

Original Article

Relationship between moral values and administrative health: an organizational assessment

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Received: 27 Sep 2022

Accepted: 20 Dec 2022

Published: 31 Dec 2022

Abstract

Background: A human society with any culture needs to observe administrative health. In the health of organizations, addressing ethical values is a requirement. The purpose of this article was to investigate the effect of ethical values of the employees of Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Company on organizational factors related to administrative health.

Methods: This was with applied purpose and descriptive nature of the correlation type and structure of qualitative and quantitative study. The statistical population included all employees of Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Company (1050). The sample size calculation was based on Cochran's formula 290 which was selected by stratified random sampling method. To collect data, study literature and research background and questionnaire were prepared. The administrative health questionnaire included 4 dimensions and 10 questions. The Ethical Values Questionnaire includes 7 dimensions and 16 questions. Data analysis was performed by structural equation modelling with PLS software.

Results: At a significance level of less than 0.05, the variables of occupational health (P=0.341), transparency (P=0.332), internal control and supervision (P=0.337) and education (P=0.374) affected moral values. The model coefficient of determination value is 0.116, so it can be stated that about 12% of the changes in the dependent variable of occupational health are explained by ethical-religious values.

Conclusion: Ethics in organizations can lead to the promotion of health and administrative efficiency and the effectiveness of creating job satisfaction among employees. Occupational health affects moral values and improves occupational health.

Keywords: Ethics; Ethical, Institutional; Occupational Health; Organizations.

Cite this article as: Durrani M, Kamali MJ, Salari Y, Shokooh Z, Molaei H. Relationship between moral values and administrative health: an organizational assessment. *Soc Determinants Health*. 2022;8(1):1-10. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22037/sdh.v8i1.39570>

Introduction

One of the necessary factors for the development of any society is the existence of a healthy and dynamic organization that consists of creative and committed human resources. The role of ethics in performance and behavior is decisive and ethics is nowadays one of the

important topics (1). Various components play a role in designing an ethical model of administrative health. From religious point of view, administrative health and supervision and inspection are important (2). Article 28 of the Iranian policies of the Third Economic-Social and Cultural

Development Plan emphasizes the issue of reforming the administrative system and preventing and combating corruption (3).

Administrative health in Iran is very low compared to other countries in the region and East Asia. Without a healthy administrative system, achieving development in a country like Iran seems to be unlikely. All the mentioned cases indicate the necessity and importance of paying attention to administrative health (4). Based on the study conducted by Moghimi, there are eleven components to organizational health, one of which is ethics. Given the importance of universities in the comprehensive development of the country and the research gap regarding the valuable category of ethics as a variable affecting organizational health, no coherent research has addressed this issue (5). One of the problems of our religious society is administrative corruption and since the best treatment is preventive measures to solve this problem, Islamic solutions to prevent corruption should be identified and introduced (6).

Addressing ethics and ethical values is a requirement. If the spiritual connections of humans decrease, mistakes and errors will increase (7).

Ethics is defined as a set of principles, often as a charter used for guidance and direction. Professional ethics have a significant impact on the activities and results of the organization. Professional ethics increase productivity, improve communication and reduce risk. Ethical values determine the standards of good and bad behavior and decision-making (8). In our society, low attention to ethical values leads to reduced communication and increased damage in the organization (9). Ethics is a force that constantly controls human behavior, creates discipline and makes him or her a human being with high and heavenly characteristics (10). If ethics is expanded in society, the problems of society will be minimized, and if it is ignored, the destruction of humanity will be certain

(11). The importance of ethics has always attracted the attention of scientists, educators and managers of organizations and societies to strive to maintain and improve its level (12). Therefore, by reviewing the results of related studies, conducting the present study to examine the role of ethical-religious values on administrative health seems to be necessary.

Methods

To prepare the questions of the conceptual model, all articles that worked on ethical value and administrative health were collected by searching the databases of Scopus, WOS, Google scholar, PubMed, Embase, and both accepted and under-review articles from 1990 to 2021 were collected. All articles collected in the electronic search process were evaluated (the number of initial studies was 590 articles). After excluding 410 duplicate articles, 180 articles were reviewed in terms of title and abstract. Finally, 151 full texts of the article were reviewed and 43 articles were included in the study. However, to design the model, following the research guidelines documented in the background, the researcher decided to use a comprehensive approach in this research by collecting and studying a number of different theories and models of administrative health as well as ethical value and collecting different opinions and views of experts and specialists in this area, they developed the conceptual model of research and accordingly the research questions were asked.

