Educational challenges ahead of nursing from the perspective of faculty members of Mashhad University of Medical Sciences

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Introduction: Development of nursing profession is faced with new challenges. Role of education is important for advancement of nursing. Faculty members are experienced in education, and they are authentic sources for determining of the educational challenges in nursing. The aim of this study was to determine the educational challenges in nursing from the viewpoint of faculty members of nursing and midwifery in University of Mashhad.

Methods: This study is a cross- sectional study conducted on 31 cases from faculty members of nursing in Mashhad University of Medical Sciences by using census method in 2010-2011. A combination of data collection methods was used for collection of data in two phases: preparation of assessment tool (questionnaire) and survey of the desired construct among the samples. After determining the validity and reliability, a questionnaire was given to the samples to answer. Data were analyzed in SPSS software version 11.5 using statistical tests.

Results: The most important threats in nursing include "Separation of fields such as anesthesia and operating room from nursing" (%93.6), "Increasing gap between clinical practice and education of nursing due to the increase in education of students and instructors" (%90.3), "Being Theoretical courses in master's and PhD program" (%77.5), "Decreasing the students' motivation" (%77.5) and "Establishing new schools of nursing" (%64.5). The most important opportunities in nursing include: "Need to informatics education in education of nursing" (%93.5), "localizing resources based on new issue and problems" (%84), and "Paying attention to evidence- based education in nursing education" (%83.9) and "adjusting the educational content according to ideals and standards of nursing" (%80.6).

Conclusion: Based on the results, Returning of anesthesia and operating room branches to nursing after bachelors', "Revising of educational content based on needs and localizing resources", "Using new methods in nursing instruction", "continuing the training based on clinical experiences" and "Using applied research in clinical environment" are suggested.

Keywords: Education, Challenges, Nurse, Faculty members

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Introduction

Nursing is now basically different from the past and it will have less similarity with today. Uncertain future is a big threat or big challenge for nursing profession. Although many predictions about the future have failed, planning to combat with future changes is essential for nursing profession (1).

Health care systems and nursing profession have been faced with numerous challenges by transition (2). Rapid environmental changes in health care systems have challenged the nurses as health care providers by limiting the access to health care services nowadays (3, 4). Although nurses have little power in health care systems in the world, considering the recovery of life and cure of diseases by nurses, new roles of nursing are accepted for people and community (5). Challenges such as the shortage of nurses, workload, and cost of access to care, the

gap between practice and education, demographic changes, elderly patients with complex physical and mental problems, technological innovation, short hospitalization of patients and stressful environment will threat the future of nursing (6).

In the study of Pang, Yung and Tayson (2000), the views of the community to nursing profession were the most challenges of this profession. Many studies in the west and east of Asia have shown that nursing as a profession is not accepted by nurses themselves and it is faced with crisis of identity (3). Caset and Lehki (2008) identified a number of challenges ahead of nursing such as professional identity, unspecified duties, lack of professional autonomy, communication problems with colleagues and managers and lack of job security that they will face in future (7). New roles of nurses have led to evaluation of their work. Meanwhile, the role of education is greater than the past (8). One of the challenges in nursing is the role of education in their readiness to improve the qualitative nursing practice. This training should be patient-centered, evidence-based, in the form of teamwork, qualitative, safe and along with technology (8-10). Nielsen et al. (2013) in "preparing of nursing students for future" writes: preparation of participants in clinical learning for change and accountability of students is necessary for optimal learning (11).

Although nursing in Iran is affected by traditions and political, social and cultural factors that has affected their perspective and professional roles (7). Nursing problems and challenges in Iran can reflect the problems and challenges of other countries (12). On the other hand, nursing in Iran should confront with challenges that is ahead of nursing in future (4).

Educational planners should try to make a favorable field for efficient use of recourses and provide conditions so that the students can acquire professional knowledge and skills (13, 14). Nursing students are influenced by future of health care intensively because they will be faced with workload in future. Nursing schools should prepare the students for confrontation with upcoming challenges and new changes (15). According to Abedini (2009), various problems will reduce the effectiveness of training, and identification of these problems is the first step for preventing them (16).

Due to the problems ahead of nursing and the necessity of preparation and planning for confrontation with these challenges (threats and opportunities) in the future, this study aimed at determining educational challenges in nursing from the perspective of faculty members in Mashhad Nursing and Midwifery School in 2011.

Methods

This study is a cross-sectional study conducted on 31 nursing faculty members in Mashhad University of Medical Sciences that were selected by census method in 2011. A combination of data collection methods was used in two phases: preparation of assessment tools (questionnaire) for challenges to which the nurses are faced and survey of this construct among the samples.

After reviewing the literature and acquaintance with the challenges of the nursing profession, the researchers were referred to expert faculty members, graduate nurses and PhD students from target population and six of them who had more knowledge about this construct were selected.

The participants consisted of 3 faculty members of nursing and midwifery school, 2 head nurses from health care centers, and 1 PhD student. The first method of data collection was semi- structured interview. After explaining the purpose of the research and obtaining informed consent for recording, the interviews were conducted in the participants' favorite places. They were asked about the structure of the educational challenges that is ahead of nursing. Each interview lasted between 45-60 minutes. Interviews were transcribed to written text by researchers as soon as possible and were analyzed immediately. The retained text were read and analyzed by qualitative content analysis. After the screening the text and sharing their ideas, common items were written. Then, the items were changed to phrases and the phrases were returned to the same interviewer and five other persons. They were asked to prioritize the phrases from 0-10 scales.

