Effectiveness Of Internship Practices By Students Of Medical Services Vocational Schools Of Higher Education

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ABSTRACT
As in the curricula of all disciplines based on practice, theoretica linformation and practic eshould complement one another in the Vocational School of Health Sciences.Clinical practices constitute a significant part of the education provided in the Vocational High Schools. In thi scontext, internship practices provide the students with a significant opportunity to improve their skills. In the present study, the aim is to determine the contributions of internship practice stop reparing studentst professional life and provide recommendations for possible problems. The study group consists of 120 second-gradestudents studying at theVocational Health High School of Karadeniz Technical University in the fall semester of 2015-2016 academic year. Data of there search were obtained via "Internship Efficiency Survey". At the end of the analysis of the data, it was found out that students generally find internship activities, which are practice-based trainings, useful and beneficial.

INTRODUCTION

It is important to set up a visual and auditory background to establish persistency in vocational school of higher education (VSHE) education. While people are able to remember 10% of things they read, 20% of things they see, 50% of things they see and hear and 70% of things they mention, they remember 90% of the things they do and mention(http://www.willarworklearning.com/2006/10/people-remember.html).
In this case, technical background is important. As it is in the training schedules of all disciplines based on practice, theoretical information and implementation mush complement each other in medical services VSHEs. Internship practices constitute a significant portion of the education in VSHEs. In this context, internship implementations provide significant opportunities for skill development in students Mcmillan&Schumacher (2001).
Internship practices as indispensable elements of medical services VSHEs, ensure the development of positive behavior changes by providing students with the means to spend considerable amount of time with several possible role models (Velioğlu 94). However, in order to establish permanent behavioral changes in students, practice areas must be appropriate for the purposes of the training. In planning the internship training, in addition to the suitability of the practice areas in terms of the training, other things such as the numbers and skills of the educators who will manage and evaluate students are also important. The roles and function of the educators during the internship training are very significant for the students. Three factors that support learning in practice are the sufficient amount of trainer support, improvement and monitoring of internship training areas, and increased cooperation with the management of hospitals for placement of students in suitable clinics (Abaans, 1997, Karaöz, 1997, Brown et al., 2005).
Internship training leads to the incorporation of the theoretical knowledge and practice, as well as learning by doing in a real life environment Aştı&Taşocak (1995). The goal is to firstly achieve the improvement of psychomotor skills of the students, and then combine/integrate their theoretical knowledge with their technical skills, and establish permanent behavioral changes (Sözen, 2003, p.10).
The student, by showing cognitive and psychomotor improvements through his/her clinical experience, develops the necessities of professionalism such as adequacy in providing services, communication, decision making and being able to work as a team memberGünay&Özer (2014).
This study aims to determine the contribution of internship practices in preparing students for professional life and suggest solutions to possible issues.
The following research questions were considered in order to reach this aim:

- What are the levels of the students in terms of their awareness and behaviors regarding internship practices?

- Is there a statistically significant difference in the students' awareness and behaviors based on their sex?
- Is there a statistically significant difference in the students' awareness and behaviors based on their departments of study?

THE STUDY

This study is a descriptive work based on a screening method on the effectiveness of internship training of students of medical services vocational schools of higher educations in hospitals. In screening models, the even, individual or object that is subject to the research is aimed to be described as it stands in its own conditions(Karasar, 2006).

Population and Sample

The population of the research consists of second year students enrolled in the Medical Services and Techniques department of the Medical Services Vocational School of Higher EducationatKaradeniz Technical University in the fall semester of the year 2015. The sample of the study consists of associate health personnel candidates (N=120) including students in programs of Medical Lab. (N=43), Medical Doc. (N=42) and Emergency Medicine Tech. (N=35). Demographic characteristics of the participating students are given in the table below.

