

Original Article

Opinions of Nurses about Organ Donation and their Professional Values

Mukadder Mollaoglu, PhD

Professor, Internal Medicine Nursing, Department of Nursing, Faculty of Health Science, Sivas Cumhuriyet University, Sivas, Turkey

Safiye Yanmis, RN, MSN, PhD Student

Research Asisstant, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University, Faculty of Health Science, Department of Internal Medicine Nursing, Erzincan, Turkey

Correspondence: Safiye Yanmis, RN, MSN, PhD Student, Research Asisstant, Erzincan Binali Yıldırım University, Faculty of Health Science, Department of Internal Medicine Nursing, Erzincan, Turkey E-mail: safiyejanmis@hotmail.com

Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between the nurses' opinions about organ donation and their professional values.

Methods: This study has been conducted on 120 nurses working in the Internal, Surgical and Intensive Care Clinics of a university hospital. The study data were collected by sociodemographic characteristics form, the beliefs about organ donation questionnaire and the Nursing Professional Values Scale-Revised (NPVS-R). The data have been evaluated by using SPSS program (version:22.0) and percentage, arithmetic mean, Chi-Square, Student's t-test, one-way ANOVA analyses have been carried out.

Results: While 86.7% of the nurses stated that they wanted to donate their own organs, 94.7% said they wanted their relatives to donate their organs. The mean value of the nurses' professional values has been determined to be 95.10 ± 25.41 . The nurses wishing to donate organs have been found to have higher scores on the Professional Values Scale and the difference between the scores of the nurses not wishing to donate their organs has been determined to be statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Considering the relationship between organ donation and professional values based on some characteristics of nurses, female nurses have been determined to be more eager to donate their organs than male nurses ($p < 0.05$) and their professional values have been found to be statistically higher. And also, the opinions of the nurses with a university degree about organ donation are more likely to be positive compared to those not having a university degree ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Almost all of the nurses are aware of the importance of organ donation. The nurses with higher professional values are more likely to donate their organs.

Keywords: Organ donation, organ transplantation, nursing values, nursing.

Introduction

The number of patients waiting for organ transplants in the world and Turkey is increasing day by day. The most important problem with organ transplantation is the inadequacies in the number of donations (Kacaroglu et al., 2011; Yazici et al., 2015).

Organ donation is the use of autonomy of an individual to allow his/her tissues and organs to be used to restore the health of other patients after medical termination of their lives and to

express this willingness with documentation. According to the definition, the organ donation includes donation of one or more organs of living donors as well as organ donation from cadavers (Sanner et al., 2006; Balci, & Sahingoz, 2014).

Health workers have a key role in increasing the organ donation due to their close communication with patients and their relatives. In particular, nurses can identify and direct potential donors towards organ donation. For being an example, they can be donors themselves. It is possible to increase the activities in this area by training the

health staff about the approaches in organ donation and the factors that affect them (Aytas et al., 2011; McGlade, & Pierscionek, 2013; Cebeci et al., 2015; Tocher et al., 2019). Their thoughts and professional values are important for nurses to communicate the importance of organ donation to the society. The American Nurses Association (ANA) and International Council of Nurses (ICN) acknowledged that the core value is usefulness, stressing that the most important condition is the well-being of the healthy/sick individuals. Value includes all beliefs and opinions that constitute the moral standards of individual behavior. Value affects decision making, personalities and experiences of individuals, and has a critical importance in solving many problems (Goris et al., 2014).

