

Ethical Challenges Experiences by Faculty Members: A Qualitative Research with a Phenomenological Approach

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Abstract

Introduction: Ethics in fulfilling one's duties are a necessity in every occupation. The educational systems are formed to a great extent, by managers' and teachers' ethical values. The purpose of this study is to elucidate the ethical challenges experienced by faculty members in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences.

Materials and Methods: This study has been carried out based on a purposive method taking a phenomenological approach that emphasizes on the perspectives held by Mandlebaum (1955). All faculty members of the University were the participants of the present research paper. The method of choice for gathering the required information was deep, face to face and semi-structured interview carried out individually, each taking approximately 60 to 120 minutes. Qualitative data analysis method used herein was the ethical phenomenology proposed by Mandlebaum (1969).

Results: After interviewing 20 professors, the information reached a state of saturation. 55% of the professors were men and 45% were women. The men and women professors' age averages were 44 ± 5.08 and 42 ± 3 respectively. Then, the interview text was analyzed resulting finally in obtaining three topics, namely educational ethics challenges, research ethics challenges and social ethics challenges, which were classified into ten categories.

Conclusion: Professors believe that we are confronted with serious ethical challenges regarding the educational ethics, research ethics and social ethics and there is felt a need for changing the attitudes in organizational behaviours and strictly dealing with the violation cases in order to be able to enweave such challenges.

Key words: Experience, Ethical issues, Faculty, Qualitative research

Introduction

Nowadays, higher education systems are faced with numerous challenges that are required to be improved and guaranteed in their quality. Academic teaching and learning processes' effectiveness in universities, as an important professional area, depends on an array of individual, occupational and organizational factors [1]. In the meantime, according to the faculty members' roles and responsibilities, ethics is a considerable issue in higher education [2]. In such a manner the ethical indicators of the faculty members can be determinants of the increase in the effectiveness and quality in the higher education system [1]. The education system is a critical section that is largely formed by the managers' and teachers' ethical values [3]. Ethics is the most genuine branch of philosophy incorporating values and remarkable features and it encompasses our daily-life deeds and experiences [4]. Therefore, university personnel including the faculty members, chancellors and their employees require topics on professional ethics to be explicated for them [5]. That is because ethics embrace human beings' internal temperaments and features out of which the human behaviours are derived and they exert the most subtle influence and effect on mankind's behaviour [6].

The existence of ethics in accomplishing the assigned tasks is among the necessities in every occupation and profession as well as in every work environment and the utilization of ethics in the work environment has been transformed into a serious need. Thus, it is necessary to pay sufficient attention to the ethical issues in higher education [7]. Although higher education institutions have taken measures to control their faculty members' behaviours, there are acts done by faculty members which do not fit ethical behaviours. Such unethical activities include cases like plagiarism, weak teaching methodologies, exchanging test questions for money and similar [8]. In a project that deals with the status survey of the faculty members' adherence to educational ethics, it was found that the professors respect their affiliated educational institution and their peers and the ethical teaching indicators overlapped with the effective teaching methodologies in the majority of cases [9]. Nine principles have been outlined for the educational ethics that include the following:

1. **Content Effectiveness:** the instructor's topical knowledge should be at a high level and it has to be ensured that the current content is accurate and appropriate for the students' curriculum.
2. **Teaching Effectiveness:** effective teacher is aware of various teaching strategies and takes advantage of the research results to reach the students' educational objectives.
3. **Handling Sensitive Subject Matters:** the topics, the voicing of which is deemed difficult by the students; the instructor, deals with them overtly, honestly and positively.
4. **Students Development:** the instructors should allow the students to develop in their specialty fields and

they should avoid inappropriate behaviors that lead to a reduction in students' development and growth.

