

Nursing Empowerment in Iran

Professor Alireza Nikbakht Nasrabadi

Tehran University of Medical Sciences

School of Nursing and Midwifery

The concept of empowerment is a core concept in nursing and health services. Empowered nurses foster better health outcomes for patients. Nurses who perceive themselves to be empowered are more likely to use more effective work practices resulting in positive patient outcomes.

Since 1915 that nursing care was carried out by household women or servants in Iran, Iranian nursing profession tries to reach to its full capacity for participating in the maintenance of public health, its desire to develop is strongly influenced by cultural, economic, and religious factors.

Iran, a country of more than 81 million has a national health service which employs over 80,000 nursing personnel who provide nursing care in general and specialty hospitals. In academic settings, there are 102 government and 82 private nursing schools around the country which are training 50000 nursing students in B.S. degree, and 5220 and 560 students in M.S. and Ph.D. degree respectively. Total 1940 teachers have the responsibility of training all nursing students. In Iran health policies in general are made in the Ministry of Health Policy Making Council. As well, the Deputy for Education (via the Nursing Board) and the Deputy of the Curative Affairs of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education(MoHME) are responsible for regulating the nursing education and the environment of practice. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also, are organizations related to policy making for nursing in Iran. As a result of the deputy of Nursing in ministry of health activates and efforts, all nurses and nursing students in Iran obtain nursing license within the frameworks of the registered nurse (RN) program. In recent years, the presence of Iranian research and education in the international science community has been on a rising trend. In the field of nursing, the number of internationally published articles soared twofold each year. With the increasing number of academic staff and postgraduate students, especially nursing PhD candidates, the amount of medical articles is expected to surge within the coming years. Nursing associations and organizations are deemed to be effective tools in promoting the profession. Iranian scientific association of nursing science, Iranian Scientific Association of Cardiac Nurses, medical-surgical scientific association, Pediatric Nursing scientific association are nursing scientific associations which are working in different specialty nursing. In the field of internationalization, the National Plan of International Development of Medical Education was designed with the aim of identifying available potentials in all the universities of medical sciences, encouraging the development of international standards of medical education, and planning for the utilization of the existing capacity in Islamic republic of Iran. Iran has accredited as an agent for International Classification for Nursing Practice (ICNP) from ICN in the Middle East. Many joint programs and international workshops were hold in Iran.

Nursing empowerment in Iran is in a good progress. Although, there are some challenges in this area but great efforts have been made to overcome these challenges. Limited human resource, inadequate job growth, nursing staff shortage, job dissatisfaction, and poor social position of nurses are some challenges in nursing professionalism in Iran.