Values help individuals to determine their purpose, direction, individual and social activities, help judge the behavior of other individuals, and help the individual to understand what to expect from others and what to expect from himself/herself (Deliktas et al., 2016). Nursing is a discipline in which values bring enrichment. Having professional values, help nurses to understand professional ethics principles and to plan the care in accordance with these principles (Sellman, 2011; Can & Acaroglu, 2015; Yazici Sorucuoglu & Guducu Tufekci, 2015). Professional values possessed by nurses guide their interaction with healthy individuals/patients, colleagues, other team members and the society, guide their decision making on value-added practices, and form the basis for nursing practice. In this case, nurses should lead the organ donation in the society, and take advantage of their professional values while advocating these behaviors and attitudes, explaining the justifications and making decisions against the ethical dilemmas (Acaroglu, 2014; Sahin Orak, & Ecevit Alpar, 2012; Vlaisavljević & Živanović, 2018; Tocher et al. 2019). In this context, it is necessary for nurses to acquire professional values as a behavior in order to be able to work for the benefit of the society and to increase the number of organ donations.

On the basis of the problem of the inadequate number of organ donations in the world and in Turkey, it is of critical importance to determine nurses' thoughts about organ donation, their professional values and the influencing factors.

The purpose of the study: In the light of this information, the study aimed to determine the relationship between professional values and thoughts of nurses about organ donation.

Methods

Design and Participants: This analytic and descriptive research was conducted to investigate the relationship between nurses' perceptions on organ donation and their professional values. The study population consisted of nurses working in the Internal, Surgical and Intensive Care Clinics of a university hospital in the Province of Samsun, Turkey. The sample consisted of 120 nurses who were over 18 years old and agreed to participate in the research. The research was conducted between February 1 and February 15, 2018.

Data Collection: The study data were collected by sociodemographic characteristics form, the beliefs about organ donation questionnaire, and the Nursing Professional Values Scale-Revised (NPVS-R).

Sociodemographic characteristics form include 17 questions such as age, gender, working clinic, education status, working time, knowledge about organ donation, willingness to donate organs and acceptance of organ donation.

The questionnaire for organ donation is composed of 20 statements, developed by the researchers in line with literature for the opinions of the nurses about organ donation (Ríos, et al. 2007; Flodén & Forsberg, 2009; Ozkan & Yilmaz, 2009; Aytas, et al. 2011; Sellman, 2011; Balci & Sahingoz, 2014, Yazici et al., 2015).

The Nursing Professional Values Scale-Revised (NPVS-R) was developed to determine the level of perception of professional values of nurses and nursing students in a five-point Likert type scale (1-not important, 2- somewhat important, 3-important, 4- very important, 5- extremely important), containing 26 items. The total score of the scale is obtained by adding the numerical values corresponding to the responses. There are no reverse-scored items in the scale. The scores taken in the scale are in the range of 26-130. The high score indicates that the alignment to the professional values is strong. NPVS-R does not contain sub-scales (Weis and Schank, 2009, Acaroglu, 2014). The validity and reliability study of NPVS-R was conducted by

Acaroglu in 2014 and the Cronbach's alpha value of the Turkish version has been found to be 0.96 (Acaroglu, 2014).

The questionnaire and NPVS-R used for data collection were handed out to nurses in each clinic and were filled in for a mean time of 10 minutes.

Ethical considerations: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. Prior to the study, necessary permissions were obtained from the Ethics Committee of Non-Interventional Clinical Investigations Ethics Committee (Decision date: 02.02.2018. Number: 15374210-757.01-E.2824). The scale used in the research was obtained via mail upon permission of Acaroglu. Nurses participating in the research were informed about the research and their verbal consent were obtained for participation. The nurses who agreed to participate in the study were informed that the personal information they gave are confidential in line with the confidentiality principle, they would never be disclosed to no one, and would not be shared.

Statistical analysis: Data were analyzed in the SPSS program (version: 22.0) and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods (mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum values, frequency and percentage), chi-square, t test in independent samples and one-way ANOVA. A level of significance of $p < 0.05$ was used to indicate statistical significance.

Results

Of the nurses participating in the study, 44.2% was working in internal services, 85% was female, 76.7% was married and 91.7% was living in urban areas. Of the participants, 79.2% had a Bachelor's degree, all have knowledge about organ donation, 86.7% was willing to donate his/her organs and 90.8% was open for accepting organ donation for himself/herself.