Table 1 - Distribution of Students Based on Their Demographic Characteristics

	Variables	**f**	**%**
Sex	Male	68	56.7
	Female	52	43.3
Program	M. Lab.	43	35.8
	M. Doc.	42	35.0
	E. M. Tech.	35	29.2

Data Collection Tools

The data of the study were collected with '*Internship Effectiveness Awareness*' and '*Internship Effectiveness Behavior*' scales by utilizing the existing literature and referring to expert opinion. Each scale consisted of 13 items and items were prepared in the form of 5-point Likert-scale. The '*Internship Effectiveness Awareness'* scale was assessed based on responses 'completely agree', 'agree', 'undecided', 'disagree' and 'completely disagree', while the '*Internship Effectiveness Behavior'* scale was assessed based on responses 'always', 'mostly', 'sometimes', 'rarely' and 'never'. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the Internship Effectiveness Awareness Scale was 0.78, while the same coefficient was 0.74 for the Internship Effectiveness Behavior Scale.

Table2 - IntervalsConsidered in Analyzingthe Data of theMeasurementTool

Rating	**Response Interval**
Completely Agree	4.20-5.00
Always	
Agree	3.40-4.19
Mostly	
Undecided	2.60-3.39
Sometimes	
Disagree	1.80-2.59
Rarely	
Completely Disagree	1.00-1.79
Never	

Analysis of the Data

- The data were analyzed in the SPSS-17 software. In the analysis of the data, in addition to the assessment of descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test was also used.

FINDINGS

The scores students received from the '*Internship Effectiveness Awareness and Behavior'* scales were analyzed using descriptive statistics regarding the 1st research question, and independent samples t-test regarding the 2nd and 3rd research questions. Arithmetic average and standard deviation distributions are given in the tables.

Table3 - DescriptiveStatistics on theInternshipEffectivenessAwarenessandBehaviorScales

Type of Scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	X	SD
Int. Eff. Awareness	120	1.00	5.00	4.24	0.44
Int. Eff. Behavior	120	1.00	5.00	3.41	0.45

Table three shows the scores of 120 prospective medical professionals. If we look at the table, the arithmetic average of the scores the students received from the internship effectiveness awareness scale was X=4.24, while the average was X=3.41 for the internship effectiveness behavior scale.

Table4 - InternshipEffectivenessAwarenessScale t-test Results of the Prospective Associate Healthcare Professionals Based on Their Sex

Sex	N	X	SD	t	dF	p
Female	68	4.49	0.43	2.09	44	0.03*
Male	52	4.23	0.65			
*p<0.05						

Table 4 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in favor of female students in the internship effectiveness awareness scores [t(44) =-2.09; p<0.05]. It may be seen that female students had an average score of 4.49 in the internship effectiveness awareness scale, while male students had an average score of 4.23.

Table5 - InternshipEffectivenessBehaviorScale t-test Results of theProspectiveAssociate Healthcare ProfessionalsBased on TheirSex

Sex	N	X	SD	t	dF	p
Female	68	3.12	0.62	-1.38	44	0.18
Male	52	3.311	0.58			

Table 5 shows no statistically significant differences in the internship effectiveness behaviour score based on the students' sex [t(44)=-1.38; p>0.05]. It may be seen that female students had an average score of 3.12 in the internship effectiveness behavior scale, while male students had an average score of 3.31.

Table6 - InternshipEffectivenessAwarenessScale t-test Results of theProspectiveAssociate Healthcare ProfessionalsBased on The Programs TheyAreEnrolledIn

Prog.	N	X	SD	t	dF	p
M. Lab.	43	4.18	0.42	-0.07	44	0.12
M. Doc.	42	4.23	0.42			
E. M. Tech.	35	4.31	0.39			

Table 6 shows no statistically significant differences in the internship effectiveness awareness score based on the programs the students are enrolled in [t(44) = -0.07; p>0.05]. The average internship effectiveness awareness scores of M. Lab., M. Doc. and E. M. Tech. students were 4.18, 4.23 and 4.31 respectively.

