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Hospital's ethical climate and nurse's desired ethical climate in Ali-ebn-Abitaleb and Khatam-al-Anbia hospital of Zahedan (2015)

Mojgan Jahantigh¹, Azizollah Arbabisarjou¹, Sadegh Zare^{2*}, Mahnaz Shahrakipour³ and Gholamreza Ghoreishinia²

¹Pregnancy Health Research Center, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences and Health Services, Zahedan, Iran

²Student Scientific Research Center, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences, Zahedan, Iran

³Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, School of Health, Pregnancy Health Research Center, Zahedan University of Medical Sciences, Zahedan, Iran

ABSTRACT

Someone who chooses nursing as a discipline should be aware that he/she may interface with ethical issues every moment. Ethical climate determines how much do the nurses must act according to ethical standards. So the main of this study is the hospital's ethical climate and nurse's desired ethical climate in Ali-ebn-Abitaleb and Khatam-al-Anbia hospital of Zahedan. This was a cross sectional study and 250 nurses were randomly selected. Data were collected through a questionnaire which included 2 parts. First part included demographic data and the second part included two questionnaires about nurse's perception about ethical climate and their desired ethical climate. Finally data were analyzed by SPSS v.19 through descriptive statistics, T-Test and ANOVA. Mean age of respondents was 30.18 ± 3.93 . 113 nurses were from Khatam-al-Anbia hospital and 138 were from Ali-ebn-Abitaleb. There was significant differences between mean score of nurses perception about ethical climate and their desired ethical climate ($p=0.02$). The ethical climate was proper in nurses viewpoint (mean score = 94.78 ± 15.35). The ethical climate was a satisfactory ethical climate in this study. But it was different with nurse's desired ethical climate. So then we suggest the authorities to keep this ethical climate and plan to make it better.

Key words: Ethical climate, desired ethical climate.

INTRODUCTION

Nurses are a huge group in hospitals and healthcare system which provide health care services to the society (1). Someone who chooses nursing should be aware that she/he may face ethical issues every moment. Ethical climate determines how much do the nurses must act according to ethical standards (2, 3). Nurses must pay attention to ethical principles because they are providing services to human being (4). Complex and confusing ethical matters came in result of health care system and technology progress (5). Ethical climate is a kind of workplace climate which determines policies for the organization and it can have ethical results (6). Ethical climate is considered as good intrapersonal relations, good relations in providing care to patient and good relation with patient's family in healthcare facilities (7). If nurses do not pay attention to the ethical principles major problems can happen in providing services to the patients. All nurses should be aware about this fact (8). Paying attention to ethical principles is much more important than the technical and scientific patient care principles (9). As Vinci states that: ethic is the infrastructure of rehabilitation activities (10). Finding the relationship between organizational ethical climate and staff's attitude and behaviors is one of the most important subjects in organizational studies. Staff who have positive attitude toward the ethical climate have a high rate of job satisfaction (11). The importance of ethical climate is mentioned in nursing texts so many times. Even the results of good or bad ethical climates are mentioned. Ethical climate can improve the rehabilitation environment and could affect the ethical behavior as an organizational variable. (12). As Olson says staff's perception about the ethical climate can affect their relation with colleagues,

physicians, authorities and patients (13). Sherey study's result had shown that good and satisfactory ethical climate can improve staff's ethical principles and could make progress in organizational commitment (14). Ethical climate can be evaluated by measuring the staff's perception about ethical climate, their decision makings in ethical matters and their corporation in solving ethical problems (15). Ethical climate could make a positive attitude for the staff and make them stay much longer in the system (9). Real ethical climate is the ethical climate which is inside the hospital and the ideal ethical climate is which staff like to be (16). Ethical climate is a multidimensional structure designed for recognizing the normative system, guiding to right decision making and right answers to ethical problems (4). Ethical climate identifies the common perceptions about methods, policies, and answers to problems in the organization (6 and 7). Schwepker believed that good and positive ethical climate can improve organizational commitment and job satisfaction in staff (17). Hart's study had shown that negative ethical climate could make nurses leave the job (10). Lack of nurses and leaving nursing are two problems in providing healthcare services (13). So we should prevent them by recognizing effective factors (16). When a system has a good ethical climate staff would try more to do their jobs in a good way (19, 18, and 15). Aryanejad's study results had shown there is a significant relationship between nurse's performance and the ethical climate (20). But this was a weak relationship. Ethical climate could increase organizational productivity and the quality of healthcare services this study aimed to investigate hospital's ethical climate and nurse's desired ethical climate in Ali-ebn-Abitaleb and Khatam-al-Anbia hospital of Zahedan. The results of this study could help to evaluate staff's attitude toward organization, and predict their reactions toward organizational commitment, job satisfaction and dysfunctional behaviors. These results can help authorities in changing and improving the ethical climate.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