Of the participants, 94.2% stated to accept organ donations for his/her relatives. The average age of participants was 33.25 ± 6.15 , and the duration of working in the profession was 11.61 ± 6.90

(Table 1).

Statements agreed by participant mostly are as follows: "I believe that organ donation gives the opportunity to save many lives when a person dies." (100%), "I believe organ donation is a quite important issue." (99.2%), "I believe that donating my organs is hope for other bodies instead of being buried." (97.5%), "I believe it is necessary for me to donate my organs to be a conscious citizen." (97.5%), "I believe it is necessary to increase the number of organ donations." (97.5%) (Table 2).

There was no statistically significant difference between Professional Values scores in terms of nurses' units, marital status, place of residence, educational status, willingness to donate their own organs, and willingness to donate organs of relatives ($p > 0.05$). The Professional Values scores of nurses who were willing to donate organs were found to be higher than the nurses who did not want to donate organs, with a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$). The scores of female nurses in Professional Values Scales were found to be higher than the male nurses and the difference was statistically significant (Table 3).

Considering the relationship between organ donations and professional values in terms of gender, female nurses were found to be more eager to donate their organs than male nurses ($p < 0.05$). In addition, nurses who had Bachelor's degree were found to be more positive about organ donation than non-university graduates ($p < 0.05$) (Table 4).

The Professional Values score of the participants who agreed the 13th statement "I think organ donation is accepted from living donors and cadavers" was statistically higher ($p < 0.05$). According to all other items, the difference in Professional Values Score is statistically insignificant among those who agreed in the item and those who do not ($p > 0.05$) (Table 5).

Table 1. Distribution of Descriptive Characteristics of Participants (N=120)

Characteristics		n	%	
Working Unit	Intensive care	33	27.5	
	Internal service	53	44.2	
	Surgical service	34	28.3	
Gender	Female	102	85.0	
	Male	18	15.0	
Marital Status	Married	92	76.7	
	Single	28	23.3	
Residential place	Rural	10	8.3	
	Urban	110	91.7	
Educational Status	High School	11	9.2	
	Bachelor's degree	95	79.2	
	Master's degree	14	11.7	
Information About Organ Donation	Yes	120	100.0	
Willingness to Donate Organs	Yes	104	86.7	
	No	16	13.3	
Requesting Organ Donation for Himself/Herself	Yes	109	90.8	
	No	11	9.2	
Requesting Organ Donation for Relatives	Yes	113	94.2	
	No	7	5.8	
Characteristics	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD ^a
Age	20	45	33.25	6.15
Working Time in the Profession	1	34	11.61	6.90

^aStandart Deviation**Table 2. Distribution of Participants' Opinions about Organ Donation**

Expressions		n	%
I think organ donation is a quite important issue.	Agree	119	99.2
	Disagree	1	0.8
I think that organ donation gives the opportunity to save many lives when a person dies.	Agree	120	100
	Disagree	-	-
I think that donating my organs is hope for other bodies instead of being buried.	Agree	117	97.5
	Disagree	3	2.5
I think it's a good thing to donate my organs according to my religious belief.	Agree	109	90.8
	Disagree	11	9.2
I think it is necessary for me to donate my organs to be a conscious citizen.	Agree	117	97.5
	Disagree	3	2.5
I think it is necessary to popularize the organ donation.	Agree	117	97.5
	Disagree	3	2.5
I think that even in the case of brain death of an individual, the functioning of other organs makes the donation of organs a murder.	Agree	14	11.7
	Disagree	106	88.3
If I have the organ donation card is in my pocket, I think they will take my organs without consulting anyone if I die.	Agree	51	42.5
	Disagree	69	57.5