5. **Mutual Relationships with the Students:** to avoid interest conflicts, the instructors should not get engaged in mutual relationships with the students because it results in a reduction in the students' development.
6. **Confidentiality:** things private to the students like marks, presence and absence and the other cases should be released only under legal cases and/or if it is allowed or informed by the student.
7. **Respecting Peers:** a university professor should respect his or her colleagues and work in teams to pave the way for the students' development.
8. **Correct Evaluation of the Students:** according to the importance that is given to correct evaluation, the instructor should credibly and accurately evaluate based on the lesson objectives.
9. **Respecting the Educational Institution:** Parallel to student development, the professors should respect the rules and the policies exercised in an educational institution [10].

Based on the evaluations performed in line with the relationship between the professional ethics and the performance of the professors in Payam-e-Noor University (PNU), it was made clear that the professors observe the above mentioned nine-fold principle. Also, there was found a positive and significant relationship between the educational effectiveness and the professors' performance in PNU. In other words, the study findings were affirmative of the idea that adhering to such principles by these professors causes an increase in teaching effectiveness [11]. It was made evident in the same research that the lesson content effectiveness is of a particular importance to the professors because it brings about an augmentation in the class efficiency and higher and more effective learning in the students; furthermore, these principles are directly associated with the professors' scientific competencies. The reported cases of unfulfilled content effectiveness incorporated issues like the professors' insufficient knowledge regarding the instructional material, incorrect interpretation of research evidence and leaving part of the lessons untaught and teaching the lesson topics in which the professors were more interested [10].

One of the ethical challenges with which the professors are faced is the existence of contradictory educational policies in the educational institutions that causes the professors' performance and satisfaction to be influenced in respect to their ethical commitments. One such case is the lesson plans and traditional teaching methods while the teachers want innovative methods [3]. However, the use of teaching methods or evaluation methods not conforming to the education objectives is a case counteracting the education effectiveness which has to be considered as a constituent of the teaching ethical principles [10].

Professional ethics guidelines for the professors proposed in Finland place particular emphasis on the ethics as sensitive issues [12]. Ethical sensitivity is defined as the individual's ability to perceive the ethical values in various conditions [13, 14]. The results of the study carried out

by Mousavi et al [15] on ethical sensitivity indicated that ethical sensitivity has been in a rate higher than medium in both university students and nurses. It has been expressed in the study that enhancing ethical sensitivity influences the awareness of the various aspects of a situation and the selection of the appropriate solution [15].

Among the various aspects of ethics in higher education, educational ethics and the challenges pertaining thereto are important topics in the area of ethics and the observation of the educational ethics causes an increase in psychological security, growth and sublimit, productivity and it also brings about a reduction in the costs in the universities [9]. Nowadays, faculty members are confronted with numerous educational challenges which are connected to teaching methods, the way the instructional material is presented, technological adequacy, observation of justice and ethics in teaching, evaluation and so forth, all of which can in a way or another obsess the minds of the professors [16]. According to the idea that the existence of ethics in carrying out the assignments is among the necessities within a certain profession, occupation and work environment and the utilization of the ethics in the work environment has been turned into a serious need [7], and because the ethics and their relevant challenges are more of a subjective nature, it is necessary to fully investigate these issues in depth from the perspective of the professors and there is felt a need for undertaking a qualitative research with a phenomenological approach to the matter. Thus, the present qualitative research aims at the elaboration of the ethical challenges experiences by the faculty members in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences.

Methodology

In the present study, ethical phenomenology with an emphasis on the perspectives held by Mandelbaum (1955) [17] was applied for gathering the data. Phenomenological method can be adopted for the survey of the features and structures of such various types of experiences as sensory, religious, aesthetic and ethical experiences [17]. The phenomenon and the context in which it takes place serve as interpretational factors for us to gain understanding of the participants' worlds and/or the studied events and incidents. In a speech, a qualitative researcher associates the applied cases with the individual's live experiences through getting logically engaged and entered into the unique and exclusive worlds of the individual participants in their own tongue [18]. The goal is study of the individuals, events, incidents and services, indeed, gaining insight into our worlds and those of the others. The interpreter is in a constant back and forth movement between the foreground and background in the participants' real situations and worlds. The goal that is pursued by the qualitative scholar is reaching an agreement on the essence of the studied phenomenon. The objective is gaining a deep understanding and capturing the extract and the quintessence of a phenomenon and acquiring knowledge regarding given events and incidents [19]. The ethical challenge as a phenomenon is yet to be

