



**Tehran University of Medical Sciences**

**School of Medicine**

**Title:**

**Explanation the code of ethical considerations in general dentistry ,  
designing and Psychometric Properties of instrument for assessing  
the Dental Practitioner's attitude towards ethical codes**

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**in**

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## **Explanation the code of ethical considerations in general dentistry, designing and Psychometric Properties of instrument for assessing the Dental Practitioner's attitude towards ethical codes**

**Background:** The dental profession has a special place of trust in the society. The dentists make a commitment that they will adhere to high ethical standards of conduct. The ethical principles arising from the contract between the dentists and patients. The good faith of the society depends on adherence of dentists to ethical principles during the all dental procedures. Ethical codes are a tool to help the dentist make better decisions in interacting with the patient, colleagues and members of the treatment team and it will be helpful and instructive for making moral decisions in moral dilemma. Different societies, according to their attitudes, have different approaches to professional ethics. A positive attitude of dentists towards the principles of professional ethics will help them to provide better services and will minimize ethical distress. Examining the ethical attitude and designing appropriate interventions requires the use of a valid tool. This study aimed to design and develop dental ethical codes for national implementation in Iran and then develop and examine the validity and reliability of a instrument to assess dentists' attitudes towards ethical codes.

**Materials and Methods:** In the present study that was designed as a sequential exploratory mixed method, the qualitative phase was followed by the quantitative phase. The qualitative part contained a qualitative content analysis with the directed approach. In this phase, Data were collected until saturation through 10 semi-structured face-to-face individual interviews and two expert panels with academic staffs from dental faculties in Tehran, Iran. Results of the qualitative phase were utilized to develop ethical codes in dentistry. The qualitative phase was conducted by item reduction and psychometric evaluation of the formulated instrument based on the COSMIN criteria. The psychometric steps were conducted included face validity, content validity, construct validity (exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis) and reliability (internal consistency, test-retest, and estimation of measurement error) and interpretation.

**Results:** In the qualitative phase, data analysis resulted in 20 primary codes in 16 categories. Finally items were classified into five principles and 10 codes. The principles included consideration of patients' interest as a priority, respect for human dignity and patient autonomy, confidentiality of patient information, the excellence of knowledge and skills, and building trust. Items pool contained 40 items made by these results. After assessing and confirming the face and content validity, the instrument contained 24 items. In the assessing initial reliability and item analysis the pilot study, 3 items were removed. Internal consistency was obtained using Cronbach's alpha for all 21 items was calculated as .899. Exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine the construct validity of the instrument. Finally, the instrument has designed with 18 items and three dimensions. These dimensions, which explained % 48 of

variance in constructing of ethical attitude of dentist included: maintain the standing of profession in relationships », "Providing dental services while maintaining trust in the profession", "Providing information for the benefit of the patient". The goodness of fit of the overall model was obtained by confirmatory factor analysis. Indexes were obtained and offer good evidences for confirming the overall model fit. The final reliability of the instrument was assessed by internal consistency and stability using Cronbach's alpha and Intra class correlation, that obtained as  $0.86$  and  $0.97$ . The results of psychometrics evaluation indicated that this instrument is desirable regarding validity, reliability and other characteristics of the measurement.

**Conclusion:** The ethical codes for Iranian dentists were drafted considering Islamic teachings and the prevailing culture. These codes can serve as a guide for professional practice of dentists. It seems that these sets can help us reach the standardized code. The Standardised Instrument Assessing Attitudes Among Dentists is designed based on the COSMIN criteria and cultural context of Iran. The appropriate Psychometric properties .It can be used to assess the ethical attitude of dentists and develop the educational programs.

**Keywords:** Codes of Ethics; Code of conduct; Ethics in Dentistry; attitude, questionnaire design