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The mediating role of professional values and self-efficacy in the relationship between organizational justice and quality of working life among nurses in southwestern Iran

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Abstract

Background An optimal quality of working life (QWL) is crucial for the preservation and maintenance of employees. Organizational justice, as a significant organizational factor, leads to the improvement and enhancement of QWL in organizations, promoting organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and ultimately increased productivity. A variable that can be influenced by organizational justice is self-efficacy, which strengthens the flexibility of nurses in challenging operating room environments. Professional values form the foundation of the nursing profession, enabling nurses to manage conflicts and prioritize actions. This study aimed to determine the relationship between organizational justice and QWL, emphasizing the mediating role of professional values and self-efficacy among operating room and anesthesia nurses.

Methods This cross-sectional study was conducted in the operating rooms of hospitals affiliated with Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Iran, including Namazi, Khalili, Shahid Faghihi, Shahid Rajaei, Shahid Chamran, and Amir al-Momenin (AS) in 2023–2024. Through quota sampling, 376 operating room and anesthesia nurses participated in this study. Data were collected in person using five questionnaires: demographic characteristics, organizational justice (Niehoff & Moorman), QWL (Walton), professional values (Schank & Weis), and job self-efficacy (Riggs). To perform structural equation modeling (SEM) considering the sample size, we used Smart PLS version 4, and to determine the role and strength of the mediating effects of professional values and self-efficacy, we utilized Sobel tests and the Variance Accounted For (VAF) statistic.

Results 376 operating room nursing and nurse anesthetists with a mean age of 33.92 ± 7.02 years and a mean work experience of 9.98 ± 7.76 years participated in this study; most of them were female, married, and held a bachelor's degree. The mean overall score for organizational justice among participants in the study was 43.53 ± 4.91 , indicating that 57.8% had a moderate level of organizational justice. The mean overall score of QWL was 79.90 ± 6.86 , showing that the QWL of operating room personnel was at a moderate level. Furthermore, the results showed that the mean score of professional nursing values for the participants in the study was 112.21 ± 6.87 , indicating that 98.7% of the operating room personnel had a high score in professional values. The mean self-efficacy score of the participants in

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of work life and ethical values was not validated, which is inconsistent with the results of the present study. Quality of work life is influenced by various factors, including working hours, lack of facilities, inadequate time off, management styles, insufficient opportunities for advancement, unfavorable working conditions, staff shortages, and income level [63].

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, SEM, contrary to the correlation test at the beginning, revealed that an increase in perceived organizational justice by participating nurses can increase their QWL. Considering the positive relationship between organizational justice, quality of work life, professional values, and self-efficacy, operating room officials and hospital managers, by understanding this relationship, can plan accordingly to enhance these concepts. This is especially important in sensitive environments such as the operating room, and it is essential to improve the conditions of personnel in these components by implementing strategies such as organizing periodic classes and workshops related to stress management, effective communication skills, and the development of professional ethics. It is also recommended that organizational justice should be regarded as a key factor in strengthening motivation and improving the quality of work life.

Implications of the findings

Implication of the findings in nursing management

Hospital and healthcare center managers can improve the quality of work life (QWL) and create a fairer, discrimination-free working environment in the operating room by enhancing the nurses' self-efficacy and showing greater respect for the professional values of nursing. Ultimately, this leads to improved productivity in healthcare facilities.

Implication of the findings in health promotion

The findings of this research can be used as a tool for promoting the public health of operating room personnel. Given the importance of the quality of work life and self-efficacy in improving mental and physical health, health promotion programs can focus on strengthening these factors.

Study limitations

In the present research, the limitations that may have impacted the results include the organizational culture and organizational structure of educational hospitals in Shiraz, as one of the largest cities and a major medical center in Iran, with its hospitals receiving a large number of visitors. This can lead to increased work shifts and dissatisfaction with personal and work life. Additionally,

these hospitals have specialized and super-specialized facilities and better financial and economic conditions compared to smaller cities and hospitals. Therefore, the results of this study are not generalizable to other cities and hospitals.

Suggestions for future research

It is suggested that future research should examine the role of mediating variables such as job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment in the relationship between organizational justice, QWL, professional values, and self-efficacy to gain a better understanding of the mechanisms connecting these variables. Additionally, similar studies should be conducted in other medical groups such as nurses, physicians, and support staff to identify and examine the differences and similarities among these groups. It is also suggested that future research should be conducted in different research environments with larger sample sizes, considering the role of economic and cultural factors.

Abbreviations

QWL	Quality of Working Life
VAF	Variance Accounted For
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling

Supplementary Information

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Supplementary Material 1

Supplementary Material 2

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Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection and analysis were performed by SA and ZM. The first draft of the manuscript was written by SA and all authors commented on the manuscript. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Declarations

Ethics approval and consent to participate

This study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. The protocol was approved by Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Committee on Ethics at Shiraz University of Medical Sciences (Ethics code: IR.SUMS.NUMIMG.REC.1402.025). All participants consented to participate in the study.