



Teheran University of Medical Sciences

School of Medicine

Title:

**Compiling national ethical guidelines for
medical teaching based on religious and cultural
beliefs in Iran**

**A dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for Doctor of Philosophy
(PhD) Degree
In
#Medical Ethics**

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Introduction and objective:

The aim of medical training programs is to educate physicians who possess the required knowledge and skills to provide services and to practice in a legal as well as ethical framework. In this respect, medical sciences universities should plan for educating efficient and ethical physicians, therefore in this study, attempts have been made to explain ethical principles and standards related to various medical training situations. Considering the fact that our society has a culturally Islamic dimension and that ethics in education are interwoven with Islamic value system in many ways, applicable guidelines in congruity with Islamic culture and custom of the society should be provided for observing ethical principles in various medical training settings to ensure that medical practices adhere to ethics in education.

Method: The current research is a comprehensive mixed-methods study involving several distinct key sections. The first section included obtaining theoretical principles of medical training of moral considerations according to religious and cultural beliefs. These principles were identified through conducting three phenomenological qualitative-field studies (including the patients' experiences of moral aspects of clinical training at their bedsides and two qualitative study of clinical teacher and students' perceptions and experiences in terms of moral aspects of clinical training), their viewpoints, concerns, as well as mental principles of individuals regarding ethical aspects of medical training. Then, a comparative study including the identification of effective viewpoints in available decision makings and policies was conducted regarding ethical issues of medical training of the world. These principles were investigated in terms of Islamic as well as non-religious views. Following the elicitation of theoretical and knowledge principles, the second part of the dissertation, namely, codification of moral guidelines applicable in medical training, was carried out.

Results: In this study, 36 individuals (16 patients, 12 faculty members of clinical training, and 8 medical students) were interviewed, and 10 themes were elicited out of which virtue-based education of the students was considered as the main and the most important theme for all three groups. In comparative study, 214 universal ethical guidelines regarding clinical training, guidelines for professional conduct of the teacher and student, and duties of teacher as well as

the students were elicited. In these guidelines, the protection of human dignity of the individuals was mentioned. In addition, the main discussions on clinical training included obtaining consent, protecting the privacy, and risk-benefit evaluations and effective supervision of students. They included topics which have enjoyed universal consensus. The main differing points were related to educational use of animals and cadaver; in some countries, educational use of these subjects have been under question and were removed from medical training courses.

Conclusion: Attempts have been made to protect human and moral values in training medical students throughout the world and not to use training subjects as educational tools. Emphasizing ethical considerations based on observing the rights of the training subject parties, students, and teacher is the way through which such an educational relation is protected. Therefore, in this dissertation, several ethical guidelines were codified which are as: guidelines for using animals in medical training, peer-based medical education, using simulated-patient and standardized patient, clinical medical training using patients, and cadaver for education in dissection. The aforementioned guidelines were developed in order to provide ethical sensitivity in medical training while manifesting the prominent role of training environment, universities as well as teacher as a role model for the students, and to ethically educate future medical practitioners empowering them to make ethical decisions at patients' bedsides.

Keywords: Ethical guidelines, medical training, training subject (animal, warm and cold cadaver, patient, simulated -patient, peers), virtuous character

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