accurately elucidated in our country. There is a scarcity of the research in this regard. Ethical challenge experience cannot be studied in quantitative research since it is a completely subjective phenomenon. Therefore, phenomenology is envisaged as more appropriate an interpretation for the recognition of the structure and the essence of ethical challenges experience. Thus, the authors adopted the above mentioned approach to the study of ethical challenge experience. Quantitative research does not offer the required flexibility and subtlety for exploring a live experience of the phenomena that is somehow connected to the way human beings interact and the rest of the qualitative research is devoid of the necessary effect in this area; hence, the most appropriate method for gaining an insight into the depth of such phenomena's experience and meaning is phenomenology [20].

The main assumptions governing the current research paper correspond to the naturalism paradigm. The study is carried out in an environment of the university's and hospital's faculty members. All faculty members in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences were selected as the study participants and were diversely appointed from the men and women teaching and working in various fields of study in different departments. Sampling was based on a goal-oriented method and the faculty members willing to take part in the study were interviewed.

To gather the data, deep, face-to-face, and semi-structured individual interviews were performed after the official permits had been acquired. To perform interviews, firstly, a list of the various study fields and departments in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences was procured. Interview guides were applied so as not lose track of the interview. Interview guide is a collection of the codified open questions designed and based on the study objectives and the research team notions and they were revised repeatedly after each interview if it was deemed necessary. Simultaneous data collection and data analyses greatly contributed to the interview guide's revision and correction. Of course, there were cases that appeared in the course of interview where questions outside the interview guide were raised and asked as made necessary by the expediency of the conversation trend. But, the existence of the guide helped the researcher have more control over the interview content and length. Every interview took 60 to 120 minutes.

Interviews continued up to a certain saturation point at which time it was thought that the interviews did not contribute any novel idea requiring a new code and the data had become reiterative. The researcher was forced to refer to the interviewee for a second time in five cases to perform another interview. The participants were asked to arbitrarily specify interview time and place. Regarding the study objectives, before the outset of the interview the interviewees were provided with the explanations on why the interview has to be recorded, their voluntary participation, interviewee information and identity confidentiality, then they were asked to arbitrarily specify the time and the place of the interviews and finally a written letter of agreement was acquired from each of

them. At the beginning of every interview, the participants were asked to introduce themselves in brief and questions were asked regarding their age, field of study and the place of education. Then, the questions pertaining to the phenomenon of concern were asked and investigations on the participants' experiences of ethical challenges continued. The discussions, having a consideration of time framework continued to the extent that the interviewer made sure that they well understood the offered concepts. The interview form contained two sets of questions. One set comprised the major questions of the interview and the second set was considered as the follow-up questions. The questions were designed based on the study objectives and the extant subjective knowledge and changes were made in case it was deemed necessary during the course of interview. The main questions were: What are your experiences regarding the ethical challenges? What are your memories of the ethics and the challenges related thereto?

The researcher tried to exactly reveal the participants' answers to each of the aforementioned questions by using follow-up questions and sentences such as "could you explain more?" or "... what do you mean?". Follow-up questions were raised based on the information offered by the participant so as to clarify the questioned concept. Interviews continued until detailed and sufficient information had been obtained and they were recorded by asking for its permissibility from the participants and then each interview was exactly transcribed onto paper documents immediately after several rounds of listening on the same day so as to get the required feedback for the upcoming interviews and/or for data adequacy purposes. The transcribed interviews were again matched with the recorded information. The keywords or the intended codes were extracted from the text and then analyses followed.

