KW:25.733; p:0.000*</b>

KW: Kruskall Wallis test; F: ANOVA, t: Independent t test; U: Mann Whitney U test. \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

When the total of the PSCSCN subscales scores of the nurses participating in this study were analyzed; the mean score of the students' "professional satisfaction" was  $14.75 \pm 3.23$  (5-20), "professional competence" was  $22.51 \pm 2.80$  (15-28), "professional attitude and skill" was  $76.95 \pm 7.38$  (62-92) and the total score was  $114.23 \pm 11.33$  (93-140). It was found that the nurses had the lowest score of between 102 from the PPAS. The mean score of the nurses from the PPAS was  $80.32 \pm 9.34$  (Table 1). It was determined that nurses exhibit unstable attitudes towards parental participation.

According to the descriptive characteristics of the nurses participating in the study, the comparison of the mean scores of PSCSCN and its sub-dimensions is examined;

- When the scores of the PSCSCN subscales were compared according to the educational status of the nurses, a statistically significant difference was found between the scores they received "professional attitude and skill" ( $p=0.016$ ) subscale (Table 2).

- When the scores of the nurses according to the PSCSCN subscales compared to the marital status were compared, a statistically significant difference was found between the scores they received from "professional attitude and skill" ( $p=0.012$ ) subscales and total ( $p=0.017$ ) (Table 2).

- When the scores of the PSCSCN subscales were compared according to whether the nurses had children or not, there was a statistically significant difference between that the scores they received from "professional satisfaction" ( $p=0.007$ ), "professional attitude and skill" ( $p=0.007$ ) subscales and "total score" ( $p=0.003$ ) (Table 2).

- When the scores of the PSCSCN subscales were compared according to the hospital where the nurses were working, there was a significant difference between the scores they received from "professional satisfaction" ( $p=0.001$ ), "professional competence" ( $p=0.041$ ), "professional attitude and skill" ( $p=0.001$ ) subscales and "total score" ( $p=0.000$ ) (Table 2).

- When the scores of the PSCSCN subscales were compared according to the units of nurses, there was a statistically significant difference between they received from "professional satisfaction" ( $p=0.000$ ), "professional competence" ( $p=0.025$ ), "professional attitude and skill" ( $p=0.000$ ) subscales and "total score" ( $p=0.000$ ) (Table 2).

**Table 3: Comparison of Parental Participation Attitude Scale Mean Scores According to the Descriptive Characteristics of Nurses**

Descriptive Characteristics	Total Score Mean $\pm$ SD(min-max)	Descriptive Characteristics	Total Score Mean $\pm$ SD(min-max)
<b>Hospital</b>		<b>Pediatric unit</b>	
State hospital	76.04 $\pm$ 6.87(57-92)	Emergency	77.38 $\pm$ 9.75(57-90)
University hospital	85.12 $\pm$ 9.48(65-106)	Surgery	86.20 $\pm$ 4.49(80-91)
		Oncology	99.00 $\pm$ 5.65(89-100)
Test; p	<b>t:5.151; p:0.000**</b>	Clinic	78.20 $\pm$ 7.55(66-92)
<b>Marital statu</b>		Neonatal intensive care	77.68 $\pm$ 6.36 (62-89)
Evli	82.17 $\pm$ 9.61(57-106)	Pediatric intensive care	79.50 $\pm$ 2.88(76-83)
Bekar	77.57 $\pm$ 8.31(62-103)		<b>F:13.464; p:0.000*</b>
Test; p değeri	<b>t:2.308; p:0,014*</b>	Test; p	
		<b>Education</b>	
<b>Having a child</b>		High school	82.50 $\pm$ 4.22(77-90)
Yes	82.57 $\pm$ 10.36(57-106)	Two-year degree	78.25 $\pm$ 6.31(69-89)
No	78 $\pm$ 57 $\pm$ 8.15(62-103)	Univesity	80.47 $\pm$ 8.87(57-106)
Test; p	<b>t:3.084; p:0.003**</b>	Master degree	77.83 $\pm$ 13.43(62-101)
		Test; p	<b>F:3.060; p:0.033*</b>

F: ANOVA, t: Independent t test. \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There was a statistically significant difference between the total score and the educational status of the nurses ( $p=0.000$ ), their marital status ( $p=0.014$ ), having a child ( $p=0.003$ ), the hospital they work in ( $p=0.033$ ), the unit they work in ( $p=0.000$ ) (Tablo 3).

