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Professional values and career choice of Turkish and United States nursing students

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Background & Aim: Professional values are abstract and general behavioral principles that provide basic standards to judge aims and actions, and these principles are formed by strong emotional loyalty of members of the profession. Research was conducted to compare the career choice and professional values of nursing students at two universities in the upper Midwest of the United States (USA) and in the middle of Turkey.

Materials & Methods: A descriptive and comparative design was used. The participants of the study were comprised of nursing students from a university in the upper Midwest of USA and a university in the middle of Turkey. The sample consisted of 728 students in all grades. Data was collected by The Nurses Professional Values Scale-Revised questionnaire and Vocational Choices in Entering Nursing Scale. Number, percentage distribution, mean, standard deviation, t test and, one-way variance analysis was used in the analysis of data.

Results: The students' mean age for American students was 24.3 ± 5.6 years, while the mean age for Turkish students was 19.8 ± 1.7 years. Mean score of American students on The Vocational Congruency (a sub-group of the Vocational Choices in Entering Nursing Scale) was 38.5 ± 5.9 and Turkish students was 29.6 ± 8.9 ($p < 0.05$). Mean score of American students on The Nurses Professional Values Scale Revised was 109.2 ± 12.3 and that of Turkish students was 101.6 ± 17.0 .

Conclusions: This study concluded that the majority of nursing students had high professional values, and when students' scores were compared, American students had higher professional values, and in career choice they considered primarily fitness of the profession to themselves and their goals while Turkish students primarily thought of their living conditions.