The present study was applied research in terms of aim, correlational-descriptive in terms of nature, and survey in terms of method. First, the qualitative method of research was used in the form of the Delphi technique and the opinions of members of the expert group were obtained. Due to the lack of previous models regarding the administrative health model with regard to the ethical value in the Urban Water and Sewerage Organization of Kerman

Province, tested experimentally and accepted among researchers in this area, based on a qualitative approach and with the Delphi method, an initial conceptual model was first developed in this study to identify the dimensions and components of the research model. Then, using information related to the case and field-survey studies, the model designed from the Delphi method was tested and analyzed. In this study, two qualitative approaches (using the Delphi technique and obtaining the opinions of members of the expert group about each of the research variables and their dimensions and components) and a quantitative approach (using the survey research method and distributing questionnaires among sample members) were used.

It should be noted that in the quantitative section, the research questions were answered using the structural equation technique. The statistical population included all employees of the Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization, and according to the statistics and information of the General Recruitment Office, 1050 employees are working in this organization. The sample size was estimated at 290 people based on Cochran's formula. They were selected by using a stratified random sampling method. The information required for the present study was collected through library resources, documents and archives of administrative organizations, especially the Kerman Municipal Water and Sewerage Organization. To collect data, the research literature was reviewed and a research questionnaire was prepared.

In the current research, McCusker's Administrative Health Questionnaire (13) examines dimensions (work health, accountability, transparency, training, health culture, social responsibility, supervision and internal control) and includes 23 questions, and Lozier's Moral Value Questionnaire (14) which examines dimensions (respect, responsibility, justice

and fairness, commitment, participation, empathy, honesty) and includes 16 questions was used.

The Administrative Health Questionnaire includes 4 dimensions of occupational health, transparency, training and supervision and internal control and 10 questions. Religious Ethical Values Questionnaire includes 7 dimensions of commitment, participation, responsibility, respect, justice and fairness, empathy, and honesty and 16 questions, which are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from very low to very high. The face and content validities of the questions were confirmed based on the opinion of experts. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of variables was estimated to be higher than 0.7, which indicates the internal coordination of variables and confirmation of reliability. Data analysis was performed by structural equation modelling in PLS software.

Results

In this study (Table 1) frequency of males were the highest (84%). In terms of education level, the highest frequency belongs to people with a bachelor's degree (76%), followed by master's degree (20%). In terms of age, people between the ages of 40 and 49 with 36% have the highest frequency of the sample. The lowest frequency of the sample belongs to people under 30 years (11%). Regarding the

Table 1. Distribution of socio-demographic characteristics of the subjects

Variable	Grouping	Number	Percent
Gender	Female	34	16%
	Male	176	84%
Level of Education	Associate	9	4%
	Bachelor	159	76%
	Master	42	20%
Age (years)	Less than 30	24	11%
	30-39	50	24%
	40-49	75	36%
	50 and older	61	29%
marital status	Married	183	87%
	Single	27	13%

marital status, the results of show that married people have the highest frequency with 87%.

The Administrative Health Questionnaire includes 4 dimensions of occupational health, transparency, training and supervision and internal control and 10 questions. Religious Ethical Values Questionnaire includes 7 dimensions of commitment, participation, responsibility, respect, justice and fairness, empathy, and honesty and 16 questions, which are scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from very low to very high. The face and content validities of the questions were confirmed based on the opinion of experts.

The value of composite reliability for all research variables was more than 0.7 and it can be stated that they have acceptable reliability based on the structural reliability index. The value of average variance extracted for all research variables was more than 0.5, which can be accepted that the variables based on the average variance extracted index have acceptable convergence validity. All indices were in the desired range for the study model. Therefore, the fit of administrative health

model and the ethical value model to the collected data was confirmed.

