CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Summary and Major Findings

Chapter 1 outlined the background to the shortage of professional nurses, the background to job satisfaction among professional nurses, the factors affecting the increased job satisfaction of these nurses in public hospitals in southern Thailand, and their commitment to their respective organizations. It also included the statement of problem, the objective of the study and the theoretical framework as well. The purpose of this research was to examine the relationships between the Corporate Ethical Values, Perceived Organizational Support & Corporate Ethical Values, Job Satisfaction, Commitment between Nurses and their Organization, and Demographic Variables. The appropriate instrument was introduced as a tool for measuring the factors that lead to increased job satisfaction on the part of professional nurses and their commitment to their respective institutions. The pre-conceptual model and the statement of each hypothesis were addressed, there being 18 research hypotheses in all. The research questions and the relevant variables were developed.

Chapter 2 of this study reviewed and discussed previous studies relevant to this research. The literature review addressed the concept of the

factors such as corporate ethical values, perceived organizational support, and professional nurses' demographics and the influence they have on have on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Also presented was an extensive review and assessment of major effects on professional nurses' job satisfaction and on a high level of commitment in public hospitals in southern Thailand. From the literature review, a combination of factors was identified, from which the researcher developed the following model: The Corporate Ethical Values, Perceived Organizational Support & Corporate Ethical values, Job Satisfaction, Commitment between Nurses and Organization Model (CPJSCOM), which also included Demographic Variables. The CPJSCOM is designed to measure job satisfaction among professional nurses and their commitment to their hospitals, as well as the relationship of their professional demographics with these two factors.

Chapter 3 of this study presented the methodology used in this study. Together with the elements of the research instrument; population, sample plan, data collection, content validity and reliability. The results of the pilot study were presented. The data analyzing techniques used to obtain the results attached to the hypotheses were also presented.

Chapter 4 presented the results of the survey participants' demographic characteristics and the conclusions drawn concerning the hypotheses, as well the results. The major findings are discussed in the following sections.

Summary of Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to professional nurses who work in public hospitals in southern Thailand. Out of 600 questionnaires distributed, 516 were returned and 60 were not returned and 24 were returned incomplete. Therefore, 516 questionnaires were usable and included in the data analysis. The results of the descriptive statistics revealed that gender distribution was 516 female (100%), with the majority falling in the age range 31-40 and 41-50. As regards tenure, most of professional nurse's years to stay in hospitals were 11-20 years and 1-10 years. Most of the professional nurses' work experience was from 11-20 years and 1-10 years. Most of the respondents were married while the second largest group was single. The majority of the respondents had graduated with Bachelor of Science degrees in nursing). The respondents were professional nurses employed in public hospitals in southern Thailand, the majority of whom were working in Phangnga, with the second largest group in Phuket and the smallest group in Krabi. Most of the respondents earned an average income per month of 20,001 to 30,000 Baht.

Summary of the Hypotheses

The main objective of this study was to test whether a relationship exists between corporate ethical values and perceived organizational support on the one hand, and job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and

their respective organizations on the other. In order to test job satisfaction, a survey instrument developed by Seashore et al. (1982) was used.

Commitment between nurses and their respective organizations was measured, firstly by using a questionnaire developed by Mowday et al. (1979)to measure three elements of commitment, namely: (1) a strong belief in an acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization.

Affective commitment was measured using a questionnaire developed by Meyer et al. (1993) that was designed to measure employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization, Employees with strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so.

Corporate ethical values were evaluated using a questionnaire by Hunt et al. (1989) designed to measure three broad-based perceptions: (1) the extent to which employees perceived that manager are acting ethically in their organization, (2) the extent to which employees perceived that managers are concerned about issues of ethics in their organization, and (3) the extent to which employees perceived that ethical (unethical) behavior is rewarded (punished) in their organization.

