

Islamic Moral Judgment on Transparency and Confidentiality and its Nursing Applications: Expository Analysis

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Review article

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Abstract

Health workers like nurses have the responsibility to provide health services to patients. By doing so, nurses are expected to contribute to the preservation of health, and thus save the lives of their patients. At the same time, nurses are tasked to ensure the delivering of information to the patient accurately and their privacy stuff is well kept confidential. Indeed, this duty is a part of the core values in nursing to “respect for human rights, including cultural rights, the right to life and choice, to dignity and to be treated with respect, “however, as lifestyle is rapidly changing, there are instances in which health workers have to deal with cases which involve breaching of transparency and confidentiality like telling lies and disclose the private information, respectively. The doubt is if the task of the nurses is to tell the whole truth and maintaining confidentiality, what occurs when health service involves decisions which need to tell lies, or disclose private information such as discloses a patient’s history to the police to investigate further for the sake of society? Scholars in the field mention that, grounded along the utilitarian perspective, for instance, the healthcare provider will do everything which will lead the good consequences to maximize happiness and welfare, including telling lies and disclose a private information. Nevertheless, what about the cases in which activities are sought to serve a greater purpose or prevent harm of individual or society? Can a nurse refuse to tell a lie and disclose private information due to respect for patient’s autonomy? This paper uses analytical and comparative methods to address ethical issues of transparency and confidentiality from Islamic and conventional perspectives. Nursing implication: Islamic view on this issue give a clear cut the condition for Muslim nurses to proceed or decline in maintaining the transparency and confidentiality of information. The subject area to investigate the degree of knowledge among nurses regarding the Islamic moral judgement on this event is extremely recommended for future management.

Keywords: Transparency; Confidentiality; Nursing; Morals; Islam

Definition of Transparency and Confidentiality

According to the *Macmillan English Dictionary*, transparency means an honest way of doing things that allow other people to know exactly what you are doing [1]. Transparency also denotes of clear and easy to understand of something [2]. Sometimes, the word transparency is always interchangeable with veracity and accuracy, which denotes “the obligation to tell the truth and not to lie or deceive others [3].” It shows that transparency comprises the element of conversation and telling the information straightforwardly between two parties, including verbal and written form. Subsequently, that information is regarded as a fact which based on evidence, not supposition, innuendo or rumors [4]. For the purpose of this discourse, transparency represents the act of telling truth between two parties, in which nothing is concealed. On the other hand, confidentiality accounts for a site in which relevant data must be kept secret, [5] or someone has been entrusted with private information [6]. *Cambridge International Dictionary of English* associates confidentiality to something is secret, but its practice can regularly be witnessed in a formal, business, or military situation [7]. In other words, confidentiality often applies to the governing body which manages the secret data. Meanwhile, *Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics* provides a full meaning of confidentiality by pointing out its aim to refrain from revealing the secret affair. This encyclopedia denotes confidentiality to “a rule or duty requiring one entrusted with private or secret matters to refrain from divulging them” [8]. Last but not least, the definition is given by the *Canadian Nurses Association* seems to be more comprehensive and applicable to this discourse. Confidentiality is associated with “the duty of someone who has received confidential information in trust to protect that information and disclose it to others only by permissions, rules or laws authorizing its disclosure” [9]. For the word confidentiality, the synonym like privacy, secrecy, and nondisclosure are the coarse word to describe a something should not be let out freely.

Basic Concepts of Transparency and Confidentiality

Sometimes people are thrusting in between two concepts of transparency and confidentiality, assuming both is the same. Both concepts are different, but linked to each other, and its usage in combining applies to the most situation particularly in the healthcare context. Grounded

along the previous definition, clearly demonstrated that the transparency denotes a delivering of information without hidden of any single detail of facts, [10] and the confidentiality of the information must be taken care of something in the pursuit of legal and moral integrity. Nevertheless, the application of both concepts to manage the information must be equilibrated. Transparent is a value that needs somebody to say true and conveys information accurately. In this respect, someone cannot cover any information that would have been recognized by the recipient information. This concept is really pleasant because it integrates a value of openness and honesty, however, harm can occur if the information is furnished to anyone arbitrarily. This site presents a balance of information management is needed, where by the value of confidentiality has to run in tandem with transparent. For the application of the value of confidentiality, it is the owner right of information, and he or she induces the right not to allow that information leaks to third parties, including information relating to the household, financial, and health. In the absence of this confidentiality, for example regarding health information, likely a student infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) will be eschewed by their peers in school. Not alone will result in the student going to stress, indeed, it will also invite a greater harm, such as suicide.

