Original Research Article

Communication skills (verbal, listening, feedback) among Ardabil Azad university medical students and related factors

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ABSTRACT

Background: The aim of this study was to investigate the level of communication skills (verbal, listening, feedback) among Ardabil Azad university medical students and related factors.
Methods: In this descriptive-cross sectional study, 150 medical university students selected randomly from September 2014 to September 2015. The necessary data collected by a standardized questionnaire named Interpersonal communication skills test containing 34 items having five points scale and its score ranged 34-170. Data were analyzed by descriptive and analytical statistical methods in SPSS.16.
Results: 71.3% of participants were female. The mean score of student's communication skills (CS) level was 100.8 ± 13.6 and in girls was 110.1 ± 13.7 and in boys was 102.5 ± 13.1 which hasn't significant differences between two genders in CS scores. There wasn't significant relation between CS in students with age, student's grade, residence place, term and participated in the CS workshop.
Conclusions: Results showed that level of CS in students was in moderate level which doing interventional studies in future for raising their CS level is necessary.

Keywords: Communication Skills, Students, Verbal relation

INTRODUCTION

Relation is said to the interaction between human which have done to estimate a specific purpose and establish a proper relationship that can be very important in people's lives. In studies of medical sciences, communicating takes place with specific purposes, such as teaching the patients, collecting clinical evaluation and assessment of possible treatment. Having CS between people is very important. Communication skills (CS) means listening and speaking relation between two persons and its feedback is very important in the medicine. The level of communication and interaction with patients, has main role in the rising the patient satisfaction, evaluation result of treatment and decreasing medical costs. In a total classification the CS levels divided in three classes such

as conceptual, content and process which the first two of them have interpersonal aspects but the third has used in educational programming.[1-4]

The type of interaction with patients, ability to have effective dialogue and identify their problem is one of the effective cases in raising the patient's satisfaction.[5]

In Molaei and et al study by using Quinn skills test, results showed that 77.7% of boys and 61.9% of girls have CS in moderate level.[6] In a study done by Mahmaoudi and et al about CS between nursing and midwifery students, the CS level in midwifery students was more than nursing students and the total level of CS among students was in moderate level.[7] In a study done by Salimi and et al, results showed that the CS level in

students wasn't desirable and years of study is one of the effective factors on CS level in students.[5]

It is our effort to identify weaknesses, obstacles and problems to strengthen communication skills in medical students for promotion the quality and quantity of care and increased the patient satisfaction and reduces the medical treatment costs. To improve efficiency in the health system and health treatment, it is essential to include the communication skills in the syllabus of medical and paramedical students. Medical and paramedical students need for learning these skills in future to having effective cooperation in the clinical visits.

METHODS

This cross-sectional descriptive study has been done on 150 medical students in Ardabil Azad University form September 2014 to September 2015 which selected randomly from all university medical students. Data collected by a questionnaire included two sections:

Part 1: Demographic information (term, sex, students' grade, participate in the CS workshop, family members, parental education level, marriage, residence place) and

Part 2: Interpersonal communication skills test which its validity and reliability previously studied. This questionnaire containing 34 items and its score ranged 34-170.

Options for each question defined as almost never, rarely, sometimes, often, rather always with score from 1 to 5.

The CS levels classified into three groups.

- 1- Acute problem of communication (score 34-79)
- 2- problem of communication (80-125) and
- 3- without problem (score up 125).

Statistical analysis

Collected data analyzed by descriptive statistical methods such as mean, SD and table and analytical statistical methods such as T-test in SPSS.16.

RESULTS

Of all students, 71.3% were girl, 64.7% non- native, 68% married and 85.2% have student's grade low 17. There wasn't relation between age, residence place, marriage and student's grade with CS as given in Table 1.

The mean score of CS among students was 96.9 which have direct relation with gender of students. The girls have mean score 102.6 and boys 91.2 and the difference between two groups was statistically significant as given in Table 2.

Table 1: Demographic data of the students participated in the study.

Variables	n	%
Sex		
Male	43	28.7
Female	107	71.3
Marital status		
Married	44	29.3
Un married	106	71.7
Students grades		
Students grades low 17	128	85.2
Students grade's up 17	22	14.8
Term		
1	27	18
2	23	15.3
3	20	13.3
4 and up	80	53.3
Parent education level		
University	98	65.3
Non-university	52	34.7
Communication skills workshop (yes)	25	16.7
Residence place		
Foreign	53	35.3
Non-foreign	97	64.7
Age	22.8±3.1	

Table 2: Relation between CS by sex.

Gender	n	Mean CS score	Mean difference	p-value
Male	42	102.5±13.1	2.4	0.31
Female	105	100.1±13.7		

DISCUSSION

The mean of CS score in girls (100.1) and in boys (102) showed that the level of CS among students was in moderate level (problem in communication). There weren't significant relation between CS and age, gender, participated in workshop about CS, marriage, parental education level and residence place.

The married people obtained score 103.1 compare to single people but not statistically significant. The result of this study was in line with Molaei et al study in Ardabil (6) but not in line with Hydarzadeh and Salimi studies which they not found significant relation among gender and CS.[5,8]

CS level among students has been increased with Students' Grades increase but in this study there wasn't significant relation between average and CS level.

It seems that having better educational performance can expose students with fewer issues in relation to others.

So, the result of this study in line with Salimi and et al study that not found significant relation between CS and students' grades.[5]

Similar to our study, Mirhaghjoo et al in a study showed that the CS level in nursing students was in moderate to good level. Also they showed that there was a significant positive relation between age and CS and score of CS have relation with variables such as marriage, CS training and Experience of caring for a sick person in the family. They suggested that on arrival at the University, communication skills should be taught to students.[4]

Barati et al in their study showed that the CS level in students in all levels Verbal, listening and feedback were not in desirable level that wasn't similar to our study because in this study we resulted that the CS among students was in moderate level. Also it revealed that the difference of CS scores between variables such as gender, marriage, education level and field of education.[3]

In a studies done by Payman et al about CS in faculty members, results showed that the level of CS among faculty members in two study was in desirable level and resulted that CS and educational performance of faculty members have direct relation and by promotion the level of faculty members in future we could decide to increasing the learning and improvement CS level between students.[9-10]

CONCLUSION

Results showed that the CS level among Ardabil Azad medical students was in moderate level (problem in communication) and by identify weaknesses, obstacles and problems, we should to strengthen communication skills in medical students for promotion the quality and quantity of care and increased the patient satisfaction and reduces the costs of medical treatment in future. Also to improving efficiency in the health system, including communication skills in the syllabus of medical students or continuing education workshops to the students about communication skills in universities and health centers is essential.

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