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The Effect of Nursing Interns Career Preparation Educational Workshop on their Professional Competencies and Career Development Readiness

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Abstract: **The transition from a nursing student to a graduate remains problematic internationally with issues arising concerning graduates' work-readiness and professional competency. Professional competencies refer to skills that develop through distinct experiences, trainings, and/or education an individual has obtained. Moreover, The Career Preparation Program (CPP) is the program which prepared the nursing intern entering the job market newly The aim of the study was: to determine the effect of nursing interns' career preparation educational workshops on their professional competencies and career development readiness setting: The study was carried out at National Medical Institute; Damanhour General Hospital and the Chest Hospital in Damanhour affiliated to Damanhour University Egypt. Subjects: All nurses' interns, who had finished their fourth academic year 2017-2018, were included (N = 350). Tools: The Knowledge regarding Career preparation program, Modified version of quality and safety education for nurses (QSEN), The Professional Competencies, & A Career Development readiness. Results: the study revealed a highly significant differences between scores of students' knowledge on professional competencies & career development pre and post educational workshop. There was highly positive correlation between professional competency, total knowledge and Career Development Readiness. Conclusion: The finding of this study can be concluded that there was significant improvement at professional competency and development career readiness level after educational workshop. Recommendations: Preparation of educational program for nurses' interns about professional competency, Implement competency-based training programs for nursing interns career developmental readiness and Further researchers, about nurses' competency and readiness level with increasing sample size and different settings.**

Keywords: **Career Development, Career Preparation, Educational Workshop, Interns, Professional Competency & readiness.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Preparing nursing students to practice safely, effectively, and compassionately in today's rapidly changing health care settings is a challenge. New graduates enter the workforce and discover absence of neither the practice expertise nor the confidence to navigate what has become a highly dynamic and intense clinical environment burdened by escalating levels of patient acuity and nursing workload (**Duchscher, 2008**). To better understand the practice readiness of graduate nurses, it is important to examine their knowledge and attitude towards it (**Casey & Campbell, 2011**). They are on the step towards making decisions about job and making final preparations just before entering society. However, the change of society and job structure, as well as difficult job market conditions are challenging to college students. College interns

have a hard time to be prepared for a job and to decide what job is good for them (**Kim & Kim, 2016**). There is a concern about college graduates' career preparation and their abilities to obtain employment after graduation. An estimated 1.5 million college graduates are either underemployed or unemployed (**Bureau of Labor, 2015**).

Universities and colleges must prepare their students who want to enter their career directly after graduation by preparing them for entering job market (**Kim & Kim, 2016**). Educators believe that there is a linkage between students' participation in an internship and their transition to the profession (**Matthew, Taylor & Ellis, 2012**). The ever changing employment market causes students to need employment preparation beyond the classroom education. Universities and colleges can provide students with educational preparation through internships. Internships allow students to engage in career development and gaining employment skills. Students who engage in professional training had increased their work beliefs and values through better understanding of culture competency. In addition to, learning the terminology associated with their field of career interest, which was enhanced through the training experience (**Simons et al., 2012**). Recently, many universities tend to provide career preparation program (CPP) for their nursing intern, which have been developed and advanced mainly in content (**Kim & Kim, 2016; Kim & Choi, 2016**). Career development readiness indicates the extent prepared for career development process, which refers to a degree that is prepared for the cognitive, affective characteristics required to achieve their career goals that will be carried out over the entire life (**M. Kim & Choi, 2016**).

In the view of regularity, the career preparation program in the early era was only providing a single episode or special lecture, not running on regular base. That was based on preparing nursing intern for resume, self-introduction and interviews. Nursing interns were stressed about participating in a career program without detailed guidelines. Nursing interns usually rush into the job market without reflecting on what they would do, which provokes only hard feelings. These programs caused nursing intern to feel pressured. It is reported that instead of handling job interviews and preparing employment applications, the job seekers should be able to navigate their careers and prepare themselves for employment based on their own interests (**Hu 2015 & Cheng, 2016; Kim, 2016**). Previous studies dealing with a career preparation program, had encouraged "exploring oneself" that is needed for nursing intern's development. (**Kim & Kim, 2016; Kim & Choi, 2013; Hu & Cheng, 2015; Kim, 2016; Y. Shin et al., 2009**).)

