



## The level of professional socialization of nursing students of Ilam University of Medical Sciences in 2016

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### ABSTRACT

Socialization is a basic and fundamental concept in nursing. There is a great need to evaluate professional socialization of nursing students. The aim of study was determining the factors affecting on the level of professional socialization of nursing students in Ilam University of Medical Sciences in Iran. The design was cross-sectional and 130 nursing students of Ilam University of Medical Sciences in Iran were selected by convenience sampling. Data were gathered by socialization questionnaire of professional socialization and analyzed by t- test in SPSS17. Significance level was considered to be 0.05. The most of the students were male (63.1%), single (96.9%) with mean age of  $21.11 \pm 2.61$  ranged 18-31 years. Mean score of socialization was  $37.71 \pm 8.48$  with a minimum of 23 and a maximum of 51. Score of socialization were at novice (11.5%), advanced beginner (45.4%), competent (43.1%). None of them were not in proficient and expert levels. A statistically significant relationship was observed between mean score of socialization competence of the nursing students with age, education level and gender ( $p < 0.05$ ) and between the mean score of socialization level of nursing students in all dimensions of the questionnaire except group participation ( $p < 0.05$ ). The level of professional socialization in the most students was advanced beginner. Therefore it is necessary to promote professional socialization by proper intervention. The results can obtain the necessary data for students and educational planners for promoting the socialization level of students and identify the strengths and weaknesses of their educational planning and administration.

**Keywords:** professional socialization, nursing students, cross-sectional study, Iran

### INTRODUCTION

Nursing as the largest part of professional personnel in forefront line of delivering services in health care systems have multiple and expanded roles and duties. The roles of nursing are multiple and complex, and nursing as a professional work requires responsibility, attention and caution [1]. Development of the concept of socialization in nursing literature dates back to before 1985 [2] and socialization is described as a major issue in nursing [3].

Socialization is a process of acquiring individual identity in which he learns required values, norms and skills for serving his social task as an effective person in his unique position [4]. Socialization is a basic concept in nursing that is due to interaction among intrapersonal, interpersonal and work functional relationships [5]. These relationships gives members the opportunity to organize themselves and their resources and solve their problems by cooperation. In fact, professional socialization is a learning process of the professional roles [4]. It consists of Anticipatory, Accommodation, and role management. The process to achieve required professional norms, values, and skills for professional survival, is not well known [6].

Internalizing a specific role allows the person to participate in a group as an individual [7]. Nursing is one of the professions that fulfils its roles within the medical team [8]. In other words, the part of this professional competence

forms in interacting with others and collaborative working relationships and team works [9]. Professional empowerment of the nurses plays an important role in achieving the goals of the health system [10]. Professional socialization is considered as the basic and influencing factor on professional development in nursing. Better understanding of socialization can help to identify instructional strategies in faculties for professional developing [11].

Review literature show inappropriate and incompetent execution of socialization process can be followed negative outcomes such as Attrition, burn out, reducing production, loss or decreasing motivation and satisfaction of nurses about occupational and professional future. On the other hand, properly passing this process can lead to acquiring professional identity, adapting with the professional role, professional and organizational commitment and thereby improving nursing care quality [9, 12-16]. Various studies have shown that implementation of nursing education improves patients situation [17, 18].