Historically, transparency and confidentiality were a pivotal component in the healthcare which can be discovered since ancient civilization. Hippocratic Oath, which known as a great medical Code of Ethic, required the physicians to assert upon the healing God to abide by several guideline of healing practices including keeping the patient information secret. The oath contains this statement: “Whatever I see or hear in the lives of my patients, whether in connection with my professional practice or not, which ought not to be spoken of outside, I will keep secret, as considering all such things to be private” [11]. Indeed, the value of this principle still apply in most of healthcare up today such as the Geneva Declaration (1948) clearly stated that the physician shall preserve confidentiality on all he knows about the patient even after his death [12]. In the recently adopted Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, transparency and confidentiality has been recognized as a fundamental human right. Article 9 of the same declaration clearly state the privacy of the persons concerned and the confidentiality of their personal information should be respected, and Article 18 mentions the transparency of information should be always promoted particularly in decision making strategies [13]. Thus, transparency and confidentiality are not new and

rare matter in life, indeed, it shows respect for people whenever the only right information should be delivered to them, and the privileged information of someone should not be shared freely.

The challenges of the yesteryear and the current state of affairs to apply both of these concepts are not the same. In the past, breaching of confidentiality was commonly due to negligence, such as leaving of telephone message that contain patient information, [14] and hashing out the private information in public places, [15] like in the elevator and a cafeteria which crowded with people. Although today, as the advancement and complexity of the health care system is moving tremendously, therefore, the challenges to maintain the transparency and are harder. The adoption of electronic health record, [16] telemedicine, and the patients' records are made available for the non-healthcare provider, such as a health insurance provider, [17,12] those involved in legal cases, [18] the widely use of mobile phones in the clinical setting [19,20] are among the cases that may result in confidentiality breach. Apart from that, due to the high prevalence of different variety of illnesses, such as cancer, truth telling becomes more challenging and may result in lying to the patient [21].

Another challenge to apply both this concept, confidentiality and transparency, can just be experienced in the reality of a real life where culture takes on a role in this issue. Some culture puts patients to have broad autonomy in obtaining health information, while some other culture to postpone the acquisition of such information to patients to provide better opportunities [3]. Many Eastern communities, in this case, prefer for hiding information instead of telling lies [22]. For instance, in Japan and China, withholding the truth wholly or partly to the patient is not uncommon because the culture of family-centered in this society enable the family to decide whether it should be told or not [23,24]. In this regard, the availability of applying this concept should be access individually.

Moral and Legal Dimension of Transparency and Confidentiality

Although the practices of transparency and confidentiality are widely applied, nonetheless, it is still not free from moral and legal arguments. The basic concept of transparency and confidentiality is to tell the truth, no hiding of information, to keep secret the information and no disclosure of information arbitrarily, respectively. Indeed, the evidence demonstrated the vast

majority of healthcare provider agrees for both concepts to be fully applied in patient care [25]. The concept is right, nevertheless, when it comes to the application sometimes may involve a moral conflict as the application of any guideline may likely beneficial to draw attention to consideration for further action [26]. For instance, someone who holds the moral responsibility to consider action right based on the rules independent of their outcome, [27] such as telling the truth is always necessary even though it may harm the patient's condition if the bad news suddenly isbrought out to them. Likewise, someone who thinks that the moral rightness of an activity is shaped by the consequences of action, [28] they may disclose the patient' information to third parties without the patient's consent if he or she assumes the action provides benefit to the patient. Whatever the reason may be, it shall be accessed through the moral and legal dimensions.

Regarding this topic, for the confidentiality issue, a case report was published in the *Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine* in 2008 is worth of citing. In this report, Mr. A, a fifty years old single has been diagnosed with mental illness. During an assessment, he confessed that he was often guilty of sexual harassment to the public. As a result, the physician in charge recommended to disclose the patient's history to the police to investigate further for the sake of the community [29,21]. On the other hand, a case report was published in the *Iran J Allergy Asthma Immunol* in 2007 represents the issue of transparency. A 69 years old man admitted due to depression, recently lost his wife due to cancer. He charged up to travel for vacation to ease his depression. Unluckily, he was diagnosed with cancer as well, but the physician lies about the situation to avoid further stress [30].