For these reasons, it is needed to develop a (CPP), which consists of two sections, namely: (1) exploration and understanding of oneself capabilities (self-reported professional competencies), (2) preparation for job interview and matching their abilities with job requirements (career development readiness) (**Kim & Kim, 2016**).

Self-reported professional competencies are viewed as: "skills required for employment. They are a combination of soft and technical skills. Soft skills are the behaviors used in the work environment, such as work-related interpersonal skills, the ability to communicate effectively and listen attentively" (**Cord & Clements, 2010**). Professional competencies refer to the actions required to complete tasks associated with the position, the ability to work in a team setting (when needed), critical thinking skills, innovation and solution-focused behavior. Furthermore, it is the ability to intentionally influencing oneself is thinking, feeling and behaviors to achieve one's objectives; and, increases purposeful action and immediate applications for personal development, leadership and achievement (**Bryant & Kazan, 2012**).

The **American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) (2008)** had emphasized the vitality of nurses' Career Development Readiness (CDR) for practice. It provided specific outcomes that are directed towards curricular priorities for undergraduate nursing programs to prepare nursing interns for the realities of today's professional practice environments. It is viewed as: "competent and having the knowledge, skills and judgment that are required for such role performance" (**Casey et. al., 2011**). Career development refers to the degree of readiness necessary for the cognitive, affective characteristics in order to achieve career goals. There is evidence that an intensive, preceptor-guided clinical experience for nursing intern is effective in increasing the confidence of graduate nurses (**Harrison & Stewart, 2007; Rush KL, Adamack M, Gordon J, et al. (2013); Wieland et al., 2007)**. This experience is provided during the semester prior to graduation, where seniors are expected to synthesize and integrate their accumulated nursing knowledge, skills, and values in clinical practice settings during their mentoring by a nurse preceptor. Its purpose is to promote professional role development through leadership and management competencies in communication, conflict management, interdisciplinary collaboration, and use of information technology (**Preheim et al., 2009**). Measuring the effectiveness of a senior practicum course is an essential step in improving the transition experience of graduate nurses. Previous studies

related to preparation for practice have focused on nursing intern's feedback of their entire educational experience. Understanding nursing intern's perceptions of readiness and preparedness for the professional nursing role is important and may provide insight into how the senior practicum develops nursing intern's readiness for practice (**Casey & Campbell, 2011**).

1.1 Significance of the study: It is anticipated that this study will contribute to career development or career planning of nursing students; and to the field of higher education in the areas of experiential learning (cooperative education and internships), as well as self-development for professional competencies. It is vital that students become aware of their options as they develop their career foundation and bridge the gap between the theory and practice.

2. MATERIALS AND METHOD

2.1. Materials

2.2 Aim of the study: The present study aims to determine the effect of nursing interns' career preparation educational workshops on professional competencies and career development readiness in Damanhour University.

2.3 Research design A quasi-experimental, interventional, one-group, pretest/posttest research design was used.

2.4 Research Hypothesis:

H1: Nursing interns, attending career preparation educational workshops, exhibit a better professional competency after their attendance.

H2: Nursing interns, attending career preparation educational workshops, show a better career development readiness after their attendance.

2.5 Setting: The study was conducted at Main Damanhour Hospital. It is affiliated to Damanhour University; the study was conducted at the National Medical Institute; Damanhour General Hospital and the Chest Hospital in Damanhour. The total number of nursing intern was 350 nurses.

2.6 Subjects All nurses' interns, who had finished their fourth academic year 2017-2018, were included. (N = 350).

2.7 ***Tools of data collection: Three tools were employed in this study:***

Tool I: The Knowledge regarding Career Preparation Program (CPP)

It was developed by the researchers based on the related literature to assess nurse interns' knowledge regarding professional competencies and career development readiness, as a pre- and post-training questionnaire. It included 10 questions, encompassing: 5 closed ended questions about professional competency and 5 closed ended questions about career developmental readiness. All questions were prepared in accordance with educational workshops content with total scores 20 degrees. The Score "two" was given for correct and complete answer; "one" was given for each correct and incomplete answer and "zero" for incorrect answer. For each area of knowledge, the scores of the items were summed up and the total score divided by the number of the items. These scores were converted into a percent score. The total nurses' knowledge was considered good if Knowledge ≥ 75%, Average 50-<75%, and poor knowledge ≤ 50%.