If I donate my organs, I think that my body will be buried without being washed and the respect I deserve, because of the stitches on my body.	Agree	7	5.8
	Disagree	113	94.2
I think that if my tissues match the individual who needs the organ donation, I will donate my organs regardless of the kinship.	Agree	105	87.5
	Disagree	15	12.5
I think only a doctor is consulted for donating my organs.	Agree	16	13.3
	Disagree	104	86.7
I think that the laws on organ donation in Turkey are not adequate.	Agree	70	58.3
	Disagree	50	41.7
I think organ donation was accepted from living donors and cadavers.	Agree	96	80.0
	Disagree	24	20.0
I think I cannot donate my organs if I have infections such as Hepatitis, HIV, etc.	Agree	87	72.5
	Disagree	33	27.5
I want to donate my organs, but I do not think I have adequate information about what to do in this regard.	Agree	36	30.0
	Disagree	84	70.0
When I donate my organs, I believe that my organs will be abused and given to the rich, not the one who needs.	Agree	18	15.0
	Disagree	102	85.0
I think I'm not eligible for organ donation because I'm old.	Agree	17	14.2
	Disagree	103	85.8
I consider participating and supporting social responsibility projects for organ donation.	Agree	90	75.0
	Disagree	30	25.0
I think, maybe today someone else needs organ donation, but in the future I or my close circle may wait for an organ donation.	Agree	111	92.5
	Disagree	9	7.5
I think that organ donation should be performed on anybody who needs an organ donation, without any distinction of religion, language, race, gender and ethnicity.	Agree	111	92.5
	Disagree	9	7.5

Table 3. Comparison of Professional Values Score Average according to Descriptive Characteristics of the Participants

Characteristics		n	Mean	SD	Statistical analysis
Working Unit	Intensive care	33	103.21	11.84	*F=2.804 p=0.065
	Internal service	53	100.51	13.23	
	Surgical service	34	95.82	13.66	
Gender	Female	102	100.72	12.43	**t=6.804 p=0.001
	Male	18	99.78	13.37	
Marital Status	Married	92	100.77	13.67	**t=1.278 p=0.204
	Single	28	97.14	11.23	
Residential place	Rural	10	101.10	12.12	**t=0.293 p=0.770
	Urban	110	99.82	13.33	
Educational Status	High School	11	99.27	13.73	*F=0.627 p=0.536
	Bachelor's degree	95	99.45	13.06	
	Master's degree	14	103.64	14.01	
Willingness to Donate his/her Organs	Yes	104	100.77	13.24	**t=8.193 p=0.001
	No	16	94.44	11.83	
Requesting Organ Donation for Himself/Herself	Yes	109	100.27	13.18	**t=0.891 p=0.375
	No	11	96.55	13.45	
Requesting Organ Donation for Relatives	Yes	113	99.83	13.25	**t=-0.310 p=0.757
	No	7	101.43	13.00	

*One Way ANOVA ** T-test for independent groups

Table 4. The Relationship between Participants' Gender, Educational Status and willingness to Donate their Organs

Characteristics		Willingness to Donate his/her Organs			Statistical analysis
		Yes	No	Total	
Gender	Female	76	5	81	***p=0.04
	Male	29	10	39	
	Total	105	15	120	
Educational Status	High School	12	7	20	****X²=14.555 p=0.001
	Bachelor's degree	82	5	87	
	Master's degree	13	1	13	
	Total	107	13	120	

*** Fisher's exact test **** Chi-Square Test

Table 5. Comparison of Professional Values Score Averages according to Participants' Opinions on Organ Donation