Causes such as rapid population growth in the world, prolongation of human life, aging population, increasing chronic diseases, changes in care needs and increasing public demand for high quality care leads to a progressing need for motivated, creative and competent nurses in health care systems [19]. Despite increasing expectation of the nurses and demanding for them, it seems there are many problems in professional socialization in domains such as independence, problem solving, responsibility, research undertaking, care delivery and cultural competence [20, 21]. There is a greater need to evaluate professional socialization of nursing students because of high number of them due to increasing need of society and introducing a wide variety of cultures [22]. Considering the importance of professional socialization of the nurses and its role in improving patient care, this study designed for determination the factors affecting on the level of professional socialization of nursing students in Ilam University of Medical Sciences.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study planned in a cross-sectional design. According to previous studies [23], 130 nursing students of Ilam University of Medical Sciences were selected by convenience sampling. Socialization questionnaire of professional socialization resulting a phenomenological qualitative research of Tahmasebiet al was used to collect information [24, 25]. The questionnaire of professional socialization consists of two parts: the first part including demographic characteristics of nursing students and the second part consists of questions of professional socialization. This questionnaire have 54 phrases in 5 dimensions of professional autonomy (7 items), professional commitment (10 items), professional competence (16 items), group participation (5 items) and professional belonging (16 items). For this questionnaire, scoring were done based on 5 options of Likert scoring method from completely disagree to strongly agree (as scores of 1 and 5 respectively). Scores ranged from 54 to 270. To calculate scores of the tool and divide the dimensions of Benner's stages of clinical competence from novice to expert, the scores were classified from zero to 100. The total score was calculated based on professional socialization. Scores ranking was classified based on 5 levels including novice (0-20), advanced Beginner (21-40), competent (41-60), proficient (61-80), and expert (81-100). Given that the number of the questions in each dimension was not the same, all of the scores convert to a multiple of 100 to be able to calculate the weight of each dimension in socialization score, and eventually all dimensions were compared each other [23]. Internal consistency and stability of the tool has been carried out by Cronbach's alpha and test-retest respectively. Reliability of the tool was confirmed by alpha 0.95 [24]. In this study, the internal consistency was 0.88 by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

In order to observe the ethical principles, the research was begun after permission from Ethics Council of Ilam University of medical sciences. The researcher asked the students to complete a questionnaire after explaining the purpose of the study and how to complete the questionnaire as well as getting informed consent to participate in the research. SPSS statistical software (version 17) was used for analysing data. Data were described by tables of distribution frequency, mean and SD and analysed by t-test. Significance level was 0.05.

## RESULTS

Findings indicated that the mean age of the participants was  $21.11 \pm 2.61$  years ranged from 18 to 31 years. 82 (63.1%) participants were male and 48 (36.9%) were female. 126 (96.9%) were single and 4 (3.1%) were married. They were 19 (14.6%) of second semester, 17 (13.1%) of third semester, 13 (10%) of fourth semester, 21 (16.2%) of fifth semester, 11 (8.5%) of sixth semester, 20 (15.4%) of seventh semester and 29 (22.3%) of eighth semester.

findings indicated that the mean score of socialization of the nursing students was  $37.71 \pm 8.48$  with a minimum score of 23 and a maximum score was 51. Means of each dimension is shown in Table 1. Score of socialization of

nursing students were at novice 15 (11.5%), advanced beginner 59 (45.4%), competent 56 (43.1%). None of them were not in proficient and expert levels.

There was a statistically significant relationship between mean score of socialization competence of the nursing students with age, education level and gender ( $p < 0.05$ ), but there was not any statistically significant relationship between mean score of socialization competence of the nursing students with marital status. There was a statistically significant relationship between the mean score of socialization level of nursing students in all dimensions of the questionnaire except group participation ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1. Mean scores of levels of professional socialization in nursing students**

| Variable                            | Male              | Female            | Total             | P     |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|
|                                     | Mean $\pm$ SD     | Mean $\pm$ SD     | Mean $\pm$ SD     |       |
| Autonomy                            | 31.74 $\pm$ 12.76 | 26.87 $\pm$ 7.25  | 26.87 $\pm$ 7.25  | 0.01  |
| Professional Commitment             | 34.91 $\pm$ 16.09 | 66.02 $\pm$ 12.80 | 66.02 $\pm$ 12.80 | 0.001 |
| Professional Competence             | 29.53 $\pm$ 14.20 | 23.62 $\pm$ 9.67  | 23.62 $\pm$ 9.67  | 0.01  |
| Professional Belonging              | 40.04 $\pm$ 18.30 | 47.12 $\pm$ 14.17 | 47.12 $\pm$ 14.17 | 0.02  |
| Group Participation                 | 43.20 $\pm$ 8.74  | 40.50 $\pm$ 15.74 | 40.50 $\pm$ 15.74 | 0.20  |
| Level of Professional Socialization | 35.89 $\pm$ 9.56  | 40.82 $\pm$ 4.89  | 40.82 $\pm$ 4.89  | 0.001 |