In examining the model of work health agreement based on moral-religious values in urban water and Sewage Company of Kerman province, occupational health had an effect on ethical-religious values by 0.341 and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of occupational health. The model coefficient of determination value is 0.116, so it can be stated that about 12% of the changes in the dependent variable of occupational health are explained by ethical-religious values. Considering the probability value (P-value $0.000 < \alpha < 0.05$), it can be calculated that there is an occupational health covenant model based on ethical-religious values in the employees of Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization Figure 1.

The method of structural equations was used and the relationship between administrative health and ethical-religious values was investigated in this way. The results of PLS analysis are shown in the Table 2.

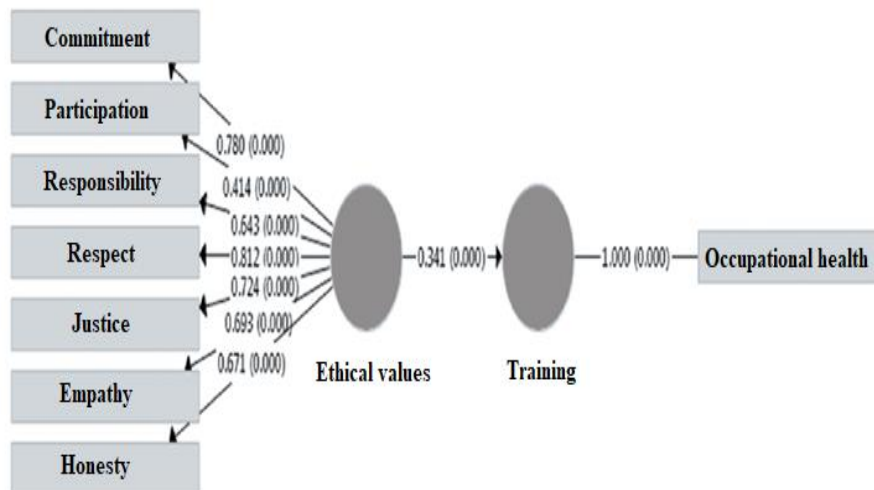


Figure 1. Path coefficients related to the relationship between occupational health and ethical-religious values

Table 2. Correlation values between work health and moral-religious values

Relationships	Parameter	Standard deviation	t	P Values
Ethical values → work health	0.341	0.051	6.68	0.000
Coefficient of determination of the model		0.116		

Table 3. Correlation values between transparency and moral-religious values

Relationships	Parameter	Standard deviation	t	P Values
Moral values → transparency	0.332	0.058	5.72	0.000
Coefficient of determination of the model		0.110		

The method of structural equations was used and the relationship between transparency and moral-religious values was investigated in this way. The results of the PLS analysis are shown in Table 3.

Transparency affects ethical-religious values by 0.332 and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of transparency. The model coefficient of determination value is 0.110, so it can be stated that about 11% of the changes in the transparency dependent variable are explained by ethical-religious values. Considering the probability value (P-value = 0.000 $\alpha < 0.05$), it can be stated that there

is a transparency covenant model based on ethical-religious values in the employees of Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization Figure 2.

The method of structural equations was used and the relationship between transparency and moral-religious values was investigated in this way. The results of the PLS analysis are shown in Table 4.

Internal control and supervision affect ethical-religious values by 0.337 and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of internal control and supervision. The coefficient of determination of model is 0.114, so it can

