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Research Article

### EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS OF NURSING AND MIDWIFERY FACULTY IN CLINICAL ENVIRONMENT BEFORE AND AFTER HOLDING TRAINING WORKSHOP OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN ZABOL CITY, 2017

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**Abstract:**

**Introduction and Objective:** The topic of professional ethics has been considered in different countries and professional groups and different languages. It is necessary for the medical profession students to increase their skills in this area, while being aware of the principles of professional ethics. Therefore, the current research was conducted due to the importance of this issue and since no study has been conducted regarding nursing & midwifery faculty students' knowledge of the principles of professional ethics in Zabol.

**Materials & Methods:** This is a semi-experimental study conducted in in the form of group trail with pre-workshop and post-workshop method on Nursing and Midwifery Faculty students of Zabol University of Medical Sciences, with cooperation of professors of the Nursing and Midwifery students for four months. After coordinating with the education department and professors of the faculty and announcing the holding the workshop for each academic level, subjects received the training and film for 21 days from 8am to 12am in 20-subject groups and each group in two days for four hours in the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery. Data were analyzed by SPSS software.

**Results:** The results showed that out of 300 participants in the training workshop of professional ethics, majority of people (66%) were female, and 60% stated that they did not have information about training and guiding the patients, and after the workshop, 97% of them stated that patient training is one of the requirements for patient knowledge. Before the workshop, the students' knowledge of stating the professional errors report was 30%, while it as 100% after the workshop. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between the variables of academic semester and ethnicity and the mean score of knowledge of professional ethics.

**Conclusion:** The findings of the research indicate that it is necessary to increase the training courses of the professional ethics for all students of different medical sciences. Therefore, observing the principles of professional ethics in students will result in providing desirable services and patients' satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Professional ethics, student, nursing, midwifery, training workshop, principles

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**INTRODUCTION:****Problem statement**

Higher education provides good conditions for ethical problems and ethics in all areas and activities of higher education are used as one of the main issues (1).

Professional ethics deals with ethical issues and questions as well as the ethical principles and values of a system and considers the voluntary actions of professionals within their own professional activities (2). The governance of professional ethics has many benefits to the organization from the internal dimension of aspects of improving relationships, promoting the atmosphere of understanding, and reducing conflicts, increasing the commitment and accountability of employees, and reducing the costs caused by control, and from the social responsibility perspective, it affects the profitability and improving the competitive advantage and organizational success through increasing the legitimacy of the organization and its actions (3). Promotion of professional ethics at the university depends on the human perception of the organizational culture of the university (4).

The effective promotion of ethics at university, as with any other organization, depends on three major steps. First, knowledge of professional ethics focuses on the specialized fields of the organization. Second, the internal orientation and self-motivation of the organization, its managers and its human resources are to achieve ethical values in the organization. The third step is the organization's skill in implementing ethical principles. In the third step, the process, methods, and techniques for promoting ethics in an organizational culture (such as behavioral communication skills, and the skills to identify and resolve ethical issues, especially the ability to deal with moral conflicts) are discussed (5). With regard to ethical code of nurses and in an Interpretative Statement in 2015, the American Nursing Association hopes that the nature of professional ethics to be institutionalized in nursing training (6), since ethics training for nursing students guides them toward providing better care when faced with ethical challenges. Although many studies have shown significant role of educators in promoting this issue, less attention nowadays is paid to this role (7). Wehwein believed that ethics training is effective in promoting student knowledge of ethical issues and using them in the workplace. In addition, the ability to make ethical decisions in students who have completed the ethics course is greater than those who have not completed this course (8).

Many studies have supported this theory that creative training during student life plays an important role in acquiring skills to deal with ethical problems, having an active role in decision making, and gaining professional identity (9). Therefore, this study was conducted given the importance of this issue and no study has been conducted regarding Nursing & Midwifery Faculty students' knowledge of principles of professional ethics in Zabol.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

This study was a quasi-experimental study in the form of group trial with pre-workshop and post-workshop method on all students of Nursing & Midwifery Faculty of Zabol University of Medical Sciences and with the cooperation of the professors of the Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery since 2017/6/22 to 2017/10/22. After coordinating with the education department and professors of the faculty and announcing the holding the workshop for each academic level, subjects received the training and film for 21 days from 8am to 12am in 20-subject groups and each group in two days for four hours in the Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery.

The inclusion criteria of research were 3th and high semester students studying at the bachelor level of nursing and midwifery and entering to internship course. Exclusion criteria of research included transfer of students to other medical universities of Iran. The first and second semester nursing & midwifery students were excluded from the research population due to their non-attending in the clinical environment. The data collection tool was a researcher-developed questionnaire, which the considered cases were extracted by review of the relevant articles. The data collection tool was a two-part questionnaire: the first part included the personal information with 6 questions (age, gender, field of study, academic level, GPA, and interest in the field of study) and the second part included 48 questions with yes or no answers, assessing the knowledge level of the students. With regard to determining the validity and reliability of professional ethics questionnaire, the content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by five faculty members of the Faculty of Nursing & Midwifery and the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed 78% using Cronbach's alpha.

**RESULTS:**

The results showed that out of the 300 participants in the professional ethics workshop, the majority of people (66%) were female. The majority (75%) of them aged between 19 and 23 years, and 100% of the research subjects stated that they had not participated

in professional ethics training workshops. The results also showed that students' knowledge of their rights was 58% before workshop, while it was 98% after workshop. In addition, their knowledge of the patient rights charter was 40% before the workshop and 100% after the workshop. In addition, 98% of them stated that the name and characteristics of the student are known to patients. In addition, 60% of them stated that they did not have information on the way of training and guiding the patients, and after the workshop, 97% of them stated that patient training is one of the requirements for increasing the patient knowledge. Before the workshop, the students' knowledge of stating the professional errors report was 30%, while it was 100% after the workshop. Seventy and five percentage of the students stated that they had complete sense of responsibility and care of the patient in the department and 85% of the students have knowledge on confidentiality of the patient information and the work environment, and

after the workshop 97% of them stated that they had information on the confidentiality rules in the workplace and the patient.