From the perspective of pro for transparency and keeping confidential information, the patient has the right to their health information. Autonomy is widely recognized as the patient's determination on their wellness care plan and self-governance over one's action [31,32]. To uphold the principle of respect for patient's autonomy, any health information pertains to the patient should be brought out to the patient and they should bring a consent from the patient before disclosing to third parties. Truthful information that has been delivered to the patient may strengthen the nurse-patient relationship, [33,23] which eventually made the patient to comply with the treatment and care. Telling the truth to the patient about their real condition may enable them to govern their autonomy in terms of care planning, [34] seek some other opinion regarding treatment, and assisting them in

resolving their financial matters. [35] Likewise, be strict in managing confidential information is likely beneficial in terms of providing and continuity of care. Research conducted in several countries, including England, Australia, Canada, and the USA demonstrates the importance of medical confidentiality to patients. Findings suggest that patients who believe that their confidentiality will be respected are more likely to seek treatment, discuss problems openly, and return for follow-up care [36,37]. In addition, a study that was published in *Implementation Science* proves that the healthcare provider and the patient accept the sharing of confidential information to third parties as well, as long as the information may not trigger any harm but produce benefits to the patient [15]. This acceptance has been supported by another study that was published in *Pediatric Nursing*, however, the majority of healthcare providers felt that the confidential information only need to inform to third parties on the need to know basis only, particularly to those who are not much related to the health organization [38]. Apart of that, Judith A Erlen, Professor of Nursing Ethics from the University of Pittsburgh, believes that disclosed patient's information inappropriately is not only lack of respect for patients but may increase the vulnerability of patient as well [39]. In some manner, whoever break this rule may lose the confidence of the patient, eventually the treatment and care that had been planned may difficult to get a cooperation from them [40]. So, this justification indicated that a greater harm should be avoided which may put patient's welfare at risk, hence, breaching of information is always seen immoral.

On the reverse, telling truth is not always preferable at all-time [24,41]. In the healthcare setting, the outcome of the patient is deemed to be a priority among healthcare provider. Telling the truth on the severity of the patient's condition to them may lead to adverse outcomes, such as anxiety and depression, hence will put a concern among the healthcare provider [42,32]. The healthcare provider who supports the ethical rule of non-maleficence may view this scenario as a breach of duty. Therefore, concealing of certain information from the patient to avoid his physical, mental, and emotional deteriorate is regarded as the best intervention for them [39]. Thus, grounded along the utilitarian perspective, the healthcare provides will do everything which will lead the good consequences to maximize happiness and welfare, is seen as moral action [43]. Therefore, Collis concluded in his literature review about the importance of truth-telling in healthcare, even it is ideal, it is not necessarily a virtue to do so [44]. Lying, the opposite value of transparency and

telling the truth is seen as morally acceptable as long as it is beneficial to the patient [40,43]. Indeed, some believe that lying is regarded as a therapeutic measure and is a suitable strategy while handling patient especially those with dementia [45]. In their research pertaining to care of patient with dementia, James and colleagues concluded that lying is pervasive across all types of settings demonstrating that 96.4% (n =106) of care providers relied on lying as a communicative strategy, [43] and study done by Culley and colleagues also found that three quarters (n = 21) of those surveyed agreed that therapeutic lies could improve communication with patients [46]. Aside of that, concealing of information, another kind of opposite value of transparency, is practiced by healthcare provider by disclosing only information that they believe would not harm the patient [39,18].

Likewise, even though many people think that confidentiality should handle all the private information, there is also some is flexibility in this respect [3]. In this regard, deontological position views confided as a prima facie duty, which obligatory to keep secret all along, unless it contradicts with the equal or stronger duties [8]. In other words, to disclose such information to a third party is allowed if such information can pose a risk to others if continued to be maintained a secret, in which this situation is also morally acceptable [47]. In Malaysia, the policies of information disclosure particularly for quality monitoring, educational purposes, administrative purposes, research purposes does exists, but it is not clearly defined [48]. For example, Malaysian nursing code, even though it allows disclosing of information to third parties who concern to the patient' care, it is not practical if a third party who is not involved in patient care, such as the Court requires patient information, apart from this clause, which states: "The nurse must not disclose information which she obtained confidence from or about a patient unless it is to other professionals concerned directly with the patient's care" [49]. Although the general rule is to keep confidential the information, but it is not absolute and disclosing information is morally acceptable particularly for the public's interest [50,12]. And this justification is in line with the law of Malaysia under the Personal Data Protection Act 2010 [51] and the code of professional conduct for Malaysian physician, [52] which states that the disclosure of information is only allowed for the public's interest, as well as if it is required by the law, or the patient gives a consent to do so. But, even if the patient does not give a consent, there are certain circumstances that the disclosure of information is legally to take place in some countries, such as the notification of

birth and deaths, infectious disease, child abuse, sport and relevant events, medical error, drug side effects, and dangerous pregnancies, but only to appropriate authorities [53,12]. In Greece, for example, the common belief is that when the patient accepts hospitalization, he or she actually expects that his personal information will be shared within the medical team as seeking for consent is not really necessary [54]. So, sometimes a justification to put off the first deliverance of information to the patient or the information hidden forever from the patient's knowledge for the benefit of patients, is morally acceptable.