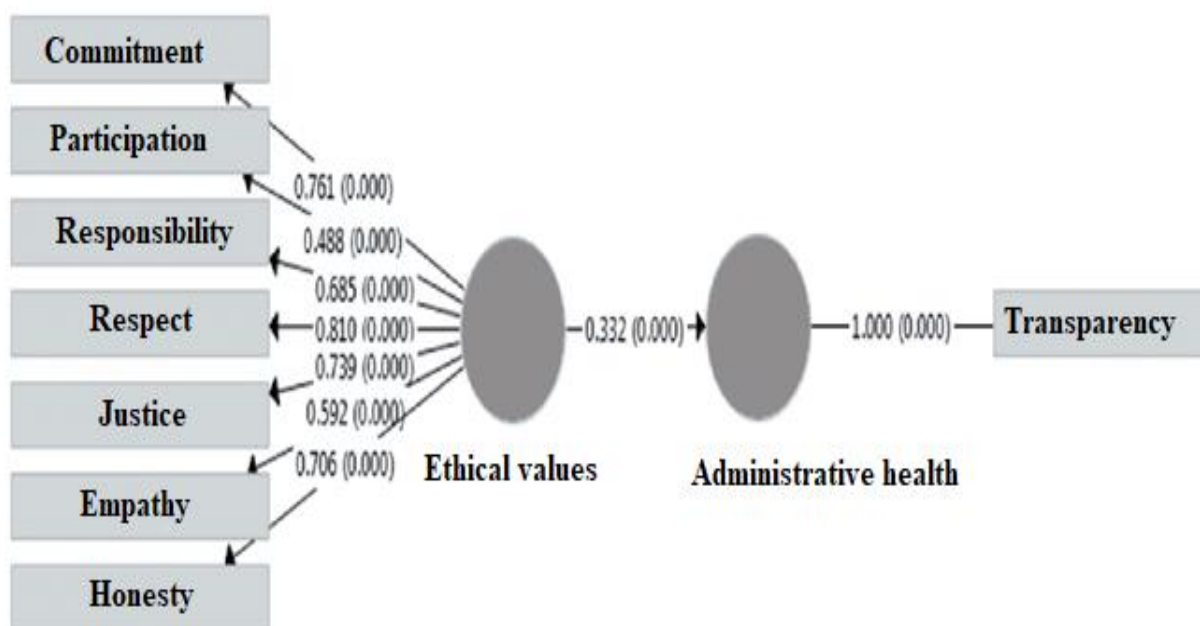


Figure 2. Path coefficients related to the relationship between transparency and ethical-religious values

Table 4. Correlation values between Ethical values and internal control and supervision

Relationships	Parameter	Standard deviation	t	P Values
Ethical values → internal control and supervision	0.337	0.056	5.96	0.000
Coefficient of determination of the model		0.114		

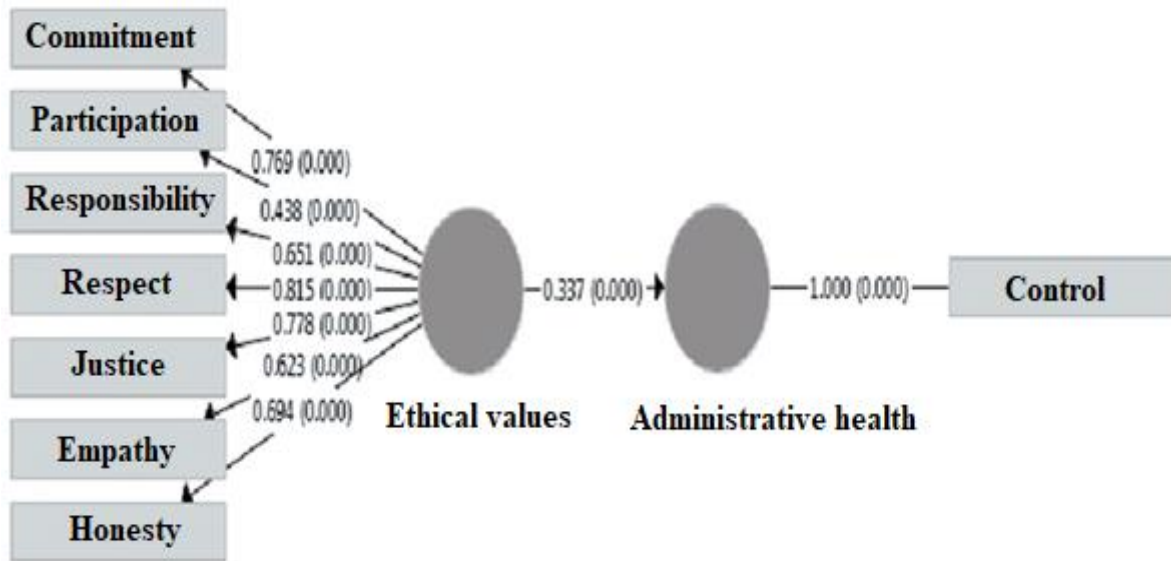


Figure 3. Path coefficients related to the relationship between internal control and supervision and ethical-religious values

be stated that about 11% of the changes in the dependent variable of internal control and supervision are explained by ethical-religious values. Considering the probability value ($\alpha = 0.05 = P\text{-value}$), it was concluded that there is an internal control and supervision covenant model based on ethical-religious values in Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization Figure 3.

