**Manuscript evaluation   
  
Title: Relationship between Autonomy and Moral Distress in Emergency Department’ Nurses.**

**Reviewer 1:**

General comments  
  
1. The issue addressed is very relevant to developing countries.

2. The information is not new. Earlier studies have proved the relationship (inverse) between the Professional Independence and Moral stress of Nurses in Intensive care wards.

3. An important omission is that the reasons or factors responsible for causing the moral stress and limited autonomy is not addressed/ or not analyzed.

Specific comments:

1. How were the samples/nurses selected using stratified sampling? What is the factor that stratifies the population?

2. In “Participants & setting” section it was mentioned that 9 were refused and 178 nurses considered. But in the results section – it was mentioned that “A total of 173 out of 187 distributed questionnaires were completed”. Which one is correct?

3. What’s the rationale for Table 2 & Table 3?

4. How did you interpret the following results? It is not appropriate to say only by descriptive statistics.

* 1. “The results show that male nurses' professional independence scores were higher than those of female nurses.”
  2. “The mean score of female nurses was higher in the intensity and frequency of moral distress.”

5. It would be good to perform some parametric/non-parametric test to evaluate the statistical significance within factors such as gender, age, experience and so on

6. Is this relationship between moral distress and autonomy controlled for the confounding factors?

7. It may be considered for acceptance after modifications (additional analysis)

**Reviewer 2:**

1. The paper is set in the Iranian context and there are a few papers delving into the same issue. The paper seems to be rather haphazard and the conclusions are not appropriate.

2. The issue is pertinent in understanding how limited autonomy for decision making among nurses in the emergency set-up can cause emotional turmoil in them. However, the methodology is not very robust and some conclusions have been made which do not directly stem from the results of the study.

3. Operational definitions or more explanation for the terms being studied is required.

4. The paper is methodologically and statistically not robust. Several grammatical errors also need to be corrected.

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