Participants' demographic information was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics. To prevent personal thoughts and beliefs interfering with and influencing the study, the author identified and discarded them before starting the interview and also during the data collection and data analysis phases. The method applied for qualitative data analysis herein was ethical phenomenology as put forth by Mandlebaum (1969) [17]. In analyzing the ethical experiences, Mandlebaum's phenomenological approach follows the thoughts and notions held by Husserl, the founder of phenomenology. Through pondering over Husserl's phenomenology, Spiegelberg defined this approach in several steps:

The first step initiates with the survey of trivial phenomena. The raw perception or the preliminary intuition of the phenomenon matters a lot. In the next step after the preliminary intuition of the phenomenon is analyzing the results. Of course, phenomena analysis does not mean that we divide results into separate components rather it means isolating the constituent element of the phenomena and clarifying its relationships with similar phenomena. Through putting phenomena in certain sets, we can describe its features as well as its interrelationships. In the third step, those sets of such phenomena that revolve

around a single point are segregated. In the fourth step, we deal with the survey of the way such phenomena has come into existence. The fifth step incorporates the analysis and the description of the way the phenomena has been shaped into our awareness. The sixth step is suspension in which we solely rely on what resides only in our awareness and knowledge. This stage is called phenomenological reduction [17]. With an abstraction of the concepts for the purpose of describing the studied phenomenon, a comprehensive definition of "the ethical challenge experiences by faculty members in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences" was presented and then evidence was quoted from the data texts for each concept.

To confirm the validity and the accuracy of the present research, the four criteria offered by Lincoln and Goba, namely credibility, dependability, confirmability and data transferability, were investigated. The increase in the number of the interviews was the first step that was devised by the author to augment the data accuracy. The researcher endeavoured to develop his relationship with the participants. After the interviews were written down, the participants were provided with the study findings and they offered their ideas regarding the findings' in accordance with their experiences and evaluated the findings' accuracy and credibility.

To insure dependability, additional to the researchers, a peer group, and specialist in qualitative research, was also asked to investigate the texts in order for the analysis process to be verified. Other activities that were carried out in parallel to verify the research authenticity were: guiding the research based on the study plan, recording the participants' interviews and transcribing them.

By preserving the written interviews as documents during the whole course of the research, the author guaranteed the research confirmability. The researcher's interest in the studied phenomenon, constant involvement in data collection and analysis, peers' revisions and qualitative research experts' reviews, searching for evidence and contradicting articles and also making efforts to acquire others' opinions in this regard, were among the other factors contributing to the research confirmability.

Results

In the present qualitative phenomenological study, the information reached a point of saturation after interviewing 20 faculty members from Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences. The professors were from medicine, nursing and midwifery, Paramedics, hygiene, dentistry and pharmacy departments of the university. 55% of the participants were men and 45% were women. The men and women's average age was in the range of 44 ± 5.08 and 42 ± 3 , respectively, and their average work record was 16 ± 6 for men and 14 ± 6.03 for women. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants as separated by gender. After the interview contexts had been analyzed, three topics and ten categories were obtained and, the obtained topics were titled educational ethics

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the participants as separated by gender

Variable	male		female		total	
	frequency	percent	frequency	percent	frequency	percent
Faculty						
Medicine	2	50%	2	50%	4	20%
Nursing and Midwifery	1	75%	3	25%	4	20%
Paramedics	2	50%	2	50%	4	20%
Hygiene	2	50%	2	50%	4	20%
Dentistry	2	100%	-	-	2	10%
Pharmacy	2	100%	-	-	2	10%
total	11	55%	9	45%	20	100%
Age (year)	44±5.08		42±3		43±4	
Work record (year)	16±6		14±6.03		15±6	

challenges, research ethics challenges and social ethics challenges. The ethical challenges of faculty members of Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences were defined as stated in the following words based on the extracted content and categories: "faculty members confront the ethical challenges in their work environment and these include a combination of ethical ethics challenges, research ethics challenges, research ethics challenges and social ethics challenges. Educational ethics challenges are derived from scientific under performance, paying less attention to scientific enhancement, inappropriate evaluation and management of the educational system. Research ethics challenges are also experienced due to improper evaluation systems and frauds and violations in research affairs and social ethics challenges are revealed in the form of ethical sensitivities, understating the professional ethics value and sense of duty as well as improper social interactions".