Tool II: The Professional competencies

Modified version of Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competency Questionnaire, **[Bay Area Transition Program Committee 2010, Cronenwett L, Sherwood G, Barnsteiner J, et al. 2007]**. The modified version of QSEN competency instrument was a self-administered 35-item questionnaire evaluating participants' core nursing knowledge, skills, and attitude. This instrument was developed and organized from QSEN concepts and AACN competency guidelines, and content analyzed by the author and QSEN residency faculty in the Bay Area. **[Bay Area Transition Program Committee 2010]**

The QSEN Competency Questionnaire completed by the participants at pre- and post-program was divided into seven areas of competency: Client centered care (**9 items**), safety & prevention (**5 items**), evidence based practice (**3 items**), teamwork & collaboration (**8 items**), professionalism (**6 items**), quality improvement (**2 items**), and informatics (**2 items**).

For example, the client centered care items consist of Item 1 (conducting comprehensive physical and psychosocial health history that includes client's perspective and considers cultural, spiritual and social considerations) to Item 9 (establishing rapport with clients and family members).

The informatics items in the last category consist of Item 34 (navigating the electronic health record) to Item 35 (utilizing clinical technologies such as smart pumps and monitors). The possible responses for each question on the competency questionnaire were: 1 = Beginning, 2 = Developing, 3 = Accomplished. For each participant, the sums were obtained from each section and averaged over the students for both pre- and post-surveys. These scores were summed and were converted into a percent score. It was classified into 2 categories:

- **Competent** if score ≥ 75%.

- **Incompetent** if score from < 75%.

Tool III: A Career Development readiness

It was developed by **Casey et al. (2011)**; to assess the career development readiness among the nursing interns. The instrument consisted of 20 items concerning students' comfort with both relational (10-item) and clinical skill performance (10-item). Responses were measured on 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". These scores were summed and were converted into a percent score. It was classified into 3 categories:

- **High** if score > 75%.

- **Moderate** if score from 60 - 75%.

- **Low** if score < 60%.

2.2. Method

2.2.1. Administrative Process

- Official approval of the Dean of the Faculty of Nursing - Damanhour University was obtained to collect the necessary data from the nursing interns. Also a permission to conduct the study was obtained from the director hospital and participation acceptance from nursing intern.

2.2.2 Study Tool: The tools used were translated into Arabic and tested for its content validity by 5 experts from the field of study (two professors and one assistant professor of nursing administration; and one professor and one assistant professor of nursing education). Accordingly, the necessary modifications were done.

- Preparation of the program lecture, power point, videos and handout.

- Reliability internal consistency of the two tools was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient: tool I (.895); and tool II (0.924).

2.2.3. Pilot Study

- A pilot study was conducted on (10%) of total nurse interns sample (N = 35), who were excluded from the study. Accordingly, minor changes were made.

2.2.4. Educational workshop:

I-Preparation phase:

- **Preparation for training program** (Career Preparation Program) to promote and enforce nursing intern' knowledge and practice related to self-leadership and career development readiness through number of learning workshops included all information about Career Preparation Program and application exercise to ensure their understanding and ability to practice, it was consisted of not only giving information about recruiting but also encouraging and motivating them. It also was focused on self-exploring and self-initiating experiences by themselves.

- A time schedule suitable for nursing intern was developed to conduct the program that included; date, place, topic, time and duration of each session. The training program designed for this study has been implemented through 13

sessions. These sessions have lasted for 35 hours (8 hours of theory and 27 hours of practice). It was difficult to take all nursing intern at the same time. Thus, they were divided into five groups of about 40 nursing intern in every session and a copy of the education/training program contents was given to each nursing intern. Nursing intern participated in the educational program activities for two hours of theoretical and 3 hours of practical, the program started from 9 to 11 AM for theory sessions two days/week & 9 AM to 12 PM for practical sessions three days/week for 10 days.

II- Developmental phase:

The program objectives and methodology were prepared based on reviewing of all relevant and recent literature.

III- Implementation phase:

Implementation of the program; a) Pretest before the program to assess the nursing intern' knowledge of self-leadership and career development readiness before starting the intervention program. The self-leadership and career development readiness Questionnaire Sheet distributed to the nursing intern by the researcher. Time needed to answer this sheet was 30-45 minutes. b) Implementing the program in a special class allocated for teaching in the Faculty of Nursing by the researchers. The teaching course included 2 parts: the first part was theoretical part which included 4 lectures, 2 hours for each. It was given within 4 days. The second part was practical part; this part was implemented within 9 days covered procedures related to precautions and application of Career Preparation Program. The teaching strategies used in the program were simulation, discussion, paper and pencils for application exercises and role-play. The teaching aids & media included flip charts, data show, CDs, handouts, picture, pen and paper& real model of incident report.

