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Investigation of Self-Confidence, Academic Achievement, Intention to Leave School and Conflict Management Styles of Nursing Students

Hemşirelik Öğrencilerinin Özgüven, Akademik Başarı, Okuldan Ayrılma Niyeti ve Çatışma Yönetimi Stillerinin İncelenmesi

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between nursing students' self-confidence, academic achievement, intention to leave school and conflict management styles. Material and Method: This study was a descriptive correlational design with a convenience sample of 573 nursing students. Data were collected using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II), the Self-confidence Scale and the Personal Information Form. The descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis were performed for the data analysis. Results: Integrating style subdimension was found to have the highest score while dominating subdimension had the lowest score. 83.1% of the students did not think of leaving school. The study results suggested a positive correlation between self-confidence and integrating subdimension (r=.408, p=.000), obliging (r=.085, p=.042), dominating (r=.310, p=.000), and compromising (r=.344, p=.000) subdimensions. Conclusion: Nursing students' conflict management styles was related to self-confidence and academic achievement. Intention to leave school was not correlated with conflict management styles. Faculty managers should notice nursing students with low self-confidence and inadequate skills of conflict management and plan specifically designed initiatives for these students.

Keywords: *Academic Achievement, Conflict Management Styles, Intention to Leave School, Nursing Students, Self-Confidence*

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışmanın amacı, hemşirelik öğrencilerinin özgüven, akademik başarı, okuldan ayrılma niyeti ve çatışma yönetimi stilleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir. Materyal- Metod: Bu çalışma, 573 hemşirelik öğrencisiyle yapılarak tanımlayıcı korelasyonel tasarım kullanılmıştır. Veriler Rahim Örgütsel Çatışma Envanteri II (ROCI II), Özgüven Ölçeği ve Kişisel Bilgi Formu kullanılarak toplandı. Veri analizi için tanımlayıcı istatistikler, korelasyon analizi ve regresyon analizi yapıldı. Bulgular: Bütünleştirme tarzı alt boyutunun en yüksek puanı aldığı, hükmetme alt boyutunun ise en düşük puanı aldığı bulundu. Öğrencilerin %83,1'i okuldan ayrılmayı düşünmemiştir. Çalışma sonuçları, özgüven ile bütünleştirme alt boyutu (r=.408, p=.000), uyma (r=.085, p=.042), hükmetme (r=.310, p=.000) ve uzlaşma (r=.344, p=.000) alt boyutları arasında pozitif bir ilişki olduğunu göstermiştir. Sonuç: Hemşirelik öğrencilerinin çatışma yönetimi stilleri, özgüven ve akademik başarı ile ilişkilidir. Okuldan ayrılma niyeti, çatışma yönetimi stilleri ile ilişkili değildir. Fakülte yöneticileri, düşük özgüvene sahip ve çatışma yönetimi becerileri yetersiz olan hemşirelik öğrencilerine dikkat etmeli ve bu öğrenciler için özel olarak tasarlanmış girişimler planlamalıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Akademik Başarı, Çatışma Yönetimi Stilleri, Hemşirelik Öğrencileri, Okuldan Ayrılma Niyeti, Özgüven*

INTRODUCTION

Conflict refers to a complex process that might result in constructive and/or destructive consequences (1,2). Conflict consists of different thoughts, values and feelings among individuals or organizations (3,4). Conflicts may occur in all settings where individuals interact with each other (5,6) and therefore conflict in nursing schools is a natural and inevitable phenomenon (7,8).

As in all school settings, there is a conflict between school managers, faculty members and students in nursing schools (9). Conflicts between student-faculty members are of special importance because they have a significant impact on educational outcomes (8). It has been recently reported that the rate of nursing students having conflicts with their educators varies between 24% and 64% (10-12). Additionally, Kantek & Gezer stated that 35.42% of nursing students perceived themselves as competent in conflict management (11). It was also suggested that improving the conflict management skills of nursing students will certainly contribute to the formation of a positive school setting by reducing the negative consequences of conflicts (13). It would be reasonably suggested that it would enable nursing students to establish positive interpersonal correlations and demonstrate a better performance in health care settings in the future (14).