Expressions		Mean	SD ^a	Statistical analysis
I think organ donation is a quite important issue.	Agree	99.81	13.30	**t=-0.585 p=0.560
	Disagree	104.33	7.51	
I think that organ donation gives the opportunity to save many lives when a person dies.	Agree	100.06	13.35	**t=0.363 p=0.717
	Disagree	98.55	11.95	
I think that donating my organs is hope for other bodies instead of being buried.	Agree	100.32	13.21	**t=1.591 p=0.114
	Disagree	90.80	9.76	
I think it's a good thing to donate my organs according to my religious belief.	Agree	99.92	13.36	**t=-0.062 p=0.950
	Disagree	100.00	0.00	
I think it is necessary for me to donate my organs to be a conscious citizen.	Agree	94.71	10.06	**t=-1.583 p=0.116
	Disagree	100.61	13.43	
I think it is necessary to popularize the organ donation.	Agree	97.27	12.32	**t=-1.914 p=0.058
	Disagree	101.88	13.55	
I think that even in the case of brain death of an individual, the functioning of other organs makes the donation of organs a murder.	Agree	100.00	12.48	**t=0.015 p=0.988
	Disagree	99.92	13.28	
If I have the organ donation card is in my pocket, I think they will take my organs without consulting anyone if I die.	Agree	100.65	13.30	**t=1.598 p=0.113
	Disagree	94.87	11.58	
If I donate my organs, I think that my body will be buried without being washed and the respect I deserve, because of the stitches on my body.	Agree	99.31	12.99	**t=-0.199 p=0.843
	Disagree	100.02	13.28	
I think that if my tissues match the individual who needs the organ donation, I will donate my organs regardless of the kinship.	Agree	99.83	12.43	**t=-0.092 p=0.927
	Disagree	100.06	14.32	
I think only a doctor is consulted for donating my organs.	Agree	101.18	12.79	**t=2.110 p=0.037
	Disagree	94.92	13.83	
I think that the laws on organ donation in Turkey are not adequate.	Agree	100.59	13.98	**t=0.998 p=0.322
	Disagree	98.18	10.84	
I want to donate my organs, but I do not think I have adequate information about what to do in this regard.	Agree	100.67	11.90	**t=0.402 p=0.689
	Disagree	99.61	13.76	

When I donate my organs, I believe that my organs will be abused and given to the rich, not the one who needs.	Agree	101.00	11.28	** t=0.374 p=0.709
	Disagree	99.74	13.54	
I think I'm not eligible for organ donation because I'm old.	Agree	98.00	11.66	** t=-0.648 p=0.518
	Disagree	100.24	13.45	
I consider participating and supporting social responsibility projects for organ donation.	Agree	101.12	13.59	** t=1.737 p=0.085
	Disagree	96.33	11.36	
I think, maybe today someone else needs organ donation, but in the future I or my close circle may wait for an organ donation.	Agree	99.98	13.57	** t=0.271 p=0.791
	Disagree	99.22	7.46	
I think that organ donation should be performed on anybody who needs an organ donation, without any distinction of religion, language, race, gender and ethnicity.	Agree	99.71	13.50	** t=-0.916 p=0.379
	Disagree	102.56	8.49	

**T-test for independent groups ^aStandart Deviation

Discussion

In Turkey, where the number of patients waiting for organs is increasing day by day, it has become a necessity to make the society aware of organ transplantation and to work on this issue. Nurses play a key role in the work of increasing organ donations due to their communication with patients and their relatives, in other words with the community. It is important for nurses to utilize professional values in directing the community towards organ donation (Aytas et al. 2011; Acaroglu, 2014; Yazici et al. 2015). The study was conducted to investigate the relationship between nurses' perceptions on organ donation and their professional values. Of the nurses participating in the study, 86.7% wants to donate his/her organs. According to a study conducted in Spain with doctors, nurses, health workers and assistant staff in a hospital, 69% of participants has been willing to donate his/her organs. (Ríos et al., 2007). According to a study on intensive care nurses, it has been reported that nurses had positive attitudes on organ donation (Flodén & Forsberg, 2009). In a study conducted with nursing students, it has been found that 50.3% of the students plans to donate their organs (Yazici et al., 2015). In another study conducted on a group of nurses, it has been found that 42% of the participants planned to donate organs, 20% did not want to donate, and 38% had been undecided (Aytas et al., 2011). According to some examples in Turkey and the world, the idea of donating their organs in our sample was higher. This is believed to be due to differences in research methods because of the cultural characteristics of the studied places.