IV-Evaluation phase:

c) Post-test immediately after implementation of the program to evaluate the change in the nursing intern knowledge regarding self-leadership and career development readiness. This reassessment was repeated after three months to follow up the improvement of defining and understanding the nursing intern to self-leadership and career development readiness in their hospital. Post- test and follow up – test used the same formula for the pre- test.

Fig.1: Design of career preparation program

Section		Contents	Treatment
Pretest			
Section 1	**1**	**meaning and value of job structured, standardized career program**	**structured, standardized career program**
	2	**what competence needed in taking job**	
	3	**career development**	
	4	**matching aptitude to job**	
	5	**understanding myself**	
	6	**exploring my competence**	
	7	**improving my competence**	
Section 2	**8**	**resume and a letter of self-introduction**	
	9	**evaluation of individual resume**	
	10	**evaluation of a letter of self-introduction**	
	11	**interview skill**	
	12	**simulated job interview**	
	13	**evaluation of simulated job interview**	
	14	**program summary and cheer-up**	
Posttest			

2.2.5. Data Collection

Data was collected pre; immediately post; and post three months from educational workshops implementation, by the above-mentioned tools that were distributed among the nurse interns at their working units. Each questionnaire took

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approximately from 30 to 45minutes/interns. The data was collected for a period of 7 months started from the 1st of January 2018 to the 31st of July 2018.

2.2.6. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations: the purpose of the study was clarified to subjects and oral informed consent was obtained to participate in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity of subjects; as well as their withdrawal right from the research at any time were assured without any consequences.

2.2.7. Statistical Analysis

Data were collected, tabulated, statistically analyzed using an IBM personal computer with Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 22. The following statistics were applied. ***1. Descriptive statistics:*** in the form of mean percent score with standard deviation; and qualitative data were presented in the form of frequencies and percentages. ***2. Analytical statistics:*** significance test Pearson's chi square test and Mont Carlo exact test, the last one is alternative for the Pearson's chi square test if there were many small expected values; correlation coefficient (r), Student t-test. All statistical analysis was done using two tailed tests and alpha error of 0.05. Regarding *P* value, it was considered that: non-significant (NS) if $P > 0.05$, Significant (S) if $P \leq 0.05$, Highly Significant (HS) if $P \leq 0.01$.

3. RESULTS

Table 1: General characteristics of subjects (Internship) (n=321)

Characteristics	Categories	No	%
Age (years)	21 ≤ 22	163	50.8
	23 < 24	102	31.8
	24< 25	35	10.9
	25 and more	21	6.5
	Mean S. D 22.8± 2.99		
Gender	Male	76	23.7
	Female	245	76.3
Attending career class	Yes	70	21.8
	No	251	78.2
Getting job	Yes	221	68.8
	No	100	31.2
Academic Score	100-85	86	26.8
	85-75	147	45.8
	75-65	79	24.6
	65-60	9	2.8
	Mean S. D 84.8± 13.71		

Table 1, shows that the mean age of the studied subjects is 22.8± 2.99 years. According to the gender, this table shows that 76.3% of them are female. Meanwhile, 78.2% and 68.8% of studied subjects are attending career class and getting job, respectively. Also, the mean score of academic scores is 84.8± 13.71 score.

Table 2: Comparison between subjects' Knowledge pre educational workshop and post educational workshop (N=321).

Items	Pre test						Post test						T. test
	Good		Average		Poor		Good		Average		Poor		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Knowledge about Competency	20	6.2	100	31.2	201	62.6	143	44.5	117	36.5	61	19	13.564 p. value:.000**
Knowledge about Career Development Readiness	33	10.3	118	36.8	170	52.9	123	38.3	150	46.7	48	15	12.637 p. value:.001**
Total	39	12.1	119	37	163	50.8	129	40.2	147	45.8	45	14	17.391 p. value:.000**

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Table 2, shows that there is 50.8% of studied subject have poor knowledge at pretest, on the other hand 40.2% of them had good knowledge at post educational workshop test. There are highly significant differences at p. value < 0.01 between scores of students' knowledge pre and post educational workshop about competency and career developmental readiness.