One of the most important factors in effective conflict management is the preference of the style used to resolve conflicts (4,13). There are different conflict management models but the most common model is considered to be the model developed by Rahim and Bonoma. According to this model, conflict management styles consist of two different dimensions, interest in self and interest in others. Within the scope of these two dimensions, conflict management styles are classified as "integrating or problem solving", "obliging", "dominating or competition ", "avoiding" and "compromising" (15).

Integrating style stands for a style in which both parties cooperate to achieve a common goal rather than their own, resulting in a win-win solution. Obliging style is a win-lose situation in which one party sacrifices their own demands while the other allows them to win. Dominating style offers a style in which the wishes and expectations of the other party are ignored and the dominant party acts coercively on the other party in order to fulfill their wishes. Moreover, in avoiding style, both parties are aware of the conflict but they are reluctant to recognize and resolve the conflict. Compromising style, on the other hand, involves moderate initiative and cooperation in which both parties waive their needs and demands (15).

Conflict management skills of nursing students have been discussed in a limited number of studies which rather offered definitive analyses (13). Therefore, many questions remain unanswered about the factors that influence nursing students' conflict management styles. It has been recently reported that there are studies investigating the correlation between conflict management styles of nursing students and response to microethical dilemmas as well as studies on psychological well-being (16). Nevertheless, the correlation between the conflict management style of nursing students and their academic achievement, intention to leave school and self-confidence levels has still remained unknown.

It is considered noteworthy that scrutinizing the factors that affect students' choice of conflict management style can ensure an effective management of conflicts (13,14). This literature review, accordingly, revealed a gap in the literature with regard to studies investigating the effects of self-confidence, academic achievement, and intention to leave school on conflict management styles of nursing students. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effects of self-confidence, academic achievement and intention to leave school on the conflict management style preferences of nursing students. It is suggested that the results of this particular study will provide insightful data for the field of nursing research and they will significantly contribute to faculty members and school managers in developing educational strategies to equip nursing students with the elementary skills to manage conflicts effectively.

MATERIAL and METHOD

Aim and Study Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of self-confidence, academic achievement and intention to leave school on nursing students' conflict management styles. This study was designed as a descriptive and correlational study. The study sought to answer following questions;

1. What is the most common conflict management style used by nursing students?
2. What are the levels of nursing students' self-confidence, academic achievement and intention to leave school?
3. What are the correlations between the conflict management styles of nursing students and their self-confidence, academic achievement, and intention to leave school?
4. What are the effects of related variables on conflict management styles?

Sample

The study was conducted in a state university in the southwest of Turkey with 573 nursing students in 2018-2019 academic year. It was noted that 78.7% of the students were female and the mean age was 20.71 ± 1.46 (min=18, max=28).

Instruments

The data were collected using the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II, The Self-confidence Scale and the Personal Information Form. Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory II (ROCI II) was developed by Rahim in order to determine how individuals cope with interpersonal conflicts, and its validity and reliability study was conducted by Yagcioglu [17]. The scale consists of 28 items and basically inquires conflict management styles in five sub-dimensions such as "integrating", "obliging", "dominating", "avoiding" and "compromising". ROCI II has three forms, A, B and C, and Form A explores which style is more frequently used in conflicts with superiors, Form B with subordinates and Form C with peers [18]. In this study, Form A was chosen by the researchers. Yagcioglu found the alpha value of .80 for Form A in his reliability study [17] and Kantek & Gezer found the alpha value as 0.71. In this study, the alpha value was reported to be 0.81. [11].

The Self-confidence Scale is a 33-item scale developed by Akin [19]. Each item is scored from 1 to 5 in this scale. The self-confidence score of the individual is obtained by dividing the total score by the number of items. Mean score below 2.5 obtained from the self-confidence scale indicates low confidence, between 2.5 and 3.5 signifies moderate confidence, and above 3.5 indicates a high level of confidence. Akin found that the alpha value was 0.83 for the whole scale in his reliability study, which was found to be 0.94 in this study.

The Personal Information Form consists of seven questions that inquire students' age, gender, marital status, academic year, employment status as a nurse, academic achievement average, and intention to leave school.