**Table 4: The Relationship Between Nurses' Age, Total, Working Years at Pediatric Units, Working Years as a Nurse and Total Scores From The Tools**

		Age		Working years as a nurse		Working years at pediatric units	
		<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses</b>	<b>Professional Satisfaction</b>	0.141**	0.159	0.187**	0,083	<b>0.292</b>	<b>0.006**</b>
	<b>Professional Competence</b>	0.531**	0.068	0.197**	0.068	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.022**</b>
	<b>Professional Attitude and Skills</b>	0.036**	0.738	0.102*	0.346	0.158	0.145
	<b>Total</b>	0.086*	0.429	0.197*	0,067	<b>0.247</b>	<b>0,021**</b>
<b>Parental Participation Attitude Scale</b>	<b>Total</b>	-	0.396	-	0.543	-	0.699
		0.092**		0.066**		0.042*	

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

When the relationship between PSCSCN and working year in their units were investigated; there was a positive correlation between occupational satisfaction ( $p=0.006$ ), occupational competence ( $p=0.022$ ) subscales and total score ( $p=0.021$ ) (Tablo 4).

**Table 5: The Relation of Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses with Parental Participation Attitude Scale**

<b>Professional Self-Concept Scale in Clinician Nurses</b>	<b>Parental Participation Attitude Scale</b>	<b>Total Score</b>
	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Professional Satisfaction</b>	<b>0.306</b>	<b>0.004**</b>
<b>Professional Competence</b>	<b>0.328</b>	<b>0.002**</b>
<b>Professional Attitude and Skills</b>	<b>0.374</b>	<b>0.000*</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.413</b>	<b>0.000*</b>

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

When the relationship between PSCSCN and its subscales were investigated; there was a positive correlation between the total score of the nurses from the PPAS and the PSCSCN professional satisfaction ( $p=0.004$ ), professional competence ( $p=0.002$ ), professional attitude and skill ( $p=0.000$ ) subscales and total score ( $p=0.000$ ) (Table 5).

#### 4. DISCUSSION

Parental participation is one of the nursing care initiatives within the family-centered care approach. However, it is not an approach that can be easily implemented in practice by the members of the health care team. It may adversely affect the acceptance of nurses' parental participation in clinics due to factors such as workload, deterioration of working conditions, lack of time, lack of information (Çavuşoğlu, 2018: 334; Özkan & Taş Arslan, 2017: 355). Although pediatric nurses know the contribution of parental participation to the care process, they are often unstable. The nurses included in this study were found to have an unstable attitude towards parental participation. Dur et al. (2016: 1) reported that nurses working in pediatric clinics have an unstable attitude towards parental attitudes in their study. Yayan et al. (2018: 179) in their study with pediatric nurses and students; it is reported that nurses have an unstable attitude towards parental participation.

It is thought that the most important factor in the instability of nurses is ethical and legal problems. It is predicted that instability is more intense in units where life-threatening practices such as pediatric intensive care, pediatric emergency, neonatal intensive care and child oncology are performed.

Other negative causes of nurses' view about parental participation are the nurses' unwillingness to share their roles with parents, their thought that parents will make mistakes during maintenance and parents do not want to participate in the care (Aykanat, 2014: 683; Boztepe & Çavuşoğlu, 2009: 11; Boztepe, 2009: 88; Coats et al., 2018 52; Stuart & Melling, 2015: 16) . Although care is the professional work of the nurse, the existence of parents is irrefutable. It is obvious that pediatric nurses will be able to manage the process more positively if they think that the parental participation will ease care by reducing the anxiety of the child and the family. It is known that specialization in care positively supports the professional self-concept of nurses. In this context, it is necessary to assume that every care activity that takes place with the parental participation increases the professional experience and reinforces the professional self-concept.

It is reported that the concept of nursing professionalism is determined in accordance with cognitive, attitude and psycho-motor factors. These factors affect education and are one of the most important steps of professionalization (Ghadirian et al., 2014: 1; Özkan & Taş Arslan, 2017: 355). Sabancıoğulları and Doğan (2014: 11) reported that the level of professional self-development of nurses working at a university hospital was moderate and positive. It was found that the professional self-concept and the attitudes of the nurses working at the university hospital attending the study were higher than the nurses working in the state hospital.