This cross-sectional study was conducted in Zahedan in 2015. The respondents were all of the nurses working in medical, surgical, emergency, pediatrics and gynecology ward of Ali-ebn-Abitaleb and Khatam-al-Anbia hospital. It has chosen 250 nurses randomly. At first we checked the list of all these nurses in two hospitals who were able to took part in the study. Then we have chosen randomly one from each three nurses according to list. Nurses filled out the questionnaires in self-report method. Nurses who had at least one year of job experience in the hospital were able to participate in the study. Data were collected through a questionnaire which included 2 parts. First part belonged to demographic information (age, sex, job experience, workplace hospital, educational degree, taking part in ethics course). And the second part included 2 questionnaires about nurse's perception about ethical climate and their desired ethical climate. Olson's 26 item ethical climate questionnaire was used for ethical climate evaluation. This questionnaire was translated in Farsi by Mobasher et al. (2005). Its reliability was calculated 0.92 by Cronbach's alpha (21). This questionnaire was used in these five areas: colleagues (4 items), physicians (6 items), hospital (6 items), patients (4 items) and authorities (6 items). Perception of ethical climate was measured by a 5 point Likert scale (1-almost never, 2- rarely, 3- sometimes, 4- mostly, 5- almost always). According to this the maximum score was 130 and the minimum was 26. A score of 78 and higher was considered as a positive ethical climate and less than 78 score was considered as a negative ethical climate. Researchers went to these two hospitals in three work shifts (morning, afternoon, evening). After explaining the aims of the study for the subjects the questionnaire was given to them and after filling them they were returned to the researcher. Finally data were analyzed by SPSS v.19 through descriptive statistics, T-Test and ANOVA.

RESULTS

Participants were 190 females and 61 males. The mean age was 30.18 ± 3.93 . The participants were 113 from khatam-al-Anbia hospital and 138 were from Ali-ebn-Anitaleb. Independent T-test and ANOVA were used to analyze the demographic data. The results of this analyzing have shown in table 1.

There was not any significant relationship between demographic data with nurse's desired ethical climate ($p > 0.05$). Also there was not any significant relationship between job experience, educational degree and taking part in ethics course with ethical climate ($p > 0.05$). According to the results of this study only there was a significant relationship between age ($p = 0.04$) and workplace hospital ($p = 0.05$) and ethical climate. Educational hospitals of Zahedan University of Medical Sciences had a good and satisfactory ethical climate in nurse's viewpoint (mean score = 94.78 ± 15.35). The results of hospitals ethical climate questionnaire and desired ethical climate in each five areas are shown in table 2.

Table 1. The relationship between demographic with ethical climate and desired ethical climate

Demographic information		Percentage	Mean hospital's Ethical climate score	Mean desired ethical climate score	Pvalue Hospital's ethical climate	Pvalue Desired ethical climate	Statistical test
sex	Female	75.7	94.15±15.50	116.58±12.34	0.23	0.26	T-TEST
	Male	24.3	96.77±14.82	114.16±15.32			
Job experience	5-1 years	42.2	97.12±14.90	116.48±12.08	0.90	0.50	ANOVA
	10-5 year	36.3	94.29±17.09	114.46±14.30			
	15-10 year	14.3	89.86±11.77	118.08±12.49			
	More than 15	7.2	93.38±13.24	116.72±14.47			
Hospital	Ali-ebn-abitaleb	45.00	96.83±12.43	115.67±15.08	0.04	0.72	ANOVA
	Khatam	55.00	93.11±17.25	116.26±11.35			
Educational degree	Bachelor	97.6	94.83±14.90	115.84±13.20	0.77	0.12	T-TEST
	Master	2.4	93.00±30.85	122.33±8.64			
Taking part in ethic course	Yes	89.2	95.32±14.97	116.02±13.15	0.17	0.92	T-TEST
	No	10.8	90.37±17.93	115.77±13.24			

Table 2. The results of hospitals ethical climate questionnaire and desired ethical climate

Ethical climate areas		Standard deviation	Mean score	Min score	Max score
Hospitals ethical climate	Colleagues	2.66	15.42	6.00	20.00
	Hospitals	4.15	21.60	9.00	30.00
	Patients	2.76	14.70	6.00	20.00
	Physicians	4.40	20.98	8.00	30.00
	Authorities	3.93	22.07	8.00	30.00
Desired ethical climate	Colleagues	2.01	18.24	5.00	20.00
	Hospitals	3.35	26.72	11.00	30.00
	Patients	2.43	17.76	6.0	20.00
	Physicians	3.39	26.88	10.00	30.00
	Authorities	3.52	26.37	10.00	30.00

According to table 2 the maximum score of ethical climate was in authority's area and the minimum score was in colleague's area. Maximum score of desired ethical climate was in physician's area and the minimum score was in patient's area. The desired ethical climate score was 115.99±13.14. There was a significant difference between nurse's perception about the ethical climate and desired ethical climate mean score ($p=0.02$).