Perceived organizational support was measured by a questionnaire designed by Eisenberger et al. (1986) to measure three components of well-being: (1) organizational rewards, (2) procedural justice, and (3) supervisor support. In identifying the existence of a positive relationship between

corporate ethical values, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and the commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment), the findings of this study support all the proposed hypotheses. Firstly, corporate ethical values were found to have a positive relationship with nurses' commitment and affective commitment and job satisfaction. Secondly, job satisfaction was found to have a positive relationship with organizational commitment and affective commitment between nurses and their respective organizations. Overall, according to the findings, professional nurses exhibit a high level of commitment to their respective organizations, especially when administrators are supportive of their job satisfaction and corporate ethical values. In addition, when professional nurses have a high level of commitment to their organization, it can help the hospitals by ensuring that they have a secure and stable workforce. The primary goal in understanding this relationship may lie in proving that the overall support by hospital administrators of professional nurses' job satisfaction and corporate ethical values leads to the nurses' intention to continue working in the hospitals, thus addressing the current nursing shortage in Thailand.

In this research, importance is attached to demographic variables, such as age, education, work experience, job tenure, marital status, income, and the specific location of the hospital. These were found to have a significant relationship with corporate ethical values, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment), and job satisfaction. It was found for instance that age and

location have a significant relationship with corporate ethical values, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment), and job satisfaction. In addition, age, education, work experience, job tenure, marital status, income, and location have a significant relationship with job satisfaction. Only education has a significant relationship with organizational commitment and job tenure, while work experience, marital status, and location have a significant relationship with affective commitment.

The result of this portion of the research supports the initial finding that corporate ethical values has a positive effect on perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. There is also a positive relationship between corporate ethical values, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment) and job satisfaction. Moreover, with professional nurses with different demographics, there is a significant relationship with their level of job satisfaction. Furthermore, corporate ethical values, job satisfaction, and professional nurses in difference demographic variable (age, education, job tenure, work experience, marital status, and area of city) have a significant relationship with commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both organizational commitment and affective commitment).

The most surprising finding of this research is that geographic location has a significant relationship with corporate ethical values, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both organizational commitment and affective commitment), and job satisfaction. This implies

that a future study of the cultural difference across the different area might be of value.

New Knowledge as a Response to the Research Questions, and Implications of Study

Initially, it is appropriate to summarize how the new knowledge that this research has created responds to the research questions that were defined earlier, which will then be explored further:

With regard to research question 1, there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and commitment to one's organization.

With regard to research question 2, there is a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and corporate ethical values and job satisfaction.

With regard to research question 3, there is a positive relationship between corporate ethical values, have an effect on commitment between nurses and their respective organization (both organizational commitment and affective commitment) and job satisfaction.

This research project is significant in that it is the first piece of research to propose a valid instrument to measure corporate ethical values, perceived organizational support, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment), job satisfaction, and demographic variables pertaining to professional nurses who working in public in southern Thailand. The results of this study explore

demographic variables in relation to professional nurses, and show that there is a significant relationship between corporate ethical values, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and affective commitment.

Academically, this study provides evidence that corporate ethical values as a variable have a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational and affective commitment. These factors can be used to model a forecasting tool and to predict job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both organizational commitment and affective commitment).

In practical terms, this study has presented recommendations that may improve professional nurses' job satisfaction and increase their commitment to their respective organizations, namely public hospitals in southern Thailand. These results have several managerial implications.

This study has identified the factors that affect the shortage of professional nurses in Thailand. When there are serious shortages of professional nurses in hospitals, it becomes increasingly important to understand the reason for such shortages. The current shortage appears to be multifaceted and influenced by factors associated with a lack of ethical values, job dissatisfaction, and differences in terms of demographics. There have ben a number of studies published concerning with the job satisfaction of nurses. For instance, Abualrub (2007) focuses on solving nursing shortages by improving nurses' feelings of satisfaction and increasing their commitment to their profession. The outcome of an ethical organization is job satisfaction (Price & Mueller, 1986). The study by Michalski (2005) found the high level

of professional nurses commitment will result in a secure and stable workforce in hospitals. Thus, the profiles of professional nurses will enable hospital administrators to enhance their well-being in terms of improving ethical values and overall job satisfaction.