Alemdar et al. (2017: 11) and Okunola et al. (2017: 355) have similar results in their studies. It was determined that the professional self-concept was higher among the nurses with master's degree than the other nurses as expected. However, it was found that the nurses who had graduated from high school had the highest attitudes for parental participation. In contrast to the literature, it was thought that the results of this study were found to be effective in terms of work-centered work, work intensity, physical insufficiency of the work environment and attitudes of other team members. According to this result, no matter how much education level increases, it can be concluded that parental participation is greatly influenced by other factors.

It was found that the attitudes of the married and/or nurses who had a child towards parental participation and the professional self-concept were higher than the other nurses. That situation was thought to be related to empathy skills of nurses. It could be interpreted that the nurses who have a child can understand the feelings of the families more easily, they put themselves in their place and they support parental participation. Yayan et al. (2018: 179) conducted a study with 146 nurses and 187 nursing students working in pediatric clinics, it is also reported that the empathic tendency of both nurses and students increased as a result of increasing attitudes towards parental participation. Sabancıoğulları and Doğan (2014: 11) reported that the level of professional self-development of nurses who have been working for a long time and who are married is higher. Similarly, the professional self-concept of married nurses in this study was found higher and the professional self-concept developed as the service year increased in the service.

The prognosis of the child's disease and the way parents perceive the disease are two other important factors that determine the quality of parental participation. Parental participation in critical clinics such as pediatric intensive care, neonatal intensive care and child oncology can become a difficult process for both the nurse and the parent. Because the intensity, duration and side effects of the treatments applied can be a threat to the physical, mental and psychological integrity of the child and the family. It may mislead the negative attitude of the parental health team, or mislead a negative attitude at the moment of intensification, and may cause disruption of care (Arslan, Basbakkal, & Kantar, 2013: 1761; Köçkar & Gürol, 2013: 33). In a systematic review, Day et al. (2016) stated that although the cooperation with family in treatment and care is required, in the cases of child oncology, health professionals act according to their decisions. For this reason, family-based and atraumatic care is required to guide families by using nurse professional roles in child oncology services. Supporting the literature, in this study, it was found that the nurses working in the child oncology service had higher attitudes towards parental participation and the concept of professional self-concept than the nurses working in other units.

When the studies are examined, it was suggested that the parents can participate in the care of the child during nutrition, hygiene and painful procedures (Curley et al., 2012: 1133; Ullan et al., 2014: 273; Vasli & Salsali, 2014: 139). However, it was reported that parental participation is still difficult in cases where acutely happen as cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and team members have to work with precision (Curley et al., 2012: 1133). It is reported that the right to be excluded from care and care by the parents at the right time, should be under the control of the nurse as case manager. In families, children do not prefer to be with their children while emergency interventions. In such a case, a clinical counselor informs the family about the process and meets the expectations of the parents. Pediatric nurses are always more moderate to the participation of parents who are calm and have less anxiety, they don't think their participation is in their workload (Curley et al., 2012: 1133; Toronto & LaRocco, 2019: 32).

Curley et al. (2012: 1133) emphasized that the provision of parental participation is possible through the use of training manuals and trainings prepared for this purpose. So it is possible by with the professionalization of nurses. In this context, it was determined that the attitudes of the nurses



participating in this study towards parental participation increased as the level of professional satisfaction, professional competence, professional attitude and skills and professional self-concept increased.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The attitudes of nurses towards parental participation were influenced by the levels of professional self-concept. It was observed that nurses' professional self-concept were influenced by nurses' level of education, working year and the units they work in. For this reason, it is important that nurses working in pediatric clinics strengthen their professional self-confidence by increasing their individual coping powers and professional knowledge, attending seminar courses, workshops and therapy activities. In addition, it can be suggested pediatric nurses to enrich itself with activities such as effective communication, tactile touch, fairy tale, play, creative drama, humor therapy to communicate effectively with the child and parents and to manage the acute crisis situations. Thus, a nurse who recognizes and copes with her own feelings can think with a more suburistic and broader perspective.

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