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Operating room staff attitude toward the ethical climate of educational hospitals

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ABSTRACT

Hospital's Ethical climate is defined as mental structure which is understood by common, fixed and significant understandings. Hospital's ethical climate could affect intra organizational relationships and employees attitudes. Positive ethical climate could reduce the medical errors in hospitals. This study aimed to investigate the Operating room staff attitude toward the ethical climate of educational hospitals of Zahedan University of Medical Sciences. This was a cross-sectional study. We collected the data of this study from all the operating room staff of educational hospitals through Olson's ethical climate questionnaire. Data were analyzed by SPSS v.19 through ANOVA and T-test. This study was conducted on 71 operating room staff. Age average was 28.34 ± 5 among subjects. There wasn't any significant relationship between ethical climate and, sex, age, and educational degree. But there was a significant relationship between attitude toward ethical climate and job experience ($p=0.05$). 57 had bachelor degree and 14 had associated degree. The mean score of ethical climate among staff was 93.11. Present study increases our knowledge about ethical climate of educational hospitals of Zahedan University of Medical Sciences. According to the results of this study operating room staff had a good attitude toward the ethical climate of operating room.

Key words: Ethical climate, operating room staff, Zahedan educational hospitals

INTRODUCTION

Nursing is an ethical profession. Nurses should make a calm ethical climate for patient's better recovery. For reaching a positive ethical climate nurses should have corporation with each other (1). This corporation is affected by several factors such as ethical climate (2). Ethical climate in an organization is the way of responding the ethical issues and hospital's Ethical climate is defined as mental structure which is understood by common, fixed and significant understandings (3, 4). Health system improvement was a complex and unsure path for giving high quality care to patients (7).

If the nurses are not supported by hospital's ethical climate, they may stop helping patients or even disturb the patients (3). A poor ethical climate in a hospital can result in nurses unethical behaviors. This could have terrible results in future for the hospital (6). Howang's study was conducted in 33 state hospitals of South Korea in 2014. The results of this study had shown that positive ethical climate in hospitals could reduce the medical errors (7). Ethical climate affects so many other factors in hospitals. Shida's study on 310 nurses had shown that ethical climate can affect job satisfaction (8). Organizational Commitment (9), ethical awareness (10), management levels (11), ethical behaviors (12), ethical distress (13, 14), nurse's inappropriate care services (15) and quitting nursing (16, 17) are other factors which could be affected by ethical climate.

According to Nafi's study which was conducted on 340 nurses in educational hospitals of Egypt ethical climate has a direct relationship with nurse's financial turnover (19). Ethical issues are known as professional and personal values for nurses (20). Ethical behaviors are important for the authorities in every system. Authorities must try hard to improve the ethical behaviors among their employees. Job satisfaction and decision of leaving the job are important for the systems. We can increase the job satisfaction and decrease the decision of leaving the job only with a positive ethical climate (21). According to the effects of ethical climate on the staff and also cause of this that organizational ethics are a current matter in hospitals this study was designed to investigate the Operating room staff attitude toward the ethical climate of educational hospitals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This was cross-sectional study. This study was conducted in three educational hospitals. All of the operating room personnel of these three hospitals were 71. Those who had a one year job experience were included to the study. Data were collected through a two part- questionnaire. Part one included the demographic data (gender, age, job experience, current hospital, educational degree). The second part was Olson's 26 item- Standard ethical climate questionnaire (designed by Olson in 1998). Subject's perception about ethical climate was measured through a 5 point Likert scale (1= almost never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=more often, 5=almost always). According to this scale the maximum total score was 130 and the minimum was 26. 78 and higher scores were considered as positive ethical climate and scores below 78 were considered as negative ethical climate. This questionnaire was translated to Persian by Mobasheret al. in 2005 and had a good reliability (0.92) (22). Researchers referred to these three 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. Data were analyzed by SPSS v.19 through ANOVA and T-test.

RESULTS

The subjects had an age average of 28.34 ± 5 . The maximum age was 44 and the minimum was 21. There wasn't any significant relationship between sex, age and educational degree, and ethical climate ($p > 0.05$). But a significant relationship was found between ethical climate and job experience ($p = 0.05$). The personnel's mean score of ethical climate was 93.11. This shows that we have a positive ethical climate in operating rooms of Zahedan. The mean score of ethical climate for Ali Ebn-e-Abitaleb Hospital was 85.56, 97.40 was for Khatam-al-Anbia and 100.56 was for Alzahra hospital. There was positive and significant relationship between hospital and perceived ethical climate ($p < 0.001$).