Table7- InternshipEffectivenessBehaviorScale t-test Results of theProspectiveAssociate Healthcare ProfessionalsBased on The Programs TheyAreEnrolledIn

Prog.	N	X	SD	T	dF	p
M. Lab.	43	3.32	0.41	-0.38	44	0.82
M. Doc.	42	3.37	0.36			
E. M. Tech.	35	3.46	0.39			

Tablo 7 shows no statistically significant differences in the internship effectiveness behavior score based on the programs the students are enrolled in [t(44)=- 0.38; p>0.05]. The average internship effectiveness behavior scores of M. Lab., M. Doc. and E. M. Tech. students were 3.32, 3.37 and 3.46 respectively.

CONCLUSIONS

- In this study which examined the internship activity awareness and behavior of prospective associate healthcare professionals, it was observed that the students generally had high scores in terms of both awareness and behavior. The minimum score on the scales was 1.00, while the maximum was 5.00. These findings show that the average scores of the participating students were on the level of 'completely agree' for the *Internship Effectiveness Awareness Scale,* and on the level of 'mostly' for the *Internship Effectiveness Behavior Scale.*
- The participating students generally agreed that internship activity, which is a training in practice was effective. It was observed that the skill training was important for their profession, the skill training duration was adequate, they were regularly inspected by the faculty members of the school, and they were satisfied with their participation in the training.
- Based on the results of this study, it may be argued that, while they have some shortcomings, internship skill trainings are generally functional and they serve their purpose. However, it was determined that internship students had negative views about abiding by hospital rules during their internship. Additionally, the students stated that emergency treatment and first aid training were not provided adequately in their schools. It may be argued that implementations supervised by responsible experts would lead to more serious and effective results and provide students with opportunities to functionally improve themselves before their profession.
- According to the analysis of the content in the internship effectiveness behavior scale, it was determined that skill training was important, the students had the chance to practice what they had learned, they complied with hospital regulations and the staff supported the students. However, it was found that the students attending the internship programs did not have adequate first aid and emergency treatment training, and they may pose serious problems in cases of emergencies. This situation may be considered as a negative point in terms of the effectiveness of the implementation.
- While there were no statistically significant differences found in the students' internship effectiveness behavior scale scores in term of their sex, there were significant differences in their internship effectiveness awareness scales scores in favor of the female students.
- The reason for the result in favor of female students might have occurred as a consequence of the model citizen image attributed to women's role in almost every society (Sadık&Çakan, 2010). According to Kağıtçıbaşı (1990), women are generally expected to be warm-hearted, empathic, sensitive, tolerant, compassionate, thoughtful, tidy and responsible. It is believed that this expectation of roles in by the society lead women to be more sensitive in communication (cited in Sadık and Sari, 2010; Çimen, Yılmaz&Çimen, 2001). Gama (2003) suggested that this result might be considered positive as female students will be prospective mothers in the future.
- There were no statistically significant differences found in the students' average scores in both scales based on the programs they were enrolled in. Additionally, E. M. Tech. students had higher scores in both scales. Consequently, it was observed that the students built up an awareness towards internship practices, however small this awareness might be, and this awareness was reflected on their behaviors in parallel to the education they received. However, these data also show that the reflection of awareness onto the students' behaviors is not on the desired level.
- It is a known issue that the supervising staff in hospitals cannot spare adequate amounts of time for students during their skills training, as the staff have other duties. Therefore, this issue may be resolved by dedicating personnel responsible only for these activities and allocating the entire shifts of these employees to the guidance of the students.

- Students receiving skills training in hospitals are treated like personnel, and they are included in departments where there are shortages of employees. This is not done by assessing the skills and knowledge bases of the students. Thus, the shortcomings of the students may create problems at some points. Therefore, managers of such establishments should stop seeing the students as personnel, and remember that they are students who are there to reinforce their education.
- It would be useful for students to be involved in departments where they can get rid of their shortcomings, reinforce the theoretical education they have received, and find a chance to practice, instead of departments with shortages of personnel. Additionally, in order to eliminate theoretical or practical shortcomings detected, capable personnel in the hospital may provide in-service training, and such issues may be resolved.

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