

The Importance of Bioethics Subject in Healthcare Education in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT : Healthcare professionals should understand that every care given to the patient must be conducted in order to achieve patient safety. That's why all kinds of healthcare intervention to human being must be made in accordance bioethical principles. These researches aimed to elaborate the concept of bioethics and explain the importance of bioethics educations in healthcare education in Indonesia. This research is a descriptive analytical research using secondary data available to public. Data were obtained by means of literature search using "google machine" with "bioethics" as main keyword accompanied with "concept" and "healthcare education". Data obtained were analyzed using qualitative method. Raw data were reduced to the most relevant data by doing content analysis. The remaining relevant data were then used to analyze the purpose of the research. The research found that the four bioethics basic principles shall be used to solve all problems that might occur or happen during medication care. In order for the healthcare professionals to understand patient's need for patient oriented medication, they need to know the concept and application of bioethics. Current healthcare curricula showed that even ethics were introduced to the student, but most of them rarely discussed on bioethics principles.

KEYWORDS: bioethics, healthcare education, autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice.

I. INTRODUCTION

Health has always become one of the most important part of human life. *Mens sana in corpore sano* is a Latin phrase that means "a healthy mind in a healthy body." Even though the phrase itself was never meant to be used for sports activities, it was famous among sportsmen [1] [2] [3]. Currently the phrase was also used in healthcare [4] [5] [6] [7]. This meant that in order people to be able to do "good things" they must be physically healthy. It the role of health promotion and public health that make people to be always in healthy conditions. It is by nature that people want to be healthy, however illness and sick cannot be avoided. When somebody get sick, he or she must be cured. To be cured, interventions must be made by health givers. Such interventions are part of curative and rehabilitative conditions. Medical doctor needs to examine the patient, which may include taking some actions that will need the consent of the patient. This will need a good communication between the physician and the patient. In pharmaceutical care, pharmacists as part of healthcare community, are also required to communicate with patient before he or she delivers drugs and/ or other kind of medication tools to the patients.

Every kind of interventions must be given in order to make the patient return to its normal conditions, even sometimes it is impossible to do it. Pharmacists while giving pharmaceutical care shall understand that whatever kind of caring he or she provided to the patient he or she must do it for the benefit of the patient. Among several things is the obligation of the pharmacists to avoid providing medicine irrational drug use [8] [9] [10]. Since all healthcare intervention must be focused on patient, patient-oriented medication become be attentive from time to time. Healthcare practitioners and healthcare givers must make decision only for and in consideration of the patients' interests. Patient safety become a phrase that must be followed in every healthcare providers and healthcare institutions. This also means that healthcare professionals should understand that every type of care given to the patients must be conducted in view of patient safety. One of the main knowledges that healthcare professional must have in order to make patient-oriented decision for patient safety is bioethics [11] [12] [13] [14] [15]. The aim of this research is to elaborate the concept of bioethics in relation to human intervention in healthcare services and explain the importance of biotehics educations in healthcare professionals' education in Indonesia.

II. METHODOLOGY

Data used in this research were secondary data, which are available for public. Data are obtained through literature research using "google" machine. The research used "bioethics" as main keyword accompanied with "concept" and "healthcare education". All collected data were screened using content analysis leaving to only