Data Collection

The researchers obtained an ethical board approval and written permission from the institution before collecting the study data. The data were collected in the classroom environment between March and May 2019. The students were informed about the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of the data. Data collection forms were handed out to students who attended school at the time of data collection and who volunteered to participate in the study. There was no time limitation for filling out the forms. A total of 700 data collection forms were distributed and 692 of the participants returned their forms. 573 data collection forms were included in the analysis because 119 forms contained missing data.

Data Analysis
The study data were analyzed with SPSS 24.0. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis and Cronbach alpha coefficient analysis. A significance level of 0.05 was taken as the criterion for the interpretation of the results.

Ethical Considerations
Ethical approval was obtained from Suleyman Demirel University Faculty of Medicine Clinical Research Ethics Committee (approval number: 16.01.2019/19). Additionally, written permissions were obtained from the institutions where the study was conducted, and informed consent was obtained from the participants. Participants were assured that all data would be kept confidential, and information was provided that only researchers would have access to the collected data.

RESULTS

Most of the 573 nursing students identified as female (n=451, 78.7 %), 99.5% (n=570) were single, 31.4% (n=180) of the participants were sophomores, 95.6% (n=548) of them were not working, 83.1% (n=476) did not think of leaving school and 72.4% (n=415) had high levels of self-confidence. Table 1 demonstrates conflict management styles, self-confidence and academic achievement scores of nursing students. It was reported that nursing students mainly preferred integrating (M=4.14, SD=49), compromising (M=4.03, SD=.48), obliging (M=3.71, SD =.48), avoiding (M=3.46, SD = .73), and dominating (M = 3.45, SD = .68) styles. The self-confidence score was 3.83 on average (SD =.58) and the academic achievement average score was 2.58 (SD=.40).

Table 1: Conflict Management Styles, Self-Confidence and Academic Achievement Scores

Conflict management styles	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Integrating	4.14	.49	3.00	5.00
Compromising	4.03	.48	2.83	5.00
Obliging	3.71	.48	2.60	4.80
Avoiding	3.46	.73	1.50	5.00
Dominating	3.45	.68	1.60	5.00
Self-confidence	3.83	.58	2.27	5.00
Academic achievement	2.58	.40	1.00	3.96

The correlation analysis was used to determine the correlations between conflict management styles, academic achievement, and intention to leave school (Table 2). It was noted that there was a medium positive correlation between self-confidence and integrating (r=.408, p=.000), dominating (r=.310, p=.000), and compromising (r=.344, p=.000) styles, as well as a weak positive correlation between self-confidence and obliging (r=.085, p=.042). In contrast, a weak negative correlation was found between self-confidence and the avoiding style (r=-.128, p=.002). It was further reported that there was a weak positive correlation with academic achievement and integrating style (r=.121, p=.004). It was concluded that intention to leave school was not correlated with conflict management styles (p>.05).

The effects of self-confidence and academic achievement on conflict management styles were analyzed with regression analysis (Table 3). The results suggested that self-confidence explained integrating style at a level of 16.6%, compromising style 11.8%, dominating style 9.6%, avoiding style 1.6% and obliging style 0.7%. It was further noted that academic achievement explained integrating style at a level of 1.5%.

Table 2: The Correlation Between Conflict Management Styles and Self-Confidence, Academic Achievement and Intention to Leave School

Conflict Management Styles	Self-confidence [1]		Academic achievement [1]		Intention to leave [2]	
	r	p	r	p	r	p
Integrating	.408	.000**	.121	.004**	.023	.575
Obliging	.085*	.042*	-.063	.134	.020	.639
Dominating	.310	.000**	-.059	.161	.013	.764
Compromising	.344	.000**	.078	.062	-.012	.782
Avoiding	-.128	.002**	.014	.732	-.035	.401

[1] Pearson correlation   [2] Spearman correlation
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Conflict Management Styles, Self-Confidence, and Academic Achievement

Conflict management styles	Self-confidence				
	β	t	p	R^2	Adj. R^2
Integrating	.347	10.678	.000	.166	.165
Obliging	.071	2.038	.042	.007	.005
Dominating	.367	7.802	.000	.096	.095
Compromising	.289	8.754	.000	.118	.117
Avoiding	-.160	-3.086	.002	.016	.015
	Academic achievement				
Integrating	.147	2.925	.004	.015	.013

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to investigate conflict management styles, self-confidence, academic achievement, and intention to leave school for nursing students and to correlate conflict management styles with those factors. The study results indicated that the most common conflict management strategy was integrating. Similarly, Kantek & Gezer   confirmed that the most common style was integrating style (19). On the contrary, the most common conflict management style was found to be collaborating style by Fakhry & El Hassan (20), avoiding style by Ren & Kim (16), compromising style by Krautscheid et al (21) . It has been recently reported that the nursing students' preferences of conflict management styles might depend on a variety of factors but these factors have not been comprehensively discussed so far (11,13). Therefore, it would be suggested to conduct further studies to provide a deeper insight into the nursing students' preferences of conflict management styles.