The method of structural equations was used and the relationship between transparency and moral-religious values was investigated in this way. The results of the PLS analysis are shown in Table 5.

The effect of training on ethical-religious values is 0.374 and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of training. The model coefficient of determination value is 0.140, so can be stated that about 14% of the changes in the dependent variable of training are explained by ethical-religious values. According to the probability value ($P\text{-value} = 0.000 < \alpha 0.05$), it can be concluded that there is a training covenant model based on ethical-religious values in Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization Figure 4.

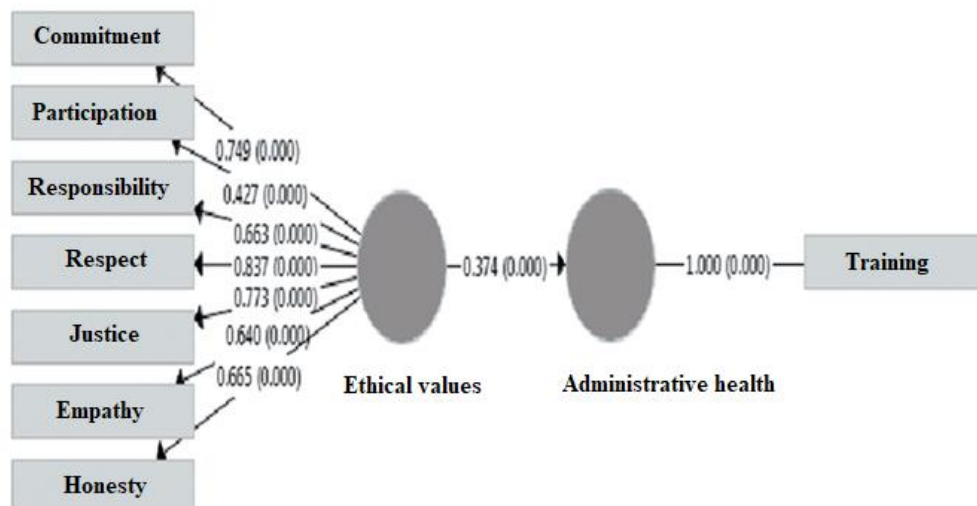


Figure 4. Path coefficients related to the relationship between training and ethical-religious values

Table 5. Correlation values between Moral values and education

Relationships	Parameter	Standard deviation	t	P Values
Moral values \rightarrow education	0.374	0.053	7.04	0.000
Coefficient of determination of the model		0.140		

Discussion

According to the research results, the relationship between moral values and administrative health is confirmed. In other words, moral values have a direct relationship with the investigated component in this model and lead to improvement in administrative health. On the other hand, the relationship between moral values and administrative health is confirmed and leads to improvement in administrative health.

Professional ethics not only affects the administrative health of the organization, but also changes the organization's thinking pattern. Administrative and organizational health has considerable advantages in the field of analyzing the effectiveness of the administrative system.

The results of the present study showed that occupational health affects ethical-religious values and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of occupational health. This finding is consistent with the results of studies conducted by Qhods (10), Al-Mashari et al. (15) and Ashraf & Kadir (16). Raabii & Bigdeli, stated that administrative corruption is a challenging problem in societies that preventive approaches are crucial in combating against it (17). Kamali in this study, culture including current values, cultural structure of the organization and culture of human resources are influential factors (18). Salehi Amiri & Shadalouii stated that the administrative system of the country, despite all the efforts made to reform it, still lacks the necessary efficiency and accountability. One of the main reasons is lack of paying attention to religious values and its fundamental role in the evolution and health of the administrative system.

The health of the administrative system is affected by ethical values in the organization and the growth of ethical values in organizations is influenced by ontological principles, value factors, and internal and external organizational factors (19). Organizational health is a situation in which all factors of the organization can meet the goals of the organization and can identify deviations from administrative and legal norms and barriers to organizational goals as soon as possible and take the necessary and timely measures to eliminate them. Administrative health can be considered as a positive outcome and corruption can be considered as a negative outcome. A little reflection on the Golden Rule and how it is applied in the professional process can illustrate the depth of the relationship between ethical value and administrative health (15).