The relationship between demographic information and perceived ethical climate is reported in table 1.

Table 1. Relationship between demographic information and ethical climate

Demographic information		Frequency	Ethical climate mean score	P value	Statistical test
sex	Female	59	93.37	0.75	T-TEST
	Male	12	91.83		
Job experience	5-1 years	38	94.63	0.48	ANOVA
	10-5 year	21	93.71		
	15-10 year	7	85.28		
	More than 15	5	90.00		
Hospitals	Ali-ebn-abitaleb	30	85.56	<0.001	ANOVA
	Khatam	25	97.40		
	Alzahra	16	100.56		
Educational degree	Associated degree	14	85.92	0.181	T-TEST
	Bachelor	57	94.50		

DISCUSSION

Ethical climate is necessary for ethical decisions. An ethical work place can will result in professional nursing services (7). So it is important to be aware of current climates. The results of this study had shown that operating room staff had a positive attitude toward the hospital's ethical climate. This result was consistent with Numminen et al. study which was conducted on 318 nurses in Finland (27). This result was consistent with some other studies such as Silen et al. which was conducted 249 nurses in Sweden (14), and Han's study which was conducted on 245 South Korean nurses (24). The mean score of ethical climate in this study was more than Howang's study (7). But it was less than Sauerland et al. study. They had two studies in this field. The first study was conducted on 152 nurses (13) and the mean score was 97.43 and the second study was conducted on 948 nurses and the mean score was 94.18. The mean scores were not different from each other a lot. But the total score was in a medium range. Ethical climate is important for preventing the decision of leaving the jobs (24). The managers and leaders in

nursing have a pivotal role in creating ethical climate (25). So then we have to improve the ethical climate to convince our human resources for staying and working. This will result in organizations productivity increasing. These results may change in studies with larger sample size. Unfortunately a larger sample size was not available in Zahedan.

The results of this study had shown that Subjects with higher job experience had a negative perception about ethical climate in comparison with subjects with less job experience. And there wasn't any significant relationship between job experience and ethical climate. But there was a significant relationship between ethical climate and job experience in Howang's study. So this result was not consistent with Howang's study. May be this is showing that there is factor which makes Zahedan Hospital's ethical climate negative. By increase in job experience this negative ethical climate would be understood much more. Authorities must plan to find and omit this factor. Another probable reason can be this that staff with less job experience are in a better job situation so then they have a positive attitude in comparison with older staff. Because the results had shown that staff with a job experience of more than 15 years and 1 to 5 years had a better perception in comparison with those who have 5 to 10 years and 10 to 15 years job experience. This result in more than 15 year employed staff can be cause of their compatibility. The results of this study about the job experience are consistent with Mobasheret al. study conducted on 350 nurses (22) and Ghorbaniet al. study conducted on 235 in Mazandaran(26).

There wasn't any significant relationship between Age and sex, and perceivedethical climate. This result is consistent with Mobasher et al. (22) and Koivunen's (23) study. But mails had a better perception than females about the ethical climate. Their mean score was didn't differ too much. This result was consistent with Pugh's study which was conducted in 2015 (6).

There wasn't any significant relationship between educational degree and perceived ethical climate. This result was consistent with Mobasheret al. (22). Staff with bachelor degree reported a better ethical climate in comparison with staff with associated degree. It is anticipated that cause of more awareness about their own rights in those who have higher educations, there should be a significant relationship between educational degree and ethical climate. There was a significant relationship between current hospital and perceived ethical climate in present study. This result was not consistent with Koivunen's study (23).

CONCLUSION

Results of this study improve our knowledge about ethical climate of Zahedan hospital's operating rooms. Authorities can use the results of this study for decisions about intra organizational relations and rules of employment. The results of present study had shown that there is a good and positive ethical climate in Zahedan Hospital's operating rooms. Also present study found a significant relationship between ethical climate, and job experience and current hospital. Operating rooms need team work and personnel's relations. We suggest the authorities to plan a process to take the ethical climate to a better situation. Even better than now. We suggest to other researchers to conduct much more studies on the relationship between ethical climate and job experience. Small sample size was one of our problems in this study, we suggest to conduct studies with larger ample sizes in future.

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