## DISCUSSION

The results showed that socialization level of the majority of the nursing students were advanced beginner level based on Benner's classification. In a study of Shahim *et al.* on nursing students, 21.4 percent of them have average socialization level and 78.6% were at high level [22]. In a study of Saberi *et al.* on MSc students that scoring has been done based on Benner's classification, 55.9% were in expert group and 43.1% in proficient group, just 1 percent were in incompetent group and none of them were in beginner and advanced beginner [23]. In a study of Mousavi *et al.* on nursing students, professional socialization of 19 percent of the students was at the intermediate level, 81 percent was at a good level and none of them at weak level [26]. Toit *et al.* study in Australia showed that the level of professional socialization in 11.6% were lower than average, 81.5% above average and 6.9% had very high level [27]. The findings of the study indicated a statistically significant relationship between age and competence of socialization that are consistent with the results of Mousavi *et al.* and Brown *et al.* studies [26, 28]. It seems that with increasing age, students learn necessary communication skills for inclusion in the community and can behave in the proper way. In other words, they become more social by aging [26].

The results showed a statistically significant difference between male and female students in professional belonging that was consistent with the results of Mirzaeian *et al.* study [24]. In the study of Bastami *et al.*, a statistically significant difference was observed between cultural competence of male and female nurses [21]. In Secrest *et al.* study, socialization was explained with belonging, knowing and affirmation. In fact, belonging induces valuable aspects of nursing, a sense of professionalism; knowledge gives the participants sense of competence, a feeling of being a part of the health care team. Experience of affirmation by participants felt as an emphasis out of time when he has created differences and changes in circumstances by his knowledge. In Abbas-Zadeh *et al.* study, professional belonging of the nurses was at the average level, and there was no statistically significant difference between male and female nurses. In the Mauno and Lawrence studies, professional belonging was different in men and women [29-31].

The findings showed that socialization of the nursing students were increased by increasing the semester. In Zaman-Zadeh *et al.* study, perceiving care behaviours had not promoted as a part of the socialization process in undergraduate students due to defects of nursing education and lack of care curriculum [32]. The study of Shinyashiki *et al.* demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the first and fourth years of attending the faculty with values, norms and professional behaviours. These findings indicated promotion of professional socialization in the educational process that is consistent with the results of this study [9]. According to Cohen's theory, professional socialization is occurred in four steps of unilateral dependence, independence negativity, dependence/mutuality, and interdependence. In fact, according to this model, nursing students have not knowledge and experience in the first stage or unilateral dependence and are in the control of the lecturer. In the second stage or independence negativity, ability to think critically and basic knowledge develop and the student begins to question authority. According to Cohen's theory, in dependence/mutually, the ideas can describe by increasing the power of logical evaluation. The students have more realistic judgement and learn to test concepts, ideas and models objectively. They are neutral, accept some ideas and reject others. Finally, in the fourth stage or interdependence, the students need both independence and cooperation and try to cooperate with others in their decision [33, 34].

The limitations of the study can be mentioned as using the questioner and completing it by the students under individual circumstances which could effect on the accuracy of their response. Another limitation of this study was the personality type of the students that influenced the results and could not possible to control it.

### CONCLUSION

The level of professional socialization in the most students was advanced beginner. Therefore it is necessary to promote professional socialization by proper intervention. These results can obtain the necessary data for students and educational planners to promote the socialization level of students and identify the strengths and weaknesses of their educational planning and administration.

### *Acknowledgment*

Hereby, we acknowledge all of the nursing students for their patience to participate in this study and appreciate the expert of Student Research Committee. This research project was approved by Student Research Committee of Ilam University of medical sciences, therefore we thank them for financial supporting.

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