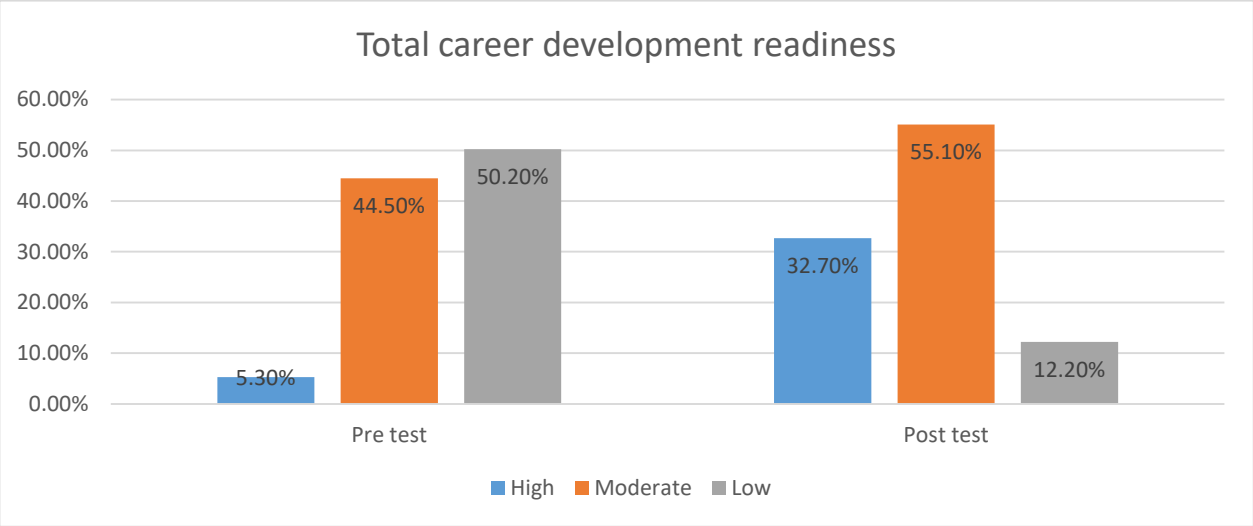

Fig. 2: Comparison between subjects' Career Development Readiness pre educational program and post educational program (N=321). T-test 19.021 p=.002**

Fig. 2, shows that there is 50.2% of studied subject have low level of career development readiness at pretest, on the other hand 55.1% of them have moderate level of career development readiness at post educational workshop test. Moreover, there are highly significant differences at p. value < 0.01 between scores of students' Career Development Readiness pre and post educational workshop.

Table 3: Comparison between subjects' professional competency scores pre educational program and post educational program (N=321).

Items	Pre test				Post test				T. test	
	Competent		Incompetent		Competent		Incompetent			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	X2	p.value
Informatics	51	15.9	270	84.1	215	66.9	106	33.1	9.35	.003**
Quality improvement	47	14.6	274	85.4	180	56.1	141	53.9	11.32	.000**
Safety & prevention	61	19	260	81	199	62	122	38	13.78	.001**
Evidence based	59	18.4	262	81.6	203	63.2	118	36.8	17.35	.000**
Client centered care	78	24.3	243	75.7	170	52.9	151	47.1	13.245	.004**
Team work & collaboration	66	20.6	255	79.4	186	58	135	42	19.032	.000**
Total	71	22.1	250	77.9	190	59.2	131	40.8	14.367	.000**

Table 3, shows that there is 77.9% of studied subject are incompetent regarding professional competency at pretest, on the other hand, 59.2% of them are competent regarding professional competency at post educational workshop test. Also, there are highly significant differences at p. value < 0.01 between scores of students' professional competency pre and post educational workshop.

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Table 4: Relationship between subjects' characteristics and Career Development Readiness post educational program (N=321).