In terms of training the patient during the hospitalization and discharge time before the workshop was 30%, while it was 92% after the workshop, and 75% of the students stated that they did not explain the goal of the work therapy or care before the workshop, and after the workshop, this reached to 96%. Eighty percentages of them stated that respect for patient was an important point in establishing a good relationship and mutual trust. The results showed that there is no significant relationship between the variables of academic semester and ethnicity and mean score of knowledge of professional ethics. Observing ethical codes among the students was significantly observed after the workshop.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of the scores of knowledge before and after training and retest (One month after training workshop)**

stage	Knowledge level	p-value
	Mean± SD	
Pre-test	21 ± 3.11	0.02
Immediately after training workshop	4.27± 41	
One month after training workshop	4.84 ±45.5	

As seen, mean scores before training, after training, and one month after training were 45.5 and has difference with ANOVA test ( $p = 0.02$ ).

**Table 2: Level of satisfaction of the participants in the workshop based on the survey**

Satisfaction	n	%
Very good	285	95
Good	15	5
Average	-	-
Bad	-	-
Total	300	100

The table above shows that 95% of the participants were very satisfied with training workshop of the professional ethics.

One month after the completion of the training workshop, the results showed that 75% of the students had desirable performance and 25% of them had a moderate performance in observing the professional ethics.

**DISCUSSION:**

In the current research, 85% of the students stated that they had knowledge of the confidentiality of patient information and the work environment. In the study conducted by Jahanpour *et al.*, results of the study showed that students' knowledge on the confidentiality of patient information by a health professional, if patient requested, was very high. This study was consistent with the present study (10). In the present study, 60% of the students stated that they had knowledge on the way of educating the patient, which it increased to 97%. In a study carried out by Veskoï Eshkevari *et al.*, results showed that appropriate information is not provided about the disease and caring methods in 52.7% of cases, and the patients' privacy (45%) and the independence of patients (64%) are not observed in the cares (11). The results of this study are in line with results of before the workshop. This suggests that nursing professors have more emphasis on training topics of nursing in order to empower students. Lack of receiving the trainings and adequate information is complaints, which are repeatedly discussed by clients in legal communities (12). In the present study, 80% of students stated that respect for the client is an important point in establishing the communication and mutual trust. In addition, in their ethical codes, Nursing & Midwifery Council of the United Kingdom has stated its behavior, performance, and ethics standards for nursing and midwifery groups. Accordingly, the first point that nurse or midwife should focus on caring the people and respecting to dignity of the people, providing required support in providing care for them, is cooperating with their colleagues (teamwork), the patient's family, and other community members for health and welfare of the people, providing the best care standards, being kind and honest and acting honestly and in according to laws of Iran (13). Respecting people, obtaining the consent, assisting and cooperating with them, confidentiality in preserving their information, obtaining the knowledge and skills required, reliability, identifying, and reducing the potential risks are the general principles that a nurse or midwife should consider them in dealing with patient or other clients (14). The ethical codes of the midwifery profession emphasize that the midwife's behavior in relation to the client and providing service to him should be along with kindness in behavior and words and consider social, cultural, and social beliefs (15). The results of the present study indicated significant increase with regard to professional ethics of the students after the workshop.

In the study conducted by Hadi Jafari, the importance of training ethics and its positive impact on

increasing the ethical judgment of nursing students was examined (16) and its results showed that the mean score of nursing professional ethics was higher in those who had completed special course in ethics compared to those, who did not complete any course. Felton believes that by completing targeted ethics training, students' ability in ethical positions increases (17). In the present study, the knowledge of the students before the workshop was 51.8%. In the study conducted by Masoumi, the mean score of students in observing professional ethics codes in the area paying attention to their rights was 89.4. In the present findings, there is no significant relationship between the variables of the academic semester and the mean score of the knowledge of professional ethics.

In the study conducted by Masoumi, results showed that there is a significant relationship between the variables of academic semester and ethnicity and mean score of observing the ethical codes, which is not consistent with the present study (20). In the present study, 75% of students stated that they had complete sense of responsibility and care of the patient in the ward. In the study conducted by Masoumi, the mean score of observing the ethical codes related to the scope of professional obligations (86.7%) ranked second. This might be explained by importance of the provision of midwifery services by training authorities in the internship environment, which is consistent with our study.

In our study, ethical codes (88%) were observed significantly among the students after the workshop. In the study conducted by Masoumi, there was no meaningful relationship between completing the ethics course and level of observing ethical codes (200).

**CONCLUSION:**

Findings of the study indicate the need to increase the professional ethics training courses for all students of different medical sciences.

Improving professional ethics training in nursing and midwifery faculties can play a major role in increasing the level of knowledge of professional ethics and observing the patients' rights. Moreover, the institutionalization of ethical training in medical science faculties requires transformation and it may be necessary to review the ethics curriculum, which is under the responsibility of the university directors. Professional ethics in a strategic attitude is at the individual level is the responsibility of the individual towards himself, his colleagues, and the organization, which plays a vital role in guiding the individual in order to achieve the determined position and goal of the organization. Therefore, observing the principles

of professional ethics in students will result in providing services satisfied by patients.

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