1. Educational Ethics Challenges:

From the faculty members' point of view, educational ethics are important topics that are needed to be taken into consideration by all of the professors in their entire stages of teaching. Examples of ethical challenges posed by the faculty members are: down-performances in transferring knowledge, less attention to scientific enhancement, evaluations being nonstandard and educational mismanagement.

1.1. Scientific down-performances:

From the perspective of the faculty members, paying less attention to what a professor is obliged to offer to the students is one of the important educational ethics challenges. Such an issue in a Medical Sciences University can lead to imperfect and incorrect learning in the students which would eventually cause endangering the care-receivers' health and, consequently, irreparable outcomes.

"Some of the professors are indifferent. They do not take their jobs seriously. Or, they might have other responsibilities and these, all in all, exemplify instances of down-performances in transferring knowledge to the

students. As an example, the professors sometimes become so engaged in patients' treatment in clinics that they prefer to devote all their time to curing of the patients and therefore they would not have much time to spend for the students" (Participant No.7, medicine department professor).

1.2. Paying Less Attention to Scientific Enhancement:

Some professors do not have sufficient motivation for updating their knowledge for various reasons and they are not looking for enhancing themselves scientifically and educationally. The faculty members participating in the present research do not pay much attention to this topic and consider it as a challenge in educational ethics.

"Some professors do not have enough time to gather new topics and correct their lesson plans. Unfortunately, it is a prevalent vision in managerial ranks that the professors are naturally interested in teaching and even if their salaries are cut they would continue their teaching. Of course, this is a simplistic analysis. Even those professors who teach in the universities for one or two years for the sake of achieving higher K-coefficients prefer their obligation to end rapidly, so they do not spend much time teaching the university students" (Participant No.9, dentistry department).

1.3. Evaluations Being Nonstandard:

The lack of appropriate scales and indices for the evaluation of the faculty members' performance can play a role in the emergence of the various and unexpected scientific, educational and ethical issues which can, altogether, cause a reduction or suppression of the motivations or even becoming inclined towards unethical issues.

"Evaluation is outcome-oriented. Evaluations are seeking to reach a goal. It is not important by what means or by what mechanism the objective is accomplished. One should not always concentrate on the students and the results. If the professors' output is only to be evaluated by the articles or the high marks it makes the individuals only think of ways to attain higher marks in the tests and evaluations" (Participant NO. 3, professor in nursing and midwifery department).

1.4. Educational Mismanagement:

Educational managers play a considerable role in the university department for elevating the professors' satisfaction and the creation of motivation in them so as to enhance their scientific and ethical levels. If the method of management causes pressure and tension, tendencies towards unethical cases rise up.

"Feedback is not positive. You are not asked about the quality of what you do. It does not matter how you accomplish an assignment. It does not matter if you are satisfied or not. Nobody asks about the facilities. The important ideas here are that one should finish the class on time, apprenticeships should go on and in the end a test should be carried out" (Participant No. 4, nursing and midwifery professor).

2. Research Ethics Challenges:

According to the idea that the university, inter alia, expects the faculty members to participate in the studies and research and offer research accomplishment, therefore, there would come about the possibility of professors faced with the ethical challenges regarding research-related issues, as well. In professors' ideas, cases like fraudulent activities and changes in organizational values are among the research ethics challenges with which they are confronted.