With regard to research question 1, the results of this research reveal that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (organizational commitment and affective commitment). An important implication of this result is to provide additional support for these relationships, particularly in professional nurses who work in public hospitals in southern Thailand. In addition, the results of the research suggest that the ethical values of an organization are another important variable that directly affect the level of commitment to that organization

With regard to research question 2, the results reveal that when professional nurses perceive that the organization applies certain ethical values, it leads to overall job satisfaction on their part. An important implication of this result is that professional nurses instinctively perceive organizational support in the form of appreciation, inspiration, caring about their well-being, and pride in their employee. Thus, administrators in hospitals can improve organizational support in terms of encouraging managers to support overall satisfaction in such a way that can be appreciated by professional nurses by giving them inspiration, show that they care about their well-being, and take pride in their accomplishments at work. For the profession nurse, job satisfaction through managerial consideration is not only

an obvious "common sense" proposition, but inferentially, it is the best environment for all professional nurses in hospitals.

With regard to the research question 3, an important implication of this research is that professional nurses need overall job satisfaction and this leads to a high level of organizational and affective commitment to the hospitals in which they are employed. Ming-Tien and Chun-Chen (2008) found the hospitals can increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment by influencing an organization's ethical climate. There were many studies cited in the literature review found that job satisfaction has an influential effect on organizational commitment, leading to an increasingly high level of commitment in organizations (Abraham, 1998, Charles et al., 2008; Chou-Kang et al., 2005; Jeffrey & Rajan, 2005; Sinan et al., 2007; Wu &Norman, 2006; Yi-Jen, 2007). In turn, a high level of organizational commitment meant that professional nurses accepted the organization's goals and were consequently were willing to continue working for that organization. Thus, hospital administrators who want to support job satisfaction and ethical values in their nurses should take appropriate action in encouraging managers to take responsibility for communicating with and supporting their nursing staff. It is the managers' responsibility to practice ethical behavior in order to ensure the personal practice of moral behavior in others working in their hospitals. In addition, hospital administrators will support job satisfaction by taking into consideration what is best for all professional nurses in their hospitals. Thus, administrators will control factors involving ethical values and job satisfaction

to ensure a high level of commitment of professional nurses, thereby resulting in a secure and stable workforce in the hospitals under their care.

This study also suggests that hospital administrators support overall job satisfaction by supporting ethical values, by encouraging managers to act ethically, and by showing concern for issues pertaining to ethics in such a way that employee will perceive that concern. Moreover, hospital administrators should support an environment of fairness in terms of rewards and procedural justice in solving problems in the workplace.

Understanding professional nurses' demographic profiles may also help public hospitals in southern Thailand. There are significant difference in means of corporate ethical values, job satisfaction, and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both in terms of organizational commitment and affective commitment) when one factors in age, educational level, job tenure, work experience, marital status, income, and the local of the hospitals in which the nurses work. The findings suggest that only the demographic variables of age and the hospital's location demonstrate a significant relationship with corporate ethical values. For example, the respondents identified "differences in age" as the most importance factor in the perceived ethical values of their organization.

It follows from the above findings that all the demographic variables demonstrate a significant relationship with overall job satisfaction. For example, professional nurses relate the importance of "differences in age, educational background, marital status, job tenure, work experience, income,

and the hospital's" as the most important factors influencing their overall job satisfaction with the organization in which they are employed.

The findings also suggest that the demographic variables of age, educational level, and the hospital's location have a significant influence on organizational commitment. In addition, only the demographic variables of age, job tenure, work experience, and the hospital's location demonstrate a significant relationship with organizational commitment. For example, professional nurses rate "differences in age, level of education, and the hospital's location" as the most important factors contributing to organizational and affective commitment. Furthermore, where organizational commitment is encouraged, professional nurses will support the organization's goals. In addition, professional nurses rate "difference in age, job tenure, work experience, and the hospital's location" as the most important factors contributing to affective commitment. Consequently, where there is a high level of commitment to this in an organization, nurses will wish to continue working there.

As a result of these findings, the new knowledge created in this study can be formulated as the following set of propositions.

1. Professional nurses who perceived ethical supported by managers acting ethically in their organization that lead to professional nurses has high level job satisfaction and commitment to organization.

2. Professional nurses who are older

2.1 have a higher level of job satisfaction than their younger counterparts.