In our study, female nurses are more eager to donate their organs than male nurses ($p < 0.05$). A study conducted with nursing students has found that female nursing students significantly more likely to donate their organs than male nursing students (Yazici et al. 2015). In a study conducted with health workers, it was found that female gender has a more positive opinion on organ donation (Ríos et al. 2007). Our study is similar to the studies in the literature.

In our study, nurses who had Bachelor's degree were found to be more positive about organ donation than non-university graduates ($p < 0.05$). In a study on Swiss citizens and non-Swiss citizens, it has been stated that the increase in education level positively affected the willingness to donate organs (Weiss et al. 2014). It is also stated in the literature that having a low education level is also an effective obstacle to organ donation (Ozkan & Yilmaz, 2009, Yazici et al. 2015; O'Leary, 2018).

The average score in nurses' professional values scale was 95.10 ± 25.41 . The NPVS-R scores of nurses who were willing to donate organs were found to be higher than the nurses who did not want to donate organs, with a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$). Nurses need some grounding in defending their behavior and attitudes in their society, in explaining justifications, and in making decisions when confronted with ethical dilemmas. One of these foundations is professional values (Kaya et al. 2012, Can and Acaroglu, 2015, Deliktas et al. 2016; Chikema et al. 2019). Professional values are abstract and generalized behavioral principles, formed by strong emotional commitment of members of the profession,

which provide a basic standard in judging their actions and purposes, and these values are stated verbally in professional ethic codes. Therefore, it is important that the professional values of nurses are high at every stage of care given in the society (Kaya et al. 2012, Acaroglu, 2014, Can & Acaroglu, 2015, Deliktas et al. 2016). It is stated in the literature that professional values of nurses are related to numerous conditions (Milton, 2007; Weis & Schank, 2009, Kaya et al. 2012, Acaroglu, 2014, Goris et al. 2014, Can and Acaroglu, 2015, Deliktas et al., 2016; Poorchangizi et al., 2019). In our study, it was found that nurses who have higher professional values have a higher desire to donate organs. It is believed that nurses with high professional values, who are willing to donate organs, can play an important role in increasing the donation of organs by guiding the society in this direction.

In our study, the scores of female nurses in NPVS-R were found to be higher than the male nurses, with a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$). According to some studies, it was determined that male gender had lower professional values than female gender (Geckil et al. 2012, Goris et al. 2014). Our study result is in parallel with the literature.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It was determined that nurses have a higher average score of professional values, and that those who were willing to donate their organs had higher professional values than those who did not want to donate their organs. It was found that nurses' gender and education are associated with the desire to donate their organs and that there is a correlation between gender and their professional values. There is a relationship between nurses' beliefs about organ donation and their professional values. Therefore, the higher professional values will increase nurses' willingness to donate organs and thus will help guide the community about organ donation positively.

Considering this study, which was conducted to investigate the relationship between nurses' opinions organ donation and their professional values, it is of critical importance to have nurses, as health educator of the community, provide training and counseling to the community about organ donation, guide them in this direction and raise their awareness. The nurses can inform the community about the necessity of organ donation, increase their sensitivity on the issue

and thus increase the chance of organ transplantation by performing their training and counseling roles. Such studies can be repeated with larger samples of nursing students and nursing groups in different areas, in order to keep thoughts and values related to the subject alive

Study limitations and recommendations: Due to the hospital where the study was conducted was frequently used for scientific investigations, in the first weeks of the study, the nurses were reluctant to participate in the study. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies should be conducted in multiple hospital rather than in a single center.

Place: The research was carried out at the Chest Disease Service of Ondokuz Mayıs University Health Practice and Research Center in Samsun, Turkey. E-mail: hastane@omu.edu.tr

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