2.1. Fraud in Research:

Due to the compulsoriness of publishing articles in faculty members promotion plans, unfortunately, inclinations towards unethical behaviors and occasionally perpetrating counterfeits in research activities are observed, although the Committee of Ethics in Research exerts serious controls in this regard and tries to prevent such fraudulent activities from taking place.

"Unethical issues have become frequent in research and there are cases of fraudulent activities reported. Even, a research work is sometimes divided into sections and articles are extracted and published from them; even worse than that happens when some professors publish the students' works bearing their own names and they do not even mention the name of the student" (Participant No.12, Hygiene Department Professor).

2.2. Changing the Organizational Values:

Although faculty members doing research is of great importance, paying no attention to the individuals' tendencies and expecting the professors to carry out activities beyond their capacities can cause the appearance of discontent. These expectations should be in one single form in all of the departments associated to a university and there should not be seen any injustice by the professors by any means.

"They do not consider the individuals' interests at all. They only expect you to carry out educational tasks. All your time is spent with the class and in learning activities; there would remain no time for research. The other departments supervise their apprenticeship activities and it is considered as a curriculum unit so the professors can spend the rest of their time on research activities" (Participant No.19,

Nursing and Midwifery Department Professor"

3. Social Ethics Challenges:

University is a small community and if the social life principles are not observed therein, the individuals are faced with challenges. In this small community, the professors predominantly play as positive role-models for the students and they can be the students' pacemaker in every single part of their behaviors and speeches. But, changes are sometimes created in the social atmosphere of the university which would be followed by unpleasant outcomes. In professors' opinions, there are cases like feeling no sense of duty, understating the professional ethics value, ethical sensitivities drop-downs and improper interactions which are deemed as social ethics challenges and problems.

3.1. Absence of Sense of Duty:

Sometimes, paying attention to individual and organizational issues causes the individuals to forget what a critical responsibility they have and that they are responsible for the students they are teaching and besides teaching them with the knowledge and correct scientific ways of conduct, they should be an appropriate ethical role-model for the students.

"Some faculty members only think of getting their own jobs accomplished. They only want to write articles to promote. They ask for help from the students in carrying out their research tasks. But, they do not think they are, as well, responsible scientifically and ethically for what they offer to their students" (Participant No.8, Dentistry Department Professor)

3.2. Understating the Professional Ethics:

Professors' ethical features and their adherence to the ethical principles are very important and it highly influences the students' social growth and professional upbringing. Any sort of unfair judgment and treatment by the professors is scrutinized by the students.

"Professors should have professional ethics. In treating the students, colleagues and patients, their ethical patterns are highly concentrated by the students. If they fail to behave correctly or if they exercise discrimination, students learn. Sometimes, it is seen that the professors treat care-receivers as their research specimen and this is highly effective on the students' perspectives" (Participant No.6, Medicine Department Professor)

3.3. Ethical Sensitivity Drop:

If anti-ethics become prevalent and common in a society, the individuals gradually adapt themselves to such anti-ethics and their moral values would be forgotten and they would be considered as ordinary and repetitive issues that can impose irreversible harm on the society's ethical values depending on the degree to which they are heinous.

"Some improper deeds are repeated to the extent that the others become indifferent to them. Things like speaking with insulting words, violating the patients' privacy, research fraud and reducing the education time have become ordinary because they have been repeated many

times and everyone has lost their sensitivity to such things” (Participant No.15, Paramedics Department Professor).

3.4. *Incorrect Interactions:*

Establishing correct relationships and interactions in the universities is one of the preliminary principles of creating a healthy educational atmosphere for the university students and any sort of unhealthy social relations can lead to the creation of widespread social corruptions.

“Illegitimate relationships are big problems. The student has obtained a low mark, say 2 or 3, and all of a sudden s/he is given a pass mark in his or her report card or a student might be caught doing violations on a test but everything is considered unseen and ignored and issues like disrespecting one another and even bribery can cause corruption in the universities” (Participant No.11, Pharmacy Department Professor).