2.2 have a higher level of commitment to their respective organizations than their younger counterparts.

2.3 have strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organization's goals, a high level of commitment to and intention to continue working in their respective hospitals.

2.4 have a lower perception of ethical support by managers acting ethically in their organization, thereby leading to a low level of ethical behavior than younger nurses.

3. Professional nurses with a lower level of education

3.1 have greater job satisfaction than those with a higher level of education

3.2 have stronger belief in, and acceptance of, organizational goals and willingness to make a commitment to staying in their respective hospitals than those with a higher level of education.

4. Professional nurses with job tenure of

4.1 less than 1 year have higher overall job satisfaction than nurses who have longer job tenure.

4.2 more than 1 year lack overall job satisfaction.

4.3 more than 20 years have more organizational commitment than those with less than 20 years.

4.4 between 1-10 years seem to be most in need of additional affective commitment.

5. Professional nurses with work experience of

5.1 more than 20 years have more overall job satisfaction than their counterparts with less work experience

5.2 between 11-20 years seem to be most in need of additional overall job satisfaction.

5.3 over 20 years have greater affective commitment than their counterparts with less work experience

5.4 less than 1 years seem to be most in need of additional affective commitment.

6. In terms of marital status, professional nurses who are

    6.1 divorced/remarried

        6.1.1 have more job satisfaction than other groups of professional nurses.

        6.1.2 have greater affective commitment than other groups of professional nurses.

    6.2 single

are most in need of overall job satisfaction and affective commitment.

7. In relation to income, professional nurses who earn

    7.1 between 20,001 to 30,000 Bt are most in need of overall job satisfaction

8. Professional nurses who are based in

    8.1 Phangnga have a higher level of ethical values and affective commitment than those in other areas.

    8.2 Krabi have a higher level of overall job satisfaction and organizational commitment than those in other areas.

9. In terms of the size of the hospital, professional nurses who work in hospitals with 201-500 beds have a higher level of job satisfaction and commitment to their respective organizations than other groups.

In summary, the overall level of job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both in terms of organizational commitment and affective commitment) plays a vital part in the functioning of hospitals in the modern-day world. Given the shortage of professional nurses in today's hospitals, corporate ethical values, perceived organizational support, overall job satisfaction, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations, and demographics are factors that will determine whether a hospital retains its professional nurses or not. As long as overall ethical values, job satisfaction, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations, and their demographic profiles are taken into consideration, hospital administrators will see improved job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations by influencing its ethical values and by viewing their nursing staff according to the differences in their professional demographic profiles. As such, this study suggests that hospital executives can encourage their nurses' participation in the organization's ethical values and maintain satisfaction by promoting overall job satisfaction and maintaining a high level of commitment on the part of all their professional nurses.

Limitations of Study

This study has added to our knowledge by examining the relationship between job satisfaction, organization commitment and the various features of hospital organization such as ethical orientation. This has not been studied in Thailand or anywhere else as far as one can determine. Thus, there are several limitations to this study. In the first part of the study, the researcher focused on the factor of corporate ethical values and its effect on job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations, as well as the correlation with the demographics of professional nurses working in public hospitals in southern Thailand. One limitation, however, is that the researcher did not examine the level of job satisfaction and commitment of all public hospitals in Thailand, nor were other type of organizations investigated, such as private hospitals. Furthermore, the researcher did not examine other types of employees in public hospitals, such as doctors and technicians.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research project is significant in that it is the first piece of research of its kind to propose a valid instrument to measure corporate ethical values, perceived organizational support, commitment between nurses and their respective organizations (both in terms of organizational commitment and affective commitment), job satisfaction, and demographic variables with regard to professional nurses working in public hospitals in southern

Thailand. Future research may examine the effect of ethical values on job satisfaction and commitment between nurses and their respective organizations in different types of hospitals, such as private hospitals and also in different type of businesses. Moreover, for future research, more specific attributes can be added to the CPJSCOM model to make the questionnaire more focused and more applicable to other types of hospital and other businesses. There is also the potential for conducting a study that could look at the cultural differences across different areas to determine how they correlate with the demographic results of this study and to create further explanations for some of the researcher's findings.