Items		Career Development Readiness post educational program							
		High		Moderate		Low		X2	P-Value
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
Age	21 ≤22	60	18.7	100	31.1	3	0.9		
	23 < 24	30	9.3	67	20.8	5	1.6		
	24< 25	10	3.1	5	1.6	20	6.3	6.811	0.039*
	25 or more	5	1.6	5	1.6	11	3.4		
Gender	Male	24	7.5	38	11.8	14	4.4	1.793	0.052
	Female	81	25.2	139	43.3	25	7.8		
Attending career class	Yes	65	20.2	5	1.6	0	0	6.144*	0.001**
	No	40	12.5	172	53.6	39	12.1		
Academic scores	100-85	76	23.7	9	2.8	1	0.3		
	85-75	25	7.8	115	35.8	7	2.2		
	75-65	3	0.9	51	15.9	25	7.8		
	65-60	1	0.3	2	0.6	6	1.9	8.184	0.002**
Getting job	Yes	85	26.5	131	40.8	5	1.6	11.10	0.004**
	No	20	6.2	46	14.3	34	10.6		

Table 4, shows a highly significant relation between attending career, academic scores, getting job in one hand and Career Development Readiness scores in the other hand. Meanwhile, there is slightly significant relation between age and career development readiness. On the other hand, there is no relation between gender and readiness scores.

Table 5: Relationship between subjects' characteristics and Professional Competency post educational program (N=321).

Items		Professional Competency post educational program					
		Competent		Incompetent		X2 calculated	P-Value
		No	%	No	%		
Age	21 ≤ 22	62	19.3	101	31.5	9.878	.000**
	23 < 24	80	24.9	22	6.9		
	24< 25	30	9.3	5	1.6		
	25 or more	18	5.6	3	0.9		
Gender	Male	45	14	31	9.6	2.836	.089
	Female	145	45.6	100	31.2		
Attending career class	Yes	64	19.9	6	1.9	11.351	.001**
	No	126	39.3	125	38.9		
Academic scores	100-85	82	25.5	4	1.2	18.369	.000**
	85-75	70	21.9	77	24		
	75-65	35	10.9	44	13.7		
	65-60	3	0.9	6	1.9		
Getting job	Yes	163	50.8	58	18.1	10.138	.020*
	No	27	8.4	73	22.7		

Table 5, exhibits a highly significant relation between attending career, academic scores, Age and professional competency. Meanwhile, there is slightly significant relation between getting job and professional competency. On the other hand, there is no relation between gender and professional competency.

Table 6: Correlation between studied variables

Items	Professional competency		Total Knowledge	
	r.	P value	r.	P value
Total Knowledge	0.431	.001**	------	-----
Career Development Readiness	0.645	.000**	3.231	.030*

Table 6, reveals a highly positive correlation between professional competency, total knowledge and Career Development Readiness. Meanwhile, there is slight positive correlation between knowledge and Career Development Readiness.

4. DISCUSSION

The CPP is the program which prepared the nursing intern entering the job market freshly. At the first step, we made the components and contents of it. It was planned for nursing intern to prepare enrollment of their new jobs. It involved of five steps; These were introduction, understanding themselves, exploring the job fields they need to work, connecting their ability to new job, remaining their career development self-directly and rounding program off (**Kim S, and Kim M 2016)**.However, it is significant that graduates address the matters they can control, such as knowing their professional competencies, to help them obtain a job. Meanwhile, Professional competencies are skills that progress through diverse experiences, trainings, and/or education an individual has obtained, as well as qualities prerequisite for a job (**Barnwell S., 2016)**. Students who involve in career development program can get the professional competencies necessary to achieve job tasks, through being involved in experiential learning that integrates classroom theory with practical applications before arriving the career field (**National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2011**). Moreover, Career Development Readiness (CDR) "Competent and having the knowledge, skills and judgment that is essential for such role performance" (**Casey et. al., 2011**). Career development refers to the degree of readiness is more than necessary, we are ready for the cognitive, affective characteristics in order to attain their career goals.

According to the knowledge of the studied Nursing Interns regarding competency, the present study revealed a significant difference between nursing interns' knowledge pre and post educational workshop at p. value <0.01. This results may be a results of the provision of a detailed explanation of the subject and give the opportunity to take feedback and make a summary of the information at the end of the workshop. This result is supported by a study performed by **Aboshaiqah & Qasim, 2018** titled "nursing interns' perception of clinical competence upon completion of preceptorship experience in Saudi Arabia". It revealed that more than three quarter of their studied subjects had good knowledge after an educational program.

According to the knowledge of the studied Nursing Interns regarding Career Development Readiness, the present study revealed a highly significant difference between nursing interns' knowledge pre and post educational workshop at p. value <0.01. This result may due to distribution of a booklet explaining the meaning, importance of readiness and steps of implementation. This results inconsistent with the study performed by **Nersesian et al., 2019** titled "Mentoring in research-focused doctoral nursing programs and student perceptions of career readiness in the United States". It reported that there was a slightly significant difference between knowledge level pre and post educational intervention at p. value <0.05. On the other hand, this result congruent with the study performed by **Tucker et al., 2019** titled "Promoting Nurse Retention through Career Development Planning". They found a highly significance difference between pre and post training.

