



## Survey of professional ethics observance degree among managers and staff of teaching hospitals of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Professional ethics is a very important issue for managers who are role models for students and staff. It can also be very effective in organizational activities. The main objective of this research is to describe the result of managers' self assessment in Shiraz teaching hospitals.

**Methods:** The present research is a cross-sectional study. The statistical society of this research includes all senior, middle and executive managers of Nemazi, Faghihi and Chamran hospitals. Regarding the small volume of statistical society and advice of a statistical counselor, the census method was used. The data were gathered using questionnaires.

**Results:** The result of this research showed that there was a significant association between managerial ethics and education levels but there wasn't a significant association between average score of managerial ethics and the field of study, sex and age. Also the mean for managerial ethics was the highest in Faghihi hospital.

**Discussion:** According to research findings and positive association between managerial ethics and education levels, observance of professional ethics is essential. So we can train managers to observe professional ethics more in their organizations in order to improve organizational efficacy.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Professional ethics, Teaching hospitals, Managers

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### Introduction

Great development and rapid changes in today organizations, growth of competition and complexity of office rules, have caused domination of strict rules in organizations and make managers to attend human resource (1).

Since human resource management is known as specialty, authorities are recommended to take into consideration the ethics and conscience. Ethics is essential for a wholesome and healthy society and because of its public, organizational and individual positive effects; it needs the attention of organization managers to try for its improvement. Another reason for its importance is that the public are very careful about public managers' behavior (2).

So, ethics is an important factor in the organization

success. Although people don't have a unique idea for its definition, all of them are searching for a similar success. Ethics always exists in public and individual lives. As public wisdom and human spirit is always engaged in ethics, this old subject appears as a new one. There is a question that what the scientific and religious ethics and its properties are.

Ethics has the concepts and values which are formed out of society and human being and has an external entity. Allameh Mohammad Taghi Ja'fari, defines ethics as a thing which brings superego in a worthy life. Ethics is highly recommended in an Islamic society and Prophet Mohammad has introduced his prophecy to complete ethics. In Islamic prospect, ethics is combination of values, beliefs, principles, dos and don'ts (3).

These values are defined as reliability, reverence, responsibility, justice, loyalty, public participation, courtesy and humanism (4). Imam Ali has also pointed to some beneficial and helpful managerial characteristics when encountering with subalterns, in his 18th letter to the Egypt governor. According to the above definitions, it's appropriate to be familiar with definition and benefits of professional ethics (5).

Bok believes that each society has its own values according to mutual relations, honesty and loyalty (6). Reliance on ethical principles help the managers to decide about what good or bad matters are, who goes to the right way and who doesn't. So managers can't decisively do their duties such as decision making, supervision, and etc, without an ethics system in the organization.

If there is ethics in work life, on the one side, working will be satisfactory and on the other side, job will improve.

In all, observance of professional ethics by managers in organization, especially in hospitals and clinics that have the most relationship with upset, stressful, depressed and unhappy people, has lots of positive effects such as:

- Enhancing productivity of managers and staff;
- Capacitating the organizations to conform to environmental changes;
- Enhancing organization's performance stability;
- Shaping more powerful work group;
- Improving managers and staff and
- Forming a positive image of the organization in public (7).

So, having managerial ethics has a significant impact on effectiveness of organizational and team performance and helps managers to solve organization's challenges and improve social relationship especially between health system managers, who have the responsibility of protecting public health.

Some of these challenges are: financial supply and management, human resource management, bad and weak management of technology in health department, low knowledge of managers and at last neglecting the customers (8).

As management is the science of managing and controlling an organization, managers should know that having good ethics has a significant role in administering the organizations, then we can see and attend matters that we couldn't before.

## Methods

This research is a descriptive - analytic and also a cross-sectional study which is done in 1387. Statistical society of this research includes all senior, middle and executive managers of Nemazi, Faghihi and Chamran

hospitals.

The reason of selecting these hospitals is that they are the biggest, oldest and the most famous hospital of Shiraz and Fars Province. They have the most patients and clients and also they include specialists of different groups, so observance of professional ethics in these hospitals has more significance. These specialists include the boss, manager, nursing manager, laboratory head, internal, surgical, cardiology, dermatology, and etc groups' managers.

Regarding to small volume of statistical society and advice of statistical counselor, census method was used.