the most relevant data that will be used to answer the aim of this research. The remaining relevant data were analysed using qualitative approach. It used normative legal research with comparative approach. Normative legal research was used because this research aimed to find out the norms embedded in the basic principle of bioethics. Comparative approach was conducted in order to find out how these basic norms of bioethics' principle was implemented in several countries in the world. This research does not specifically choose any specific countries, as well as to determine a certain number of countries for the study. It was chosen randomly and ended whenever this research found them sufficient. This research required two months period to collect data and to do the analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research found that there were at least three versions of the introduction of the term bioethics. One version mentioned that the term was used for the first time in 1970 in the United States by Potter in 1970. Dr. Van Potter himself was a researcher at the Center for Cancer Research in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Wisconsin [16,17,18]. Another version stated that in the same period with Potter, André Hellegers used the term in his discussions with the Kennedy family to establish of a center for biomedical ethics [16,19]. The other version, which was the oldest referred back to 1926(7) when Fritz Jahr discussed on biological research [20,21,22]. The term Bioethics came from the Greek word bios which means life and ethos which means behavior [20]. The term itself has shown us that bioethics is different from ethics. In some references, the terms bioethics may be used interchangeable with medical ethics when people discussed on physician-patients relation [23,24] and health ethics [25]. While ethics are dealing with behavior, which tell people on what should be done and what should not be done; bioethics remind people of ethics in relation to life [26]. Encyclopedia of Bioethics defined bioethics as “the systematic study of the moral dimensions—including moral vision, decisions, conduct, and policies—of the life sciences and health care, employing a variety of ethical methodologies in an interdisciplinary setting” [27]. Bioethics can be defined as the discipline dealing with the ethical implications of biological research and its applications, especially in medicine. Bioethics includes the study of what is right and wrong in new discoveries and techniques in biology, such as genetic engineering and the transplantation of organs [20].

In simple definition, bioethics is part of ethical code of conduct. Bioethics are ethics that deals only with the life of living things, including the life of human being. Therefore when healthcare professional deals with any kind of intervention against human, he or she need to consider bioethics. Ethics concerns about norms and values, about rights and wrongs. Whenever ethics will be applied to any essential part of human, including clinical research and medicine, all those moral principles are defined as bioethics and medical ethics, respectively [28]. Bioethics include ethical code of conducts in relation to any advancements in biological sciences and biotechnology, such as organ transplantation, genetics, and molecular biology [25]. Bioethics also concerned with ethical issues of biomedical scientific technologies such as **stem cell therapy**, **xenotransplantation and the use of animal models in research and biotechnology** including cloning, **gene therapy**, human genetic engineering, manipulation of basic biology through altered DNA, etc. [28]. Bioethics applied since the beginning of human life [29] until the end of human life (defining death) [30,31]. Ethics will include the relation between the same healthcare professionals, or between physician and pharmacists or nurse, or between healthcare professionals and healthcare providers or institutions, or between healthcare professionals and patients. With respect to the latest, the ethics are considered as bioethics. Even though the term bioethics has been introduced long time ago, it was only since year 2000 that the concept of bioethics was reintroduced again. It can be said that it has not been in use for more than 30 years since Porter mentioned it in 1970 in the United States [16]. The concept of bioethics includes for basic principles. They are autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice [28, 29, 32, 33,34,35,36]. All these four principles should be respected in bioethics, whenever healthcare professionals would like to make any intervention with respect to human life. None of these four principles are priority to the other. The principles are prima facie obligations that each must be respected equally in no particular order.

Autonomy means that one should respect the right of individuals to make their own decisions by respecting the decision-making capacities of autonomous persons; enabling individuals to make reasoned informed choices [37,38,39]. The principle of autonomy is acknowledged in Article 5 of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights [40] and Article 3 point a of Convention On The Rights Of Persons With Disabilities [41]. Implementing this principle means to let the patient decides for his or her own life. However, the healthcare professional shall inform the patient everything the patient shall know with respect to the intervention, that is useful for the patient to make decision [39]. Event in over the counter pharmaceutical industries, each kind of information provided to public to be read must be sufficient enough for the prospective buyer to understand and

make decision to buy or not to buy the relevant medicine [42,43,44]. Autonomy comes up with communications and informed consent, even it might have slight differences in many multicultural settings around the world [45] and from the view of current development compared with its original from historical perspective [46].