Discussion

Since phenomenological approaches to ethics cause transparency in the individuals’ behavioural examples (21), the respectable professors were asked to express their major concerns with no consideration and conservatism based on the same approach. Therefore, the results obtained from the interviews can be taken into consideration in making efforts to mitigate the ethical harm in the atmosphere governing Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences and copying and dispersing this to the other universities.

The results obtained based on the demographic features of the participants who were from all of the departments and had a high work record were summarized into three main axes and ten secondary topics all of which indicated that reviewing and revising measures regarding some cases are necessary and should be taken immediately.

The first section pertaining to the educational ethics challenges regarding the four variables pointed out in the interviews implies that the professors are faced with a motivation dropping trend and educational mismanagement manifested in not paying attention to the professors’ educational functions and the evaluation systems being nonstandard as well as the lack of attention that was paid by the faculty members to their own scientific enhancement especially in clinics, all leading to scientific down-performance by the professors in transferring knowledge to the students which would eventually result in students’ decline of learning. Therefore, with a constant supervision on the educational trends and functions of the professors and also by holding conferences and scientific meetings in areas like educational epistemology the necessary steps should be taken in line with developing and fertilizing the faculty members’ motivation because the studies have shown that in spite of various methods devised in professionally developing the students, teaching by the professors is still an effective method for students’ learning [9].

In the second section, the researchers dealt with the research ethics challenges which are in fact yielded from

the feedback professors received from their studies for elevating their teaching skills and it will finally cause their scientific vigour to be strengthened; and the obtained results are suggestive of faculty members’ low concern in this regard. Of course, the most important ethical harm in the present research paper is violation and the universities are faced with different kinds of it and it has unfortunately caused serious harm to the research procedures and trends [22]. Plagiarism is the product of abnormalities resulting from getting non-academic regulations entered into Iran’s academic areas. When the scientific life regulations and educational institutions’ rules are imbalanced and the scientific spaces are not allowed to freely expand and reach maturity based on their independent professional regulations, the result would be norms and values’ weakening and the effects of such a weakness would be observed in scientific socialization and scientific ethics weakening and plagiarism which is a heinous sign thereof [23].

And, the third section deals with the social ethics challenges for which the interviewees pointed to four harms, the same as the educational ethics challenges. These are: feeling no sense of duty, understating the value of professional ethics, ethical sensitivity decline and improper interactions all of which are results of the university management paying less or no attention to coordinating the professors. On the other hand, disregarding the professional ethics principles leads to the behavioural discrimination in respect to the students and colleagues. Unfortunately, there is no fascination in the universities and some of the professors do not exhibit good behaviours. Furthermore, the universities do not treat students very well [1].

Conclusion

Paying attention to all three proposed aspects in terms of the ethics causes an elevation in the ethics in the educational environments and increases the faculty members’ motivation for becoming inclined towards truthfulness and righteousness. Among the limitations that the authors were faced with in getting the present research activity done was the participants’ possible engagement in daily and educational activities and this made the researchers face temporal constraints for performing the interviews. To overcome this limitation, the researchers tried to take most advantage out of their leisure times, meanwhile making prior coordination with the professors in regard to the interview sessions.

Based on the study findings, professors in Hormozgan University of Medical Sciences believe that we are confronted with serious ethical harm in terms of educational, research and social ethics and finding a way out of this mess depends on the change that is needed to be made in the attitudes in terms of organizational behaviour and treating appropriately the cases of the primary study principles violations. Moreover, the necessity to hold specialized classes on professional ethics in line with stabilizing the occupational ethics and moderation in behaviour for the purpose of decreasing the ethical harm among the faculty members is a fundamental issue and there is a need, as

well, for avoiding ethical bottlenecks by breaching the ethical principles and social norms. Therefore, a favourable and exhilarating atmosphere can be made to govern the academic community through observing the ethical and professional ethics thereby barring the anti-ethics takeover of the education trends.

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