Data have been gathered using a questionnaire which was made by the researcher. The questionnaires were completed by those people mentioned. The questionnaire had 2 parts: The first part included 4 questions about the demographic specifications of managers; the second part had 30 multiple choices questions about managers' moral characteristics on the base of Islamic narratives and especially the Nahjolbalagheh (The 18th letter of Imam Ali to the Egypt governor).

Above the questionnaire, it's explained that personal information is completely secret, names and families are not mentioned. People were asked to answer the questions honestly in order to use the collected information in educational programming to enhance managers' professional ethics level. Likert scale was used for grading.

Choices included (I don't know, weak, intermediate, high) and their grades were 0 to 3 respectively.

The minimum acquired grade was 0 and the maximum was 90. Then the average grade of each hospital was calculated distinctly and at last the overall mean of 3 hospitals were also computed.

For validity evaluation, panel expert method was used (5 members of scientific board of medical ethics, management and informing groups of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences).

For reliability evaluation, test - retest method was used.

The adjusted questionnaire was distributed among 20 members of the manager groups of Nemazi hospital, in 2 processes, in 10 days. The cronbach coefficient was evaluated using SPSS 14 software and this coefficient for the final questionnaire was %85. Then 320 questionnaires were distributed among the targeted group and 269 correctly completed questionnaires were collected.

For data processing, SPSS 14 software was used. Data were analyzed using T test and ANOVA test.

In this research, the relationship between professional ethics and managers' demographic information was clarified and was shown with descriptive and analytic

frequency tables for reporting the conclusions.

**Results**

The demographic information of the participants was as following: Among 269 participants, 243 were female %90.3 and 26 of the rest were male %9.7. Among 243 female, 198 (81.4%) were from medical and 45 (18.6%) from administrative and financial department. Among 26 men, 19 (73%) were from medical and 7 (27%) from administrative and financial department. Demographic information is depicted in the following tables.

**Table1.** Staff's professional ethics average scores in Nemazi, Faghihi and Chamran hospitals

Teaching hospitals	Minimum score	Maximum score	Average score	Standard Deviation SD
Nemazi	15	128	96.7	2.47
Faghihi	52	128	100.19	1.98
Chamran	11	128	99.22	2.3

According to average ethics scores, Faghihi hospital managers had the highest score 100.19 and Nemazi hospital managers had the lowest score 96.7. Chamran hospital score was 99.22.

**Table2.** The relationship between managers' professional ethics and age

Age	Professional ethics	n	Mean	SD	p
20-30		119	47.03	44.23	0.305
30-40		100	48.24	37.18	
40-50		50	52.61	18.59	

There wasn't significant relationship between average score of professional ethics of teaching hospital managers and age.

**Table3.** The relationship between managers' professional ethics and education levels

Education level	Professional ethics	n	Mean	SD	p
Diploma degree		11	27.58	6.44	0.001
Associate degree		89	31.75	2.39	
Bachelor of Science degree		22	38.73	5.79	
Master of science degree		132	57.62	1.75	
Medical doctor & higher degrees		11	44.57	5.98	

There was a significant relationship between professional ethics of teaching hospitals and education levels; this means that as managers' education levels increase, their professional ethics average grades

increase too.

In addition, there wasn't a significant relationship between managers' professional ethics of teaching hospitals and their sex and field of study.

**Discussion**

The average scores of managers in Nemazi, Faghihi and Chamran hospitals were 96.7, 100.19 and 99.22; out of the total score 105 respectively and they were evaluated as high scores. So professional ethics levels in training hospitals are high and it's satisfactory. Moayedfar (9), reached to the same result in 2006.

The results show that there is a significant relationship between managers' educational levels and professional ethics; this means that when managers' education level goes higher, their job ethics level does too. Moayedfar (9) and Nikbakht (10) had the same results too.

Education is one of the most important effective factors in job ethics. If manager's education is higher, his job ethics will be higher too.

Yet poor work ethics among staff with low education level is significant. This issue affects hospital performance. Professional ethics has many benefits for the organization.

So, professional ethics level should have gone higher by means of lectures, workshops, on the job training and etc, to make the performance more effective and attract the support of patients to hospital. As regards to high position of ethics in different parts, ethics development is essential.

In other way, this research showed there isn't a significant relationship between age and managerial ethics in hospitals, which is the same as other's results.

Also this research explains no significant relationship between sex and managerial ethics which is the same as Moayedfar (9) and Nikbakht (10) research results.

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