Self-confidence is one of the factors affecting the performance of nursing students (22-24). The study findings illustrated high levels of self-confidence, which was also confirmed by a study conducted by Kukulu et al. (24) . However, Eraydin & Karagozoğlu found moderate levels of self-confidence (25). It has additionally been reported that personal and parental characteristics as well as educational and social backgrounds had a significant impact on the self-confidence levels of students (26). It is suggested to conduct similar studies in future in various educational environments that may yield different results regarding self-confidence levels of students.

A major target in nursing education is to educate self-confident nurses (25). That the participant nursing students in our study had high levels of self-confidence could be interpreted as a positive outcome, which is considered to be of utmost significance to sustain such positive outcomes in future. School managers and faculty members are recommended to focus on what makes their institutions any different from other institutions to achieve better results. In addition, it is suggested to compare the characteristics of schools where students have high and low levels of self-confidence

in future in order to determine the factors that might have an impact on developing self-confidence. It will certainly make a significant contribution to enhancing the self-confidence of nursing students.

It was also noted that 4.2% of the nursing students had an intention to leave the school while 83.1% of the participants did not have such intentions, which indicates nursing students' lower levels of intention to leave school. The recent studies on intention to leave school have suggested contradictory results. Roso-Bas et al. carried out a study with 144 undergraduate nursing students at a university in Spain and found lower levels of intention to leave school (27). Van Hoek et al. reported that 63.7% of students never thought of leaving school (28). Moreover, Temel et al. noted that 10.6% of the students do not want to pursue a career in nursing (29). The intention to leave is crucial since it is a major precursor for the decision to leave (30). Thus, it would be instrumental for nursing education institutions to regularly monitor intention to leave schools of nursing students.

It was further concluded that the conflict management style preferences of nursing students were certainly associated with self-confidence while no study has particularly focused on the correlation between conflict management styles and self-confidence so far. However, Sanli Gunes and Akbaba found that there was a relationship between conflict management styles and self-esteem, which is closely related to self-confidence (31). Besides, Hisli Sahin et al. pointed out a correlation between how individuals see themselves, self-perception and conflict management styles, which comply with the results of our study (32). In light of these results, it can be argued that increasing students' self-confidence may potentially improve their preferences of conflict management styles.

It was also found that academic achievement also affects the conflict management styles of nursing students, particularly integrating style. Similarly, Ozdelikara et al. conducted a study with nursing students and reported that integrating and compromising strategies were especially influenced by the perception of academic achievement (33). Integrating style, also known as problem solving style, is characterized with a win-win situation (4). Therefore, it may be suggested that nursing students can manage conflicts more effectively when their academic achievement is improved.

This research has some limitations. Firstly, one limitation is that the data were collected through self-reporting, reflecting nursing students' personal statements about conflicts with their instructors. Additionally, since only one school and a limited number of students were included in the study, the research findings cannot be generalized.
This study was considered to contribute to the body of knowledge of nursing students' conflict management styles. It was eventually reported that nursing students mostly preferred integrating style and dominating style was found to be the least preferred conflict management style. The students had high levels of self-confidence and low levels of intention to leave school. Moreover, a positive correlation was noted between conflict management styles and self-confidence and academic achievement, but not with intention to leave school.

A lot of questions have remained unanswered about conflict management style preferences of nursing students. It is obvious that factors that influence style preferences should be better investigated so as to enable nursing students to develop effective skills of conflict management. It is definitely suggested to thoroughly explore the correlations between conflict styles of students, attitudes of tutors, and conflict management styles in future studies. Finally, repeating this study in different schools would be beneficial to confirm the obtained results and strengthen the evidence.

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