According to Career Development Readiness scores of the studied nursing interns, the present study showed the presence of a highly significant difference between scores of nursing interns' pre and post educational workshop and 55.1% and 32.7% of studied nursing interns had moderate and high level of readiness. This results may due to take into account the individual differences of the students during the workshop and giving an opportunity for questions. This result is supported with a study performed by **Jackson, 2019** titled "Nursing Student Perceptions of the Development of Work

Readiness in Australian Undergraduate Programs". It reported that only less than one fifth of studied nursing interns had poor level of Work Readiness.

According to professional competency scores of the studied nursing interns, the present study showed the presence of a highly significant difference between scores of nursing interns' pre and post educational workshop and 59.2% of studied nursing interns was competent compared with only 22.1% of them was competent at pretest. This results may due to there are lectures about competency as a part of the orientation program before internship training. This result agrees with the findings of a study performed by **Ebrahimi & Alinejad, 2017** titled "the impact of ethics workshop on the ethical knowledge and competency of fourth years' medical students of Shiraz University of medical sciences". It reported that there was highly significant between scores of nursing interns' pre and post educational workshop. On the other hand, this result inconsistent with the study performed by **Ayaz-Alkaya, Yaman-Sözbir, & Bayrak-Kahraman, 2018** titled "the effect of nursing internship program on burnout and professional competency". They reported that there was a slight significant between professional competency of nurses pre and post program.

Regarding the relationship between nursing interns' characteristics and professional competency post test scores. The present study revealed the presence of a highly significant relation between attending career, academic scores, Age and professional competency. Meanwhile, there was a slightly significant relation between getting job and professional competency. This result may due to the level of competency improved with increasing of nursing interns' age, increasing academic scores and getting job. This result is inconsistent with that of a study performed by **Arrigoni et al., 2017** titled "nursing students' clinical competencies: a survey on clinical education objectives". It reported that there was no relation between age, job and competency level. On the other hand, this result agreement with the study performed by **Malakooti, Bahadoran, & Ehsanpoor, 2018** titled "Assessment of the midwifery students' clinical competency before internship program in the field based on the objective structured clinical examination". It reported that there was relation between nurses' interns' characteristics and clinical competency.

Regarding the relationship between nursing interns' characteristics and career development readiness post test scores. The present study revealed the presence of a highly significant relation between attending career, academic scores, getting job and Career Development Readiness scores. Meanwhile, there was a slightly significant relation between age and career development readiness. This result is supported by a study performed by **Cheng et al., 2016** titled "Attributions, future time perspective and career maturity in nursing undergraduates: correlational study design", they found that there was relation between nursing interns' age, academic scores and career development readiness.

According to the correlation between studied variables. The present study reported the presence of a highly positive correlation between professional competency, total knowledge and Career Development Readiness. Meanwhile, there was slight positive correlation between knowledge and Career Development Readiness. This result is in line with a study performed by **Aboshaiqah & Qasim, 2018** titled "Nursing interns' perception of clinical competence upon completion of preceptorship experience in Saudi Arabia", reported that there was positive relation between competency and readiness of studied subjects. On the other hand, this result inconsistent with the study performed by **Walker & Campbell, 2013** titled "Work readiness of graduate nurses and the impact on job satisfaction, competency, work engagement and intention to remain". It reported that there was a slight relation between work readiness and competency.

5. CONCLUSION

The finding of this study can be concluded that nursing interns, attending career preparation educational workshops, exhibit a better professional competency and career development readiness after their attendance.

There was significant improvement at professional competency and development career readiness level after educational workshop. There was positive relation between knowledge level, readiness and professional competency.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of the current study the following recommendations are suggested:

- Preparation of an educational program for nurses' interns about professional competency
- Implementation of competency-based training programs for nurses' interns career developmental readiness.

- Relying on job training to raise the efficiency of nursing interns.

- Continuous evaluation of nursing interns' competency level and readiness level to identify weaknesses and strength points to be relied upon during training.

- Further researchers, about nurses' competency and readiness level with increasing sample size and different settings.

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