Beneficence means “do as much good as you can.” Within the framework of healthcare services, it means that whenever any intervention must be done against the patients, the intervention must be for the benefit of the patients. Healthcare professional must do as good as he or she can do for the patients. These may include protecting the rights of the patients and preventing harm to the patients [47]. In view of patients’ perspective, they expect doctors to be compassionate, empathetic, and sensitive when the communicate and treat them. This means that beneficence principle requires healthcare professionals to have a duty that they must concerned about the benefit to the patient and to take all positive steps that may be required to remove the harm from the patient. Nonmaleficence means “first do no harm”. This principle sometimes provided wrong perception to patients and their families. When surgeons did dis o her operation, he or she will cut people open, doctors prescribed medicines which none of them is free from side effects which can be harmful to the patient even when the patient consumed it according to what he or she been told. However, those things shall not be seen as harming the patients [28]. Every means of intervention was conducted in accordance with the framework of standardize care that all healthcare professional must be expected to do. Nonmaleficence raised the issue on informed consent that some people need more attention that any intervention must be done in sensitive way that he or she must know all the procedures and results of such intervention [48]. Under these circumstances, this principle may be in conflict of the principle of autonomy. Beauchamp and Childress stated that ‘first do no harm’ means avoiding anything which is unnecessarily or unjustifiably harmful to the patient [48].

Justice means “to distribute health resources fairly”. It cannot be avoided that sources in healthcare are limited and rare, therefor to serve patients, healthcare institutions or providers, including hospital needs to be fair and just for everyone [28]. They must have and provide its own rules with respect to the treatment for all patients without any kinds of discrimination. However, it does not mean there will be no priority. Priority can be given subject to the clear rules and regulations applicable. In the event there is no laws and legislations or government regulations, the healthcare providers or institutions may make the regulations by themselves. In hospital setting it was named as Hospital bylaws. Beauchamp and Childress stated that justice may be seen from many perspectives. They pointed out that justice may be served in the way that generates the best outcomes or most happiness. It could mean that in case of choices between an elderly patient with no dependents and a parent with young children, based on the best outcomes, leaving the first patient to die is the better choice. Another point of view can also be seen from the allocation of resources based on the principle of who needs treatment the most [28]. Just recently in 2018, a research conducted with respect to the knowledge of bioethics in pharma issues proved that the completion of bioethics as a coherent knowledge system is clearly underestimated. The research suggested that the integration of ethics into bioethics is required [50]. Another research concluded in 2107 which examined the curricula of ethics in several universities proved that the best curriculum is the curriculum that covers research ethics, professionalism, and pharmacists’ relationship with patients and other healthcare providers [51]. Research ethics and pharmacists’ relationship with patients are academics’ subjects that related to the application of bioethics. Before, in a research conducted in 2011, stated that teaching ethics to pharmacy student will be better if it is conducted as team-based learning for the student. The most interesting part is the team-based learning module covers subjects that related to the implementation of bioethics. Among other they are duty to do good and avoid harm, privacy & confidentiality, principle of autonomy, informed consent, principle of veracity, principles of avoidance of killing and abortion, sterilization, and contraception. That subject related very much to the implementation of bioethics [52]. The importance of bioethics educations was also discussed in many other researches, even though the main purpose of the researches did not directly deal with the curricula of bioethics itself [53,54].

IV. CONCLUSION

Analysis and discussion as conducted above proved that bioethics, which contained four basic principles, are ethics that shall be used by healthcare professionals to solve all problems that might occur or happen during medication care. Healthcare professionals conduct must be patients’ oriented. He or she must provide sufficient but significant information to patients or their families so that the patients and/ or the families can make their own decision. That is the principle of autonomy that must be followed by all healthcare professionals. However, the implementation cannot be stand alone, it must be accompanied by beneficence and non-maleficence. These two principles limit the applicability of the principle of autonomy. Finally, the principle of justice provides the

whole pictures on how all the principles must be implemented when healthcare professionals were faced with choices that involved more than one patient at the same time with limited resources. In order for the healthcare professionals to be able to understand the whole needs of patients with respect to patient oriented medication, healthcare professional need not only to know but to understand the whole concept and application of bioethics. For such purposes healthcare professionals must be equipped with sufficient knowledges and educations of bioethics. This means that that bioethics education is a must for healthcare professionals. It must be incorporated as teaching subjects in university curriculum. Education of bioethics in professional healthcare' curriculum becomes important.

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