Then questionnaire was distributed among ten individuals who were eligible for the study. The data were analyzed through factor analysis. After weighting, data were analyzed. The statements with which many agreed were kept (14 items) and the other statements were deleted. Residual statements were prepared as attitude questionnaire. Reliability was calculated %73 using alpha Cranach's coefficient of consistency that is suitable for researcher- made instruments.

To determine the content validity, Waltz and Basell's content validity were used on 20 persons. This index with a four-part scale was used to assess the questionnaire based on relevance, simplicity, transparency and necessity. In the end of the questionnaire, two open questions were designed and the interviewees were asked to comment and provide recommendation regarding the removal, alteration and addition items. Items with relevance over %75 were kept and the other items were deleted. After identifying the reliability and validity, the questionnaire was sent to faculty members and their responses were collected and analyzed. Then, using SPSS software version 11.5, educational challenges were calculated using statistical tests (including distribution). This research was done with the permission of nursing and midwifery school of

Table 1. Absolute and relative frequency of threats from perspective of faculty members in Mashhad nursing and midwifery school

Educational challenges		Agree		No idea		Don't agree	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Increasing gap between clinical practice and education for increasing level of education in students and teachers	Threat	28	90.3	2	6.4	1	3.3
Being theoretical course in master's and PhD program	Threat	24	77.5	2	6.4	5	16.1
Being Theoretical courses in master's and PhD program	Threat	28	90.3	0	0	3	9.7
Separate of fields Such as anesthesia and operating room from nursing	Threat	29	93.6	0	0	2	6.4
Establishment of new nursing college	Threat	20	64.5	5	16.1	6	19.4
Decreased level of motivation In students	Threat	21	67.7	3	9.7	7	22.6

Mashhad. Participants were free in admission and continuing of this research.

Limitation

Limitations included small number of samples and limiting the research to nursing and midwifery school of Mashhad.

Results

The mean age of the participants was between 43.61 ± 5.73 and most of the participant were female (%53.1), faculty members (%87.5), masters (%53.1), medical-surgical nursing (%68.8), average clinical experience (6.67 ± 6.26), average teaching experience (14.9 ± 8) and member of nursing system (%53.1).

The main threats for nursing were: "Separating the fields of anesthesia and operating room from nursing (93.6), "Increasing the gap between clinical practice and education due to increasing level of education in students and teachers"(%90.3), Being Theoretical courses in master's and PhD program"(%90.3), "Theoretical courses in Master and PhD programs"(%77.5), "Decreasing the level of motivation in students"(%67.7) and "Establishment the new nursing schools"(%64.5)(table 1).

The main opportunities for nursing included "Need for virtual education technology in nursing"(%93.5), "Making native the content and resources based on new

issues and problems"(%84), "Attention to evidence-based education in clinical education"(%83.9) and "Setting educational contents based on ideals and standard of care"(Table 2).

Discussion

The main threats for nursing were: "Separating fields of anesthesia and operating room from nursing","Increasing the gap between clinical practice and education due to increasing level of education in students and teachers", "Being Theoretical courses in master's and PhD program", "Theoretical courses in Master's and PhD programs", "Decreasing the level of motivation in students" and "Establishing the new nursing colleges".

Spitzer and Perrenoud (2006) indicated that many changes have been made in unification of nursing education recently in Europe, but nursing education doesn't have the necessary integrity (17). Henderson (2002) states that since nursing education goes to academic education, based on opinions of the consumers, managers and practical nurses, the nurses cannot change theoretical knowledge to holistic practical care (18). Vaismoradi et al. (2012) have emphasized the change in nursing education for more involvement of nursing students in nursing practice (19). Valizadeh et al. also (2007) point out that nursing education is faced with problems in theoretical and

Table 2. Absolute and relative frequency of opportunities from perspective of faculty members in Mashhad nursing and midwifery school

Educational challenges		Agree		No idea		Don't agree	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	percent	Frequency	percent
Need for virtual education technology in nursing	Opportunity	29	93.5	2	6.5	0	0
Make native the content and resources based on new issues and problem	Opportunity	26	83.9	3	9.7	2	6.5
Setting educational contents based on ideals and standard of care	Opportunity	25	80.6	5	16.1	1	6.4
Pay attention to evidence- based education in clinical education	Opportunity	26	73.9	0	0	5	15.1

clinical education nowadays. Educational planners should provided opportunities for better use of resources so that the students can gain necessary knowledge and skills (13). Also, Ehnfor and Grobe (2004) have emphsized evidense-based practice (20).

The main opportunities for nursing were: "Need for virtual education technology in nursing", "Making native the content and resources based on new issues and problem", "Attention to evidence-based education in clinical education" and "Setting educational contents based on ideals and standard of care".

Gronenwet et al. (2007) revealed that one of the nursing challenges is preparing expert nurse for improvement of nursing work quality. This education should be client centered, evidence-based, based on team work, qualitative, safe and informatic. This education should provide knowledge, attitude and skills for practical work (10). Salminen (2010) for future of nursing education recommended that nursing education should be evidence-based, and research in nursing education should be developed (21). Emerson and Records (2005) state that experts and faculty members in education and research are decreasing for retirement of expert persons and not replaced them with new members. Then development of nursing in future is at risk. In addition, necessary time and energy for development of the profession are limited by the increase in expectation from teachers and educational services. Viability of a profession is related to development and dissemination of knowledge (22).

Conclusion

Based on the results, it is recommended that the fields of anesthesia and operating room are returned to nursing in masters. The gap between education and practice can be less by existence of registered nurses in clinical environment. By using new instructional approaches, the traditional instruction can be improved. Evidence-based challenge can be improved by applying the research. Setting contents based on ideals and standards can be ameliorating by updating the content based on necessity. And making native of content will be useful opportunity.

Acknowledgement

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