DISCUSSION

Ethical climate makes a good climate for healthcare services and ethical decision makings. Ethical climate is different from organizational properties. The results of this study had shown that the ethical climate was good and satisfactory. This result was consistent with so many studies (5, 21, and 23). But it was lower than Ulrich and colleagues study (24). Fazljou et al. found better ethical climate from nurse's viewpoint. This can be due to diversity in cultural background and geographical environments in these studies. The highest score of ethical climate was in authority's area. This result was consistent with Khazni et al. (25) and Fazljou and colleagues study (22). Given that most of studies which showed a positive ethical climate (25, 22, 21) the highest score was in authority's area we can say that authorities (matrons and head nurses) have an important role in making a good environment for nurses. May be this is due to the authorities have a higher job experience and they have seen nurses problems. Hence they tried to solve them all.

Patient's area had the lowest score in the questionnaire. While in Khazni et al. study (25) and Fazljou et al. study (22) the lowest score was for physician's area. According to this that a proper patient care service can reduce patients fear and nervousness from the treatment (26). It suggested that the authorities to try planning for a good relation between nurses and the patients. Also, the nurse-managers and staff make sure to carry out the all cares with values. They can share their experiences and expert in care of patients, they create and develop good communication skills with colleagues (27). Colleague's domain had a low score in the questionnaire too. Nursing is an emotional profession and relation between colleagues and the corporation between them is really important in this field. Professional support from colleagues can improve services quality and it would result in patient and staff satisfaction (10). Physician's area had the highest score in the questionnaire of desired ethical climate. While in Khazni et al. (2013) study the highest score of desired ethical climate was for authorities' area. So then it can be stated that Khatam-al-Anbia and Ali-ebn-Abitale hospital's nurses considered the positive ethical climate. The ethical climate which physicians have a good relation with them. Also, nurses asked the physicians to have a better relationship with them. According to this, it is suggested the authorities to try to create a better relationship between physicians and nurses. The lowest score in the questionnaire of desired ethical climate was for patient's area which was consistent with Khazni et al. study (25).

According to this result we can state that nurses did not expect a better relationship with the patients. Maybe they are not aware about the importance of this matter. It suggested the managers to hold workshops to teach the patient rights to nurses and mention them about the importance of relationship between nurses and patients. This could improve the quality of healthcare services. Almalki believed that creating a good workplace can increase job satisfaction and decrease the attitude of leaving the job and turn over in nurses and finally increase the quality of healthcare services (28). Changes in nurse's attitude toward ethical responsibilities can make change in nurse and patient's relationship. Bad relationship between these two can put patient's safety in a trouble (25). The results of this study had shown that there is no significant relationship between demographic information and hospital's ethical climate. This result was consistent with Ulrich et al. (24) and Pauly et al. research (29). Peerz and Roux (2012) indicated that it is possible to promote the positive disciplines in the schools through creating the main values, liberator values, human rights and cultural values (30).

But there was a significant relationship between sex and educational degree with ethical climate in Fazljou et al. (22). This difference can be cause of the huge difference between sample volumes in these studies. But there was a significant relationship between age and workplace hospital, and hospital's ethical climate. May be different viewpoints in two hospital's nurses is cause of different policies, skills and performances. Number of patient beds, number of ward nurses and even learning level can be effective in nurse's attitude toward ethical climate. In this study we have founded that there is good ethical climate in these two hospitals. But it is far from nurse's desired ethical climate. Creating a good ethical climate can decrease job stress and solve so many problems in the hospital (31). Ethical climate has a direct effect on organizations life, behaviors and staff's ethical decision makings (3). An appropriate ethical climate would make the staff to obey the policies and it decreases the errors in the hospital. So we suggest the authorities to plan for progress in factors such as trustful relationship between the staff, responsibility's clearance, participatory decision-makings, and perception about nurse's job (7). This can create a better ethical climate for the hospitals.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study had shown a good ethical climate in these hospitals. But it was far from nurse's desired ethical climate. Authorities must keep this ethical climate and plan for its improvement. We can make a positive ethical climate with ethic management and its institutionalizing in the organization. Organizations can manage ethics with planning for it. Ethical plans can help organizations solve their ethical problems in different situations. Today ethical management is a huge field of management with functional materials. These materials are ethical codes, behavior codes, policies, and the methods of ethical and educational problems. We suggest the researchers to mention the negative factors which effect staff's behaviors and decision making for evaluating the ethical climate. Factors such as relationship between staff and the supervisor's behaviors can be effective also.

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