At current, human society with any view, culture, structure and population needs to observe administrative health in it, and considering its completeness and comprehensiveness, it will meet the daily needs of human beings in the areas of organizational justice and the followers of the administrative health system in all human societies (16).

Also, results showed that transparency affects ethical-religious values, and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of transparency. This result is consistent with the results of studies conducted by Schilling (20) and Douglas et al. (21). Researchers believe that in light of ethics in organizational environments, many of the challenges are eliminated (22). Despite all the efforts made to reform it, the administrative system of Iran still lacks efficiency and necessary accountability. Therefore, the

implementation of three types of vision and belief reforms, internal reforms and external reforms is necessary (19).

The results of this study also showed that internal control and supervision affect ethical-religious values and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of internal control and supervision. This result is in line with the results of the research conducted by Nekles (12). Habibitabar, stated that administrative health is a crucial and necessary issue that has a ethical basis in the system of religious administrative ethics model, but several factors and components affect this ethical model. One of the most important components of this model is control and supervisor, but other factors require investigations (23).

The results also showed that training has an effect on ethical-religious values and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of training. This result is consistent with the results of studies conducted by Khaleghi (11) and Larens (22). Iranzadeh & Davoodi, argue that administrative health is a disability that is caused by various reasons and it is necessary to review several studies to find the majority of these causes (24).

Sheikhi, stated that ignoring public demands and corruption in the administrative system will threaten the legitimacy and efficiency of governments in the long term. Governments have taken many measures to reform and improve their administrative structures to be more efficient and accountable, and to reduce corruption. Some of these measures are transformation of the payment system, recruitment and employment, simplification of structures, transparency of tasks and authorities, downsizing and reducing the ownership of organizations, changes in the financial system, the use of regulatory mechanisms, performance appraisal, encouraging committed and hard-working employees and also appreciating and guiding them, training and

punishing different people. According to Sheikhi, several articles have been presented about the health of the administrative system in Iran, but less attention has been paid to the religious principles and sources and the solutions that Islam has provided on the health of administrative system (25). In fact, culture building is the only solution to this problem. Organizational injustice in some cases may occur at similar levels (26). Human resource training is one of the most important tasks that the organization should consider to increase administrative health. All government organizations in Iran have looked at this issue from one dimension and there is a unit called human resource training in these organizations, but the point that is sometimes overlooked is the effectiveness of the training (27). It is necessary to define appropriate and effective training packages for all levels and disciplines, and to continuously monitor the effectiveness of these training packages and, if necessary, to update these packages due to changes in existing technologies (28). Hence, it is better to define specific and quantitative goals in all parts of the organization based on upstream strategies and goals, and to determine operational plans based on them. By doing this, employees with more knowledge and understanding of the relationship between their tasks and overall goals can have more effort if there is commitment and work conscience (29).

Conclusion

Based on the results of the present study, it can be concluded that occupational health affects ethical values and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of occupational health. Also, transparency affects ethical values and increasing the score of ethical values increases the score of transparency. When ethical value is widely used among the employees of the organization and human resource management is done in accordance with ethical principles, the management will

improve and the success of the organization in general will increase. Also, ethics in organizations can lead to improved administrative health and efficiency and it increases the effectiveness of the organization. It also causes more job satisfaction among the employees. We hope that the esteemed officials of Kerman Urban Water and Sewerage Organization to pay attention to this important issue and make the necessary policies and plans to improve the current situation.

Recommendations

Since administrative health is an important issue, and it has not yet been thoroughly investigated, it is recommended that administrative health be further investigated and that the relationship between administrative health and ethical values be examined in other societies.

Acknowledgments

The authors of this study hereby appreciate all the colleagues in the research department of the Kerman Province Water and Sewerage Organization, who cooperated in the approval and implementation of this project. We also sincerely appreciate the esteemed reviewers and the relevant officials of the magazine their valuable suggestions, corrections and follow-ups.

Author's contribution

Masoumeh Durrani and Mohammad Jalal Kamali developed the study concept and design. Yaser Salari acquired the data. Zahra Shokooh and Hamidreza Molaei analyzed and interpreted the data, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the intellectual content, manuscript editing and read and approved the final manuscript.

Informed consent

Questionnaires were filled with the participants' satisfaction and written consent was obtained from the participants in this study.

Funding/financial support

There is no funding.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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