Islamic Perspective

To understand the Islamic perspective on transparency and confidentiality, a few things have to be clarified, including the Islamic understanding of the concept of Amānah, as well as the virtue of telling the truth and keeping a secret.

First, Amānah means fulfilling and upholding trust. Amānah is a significant facial expression in Islam as it is nearly linked to the responsibilities and undertakings that are should be performed. Trust is not a thing that could be considered trivial, but it is a very heavy burden to the extent that none of those willing to accept the assignment except humans, as stated in chapter 33, verse 72 [55]. Nevertheless, as explained by Abdullah Yusuf Ali in *The Meaning of The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary (In Modern English)*, man will receive the consequences and effects depending on the degree of which the Amānah is successfully met. If the Amānah fails without reasonable cause, the man is becoming hypocrites, unbelievers, and will be punished by God in the hereafter. On the other hand, a man who successfully implemented Amānah well will get the glory from God, where his or her state is higher than the angels [56].

Amānah must be taken away by humankind is divided into two, namely to God and other people [57]. Amānah in God is mandatory claims made as vicegerent on Earth, [58] glorify the Earth with the Sharia's guideline set by God. While the Amānah to the other people on the other hand, we are responsible for other's wellbeing such as passing on the right of our family, the right of our relatives, and the right of members in the workplace. In a health care setting, nurses are responsible for passing on the right of their patient, including telling the true statement and holding on their secret. For the purpose of this discourse, the Amānah to other people, particularly the trust given for stating the truth and preserving a

secret in the nurse-patient relationship in the health care setting is preferred.

Second, in Islam, the kinship between human is real important and any effort to beef up the trade union is very advanced. In this case, honesty and trust in each other are the moral values that are emphasized to harmonize this relationship. In other words, stating the truth and preserving a secret is a moral character praised in Islam. The act will not only be favored by society, it will even be given a reward by God because it follows the Sunnah taught by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w). Telling truth means providing the actual data and fact, no concealment, no cheating, and withholding of information. Telling the truth is a moral principle that is practiced by every culture and religion. Even in Islam, Ibn Kathir in *Tafsir Ibn Kathir* emphasized that telling the truth is a characteristic of the devout followers of God, and such actions will distance them from the corruption in the world and the hereafter [59]. Likewise, trust in each other will exist when one is honest in a conversation. In the end, people will live in serenity and without prejudice to each other. From a different angle, telling a lie is a position that is forbidden in Islam because it is not only deceptive, but the other party being persecuted, creating antagonism, and breaking up the ties of relationship. Indeed, this situation had been accentuated by the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w), as narrated by Abdullah, [60,61] the outcome of telling the truth and telling lies is different. Agreeing to this hadith, telling the truth may pave the path for someone to lead onward to do well and to be located in heaven, while those who lie may continue to dwell in hypocrisy and will be placed in the hell. In this case, God also asserts in the Qur'an about the importance of telling the truth and left lying stance, such as in chapter 9; verse 119, [62] chapter 11; verse 18, [63] and chapter 47; verse 21, [64] so that people may learn.

Maintaining a secret is another merit that has been embedded in Islamic teaching. In Islam, there are three categories of secrets, including self's secret, others' secret, and religious secret [65]. In keeping others' secret especially, the Amānah has been entrusted to the next parties to hold the information privately, therefore, exposing a secret without his or her consent may cause hostility and loss of trust between each other. Thus, it is clear that basic principle of preserving a secret is obligatory, while breaching of the secret is forbidden. Prohibition of breaching the secret is explained in chapter 66; verse 3-4 where God reprimanded the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w)'s wives who leaked secrets after he entrusted the secret to them [66]. Indeed, God

condemned the acts of disclosing secrets and described them as the vilest of people [67,61].

Transparency and Confidentiality in Healthcare from Islamic Perspective

In the present time, the advancement of the healthcare system, the emerging of a new disease, upholding the concept of transparency and confidentiality completely is another challenge faced by the healthcare providers including nurses. Nurses, as the one who are responsible for managing and caring for the patient, they do not care merely on the physical aspect, but also for the patient's physiological, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Sometimes, being too truthful by disclosing bad news directly to the patient may deteriorate the patient's emotion and guide to a greater harm such as dying.

In regards to this matter, a fatwa issued by the Permanent Committee for Research and Fatwa, Fatwa No. 6355 in response to the questions regarding the ruling of telling lies, the committees agree that it is obligatory for everyone to constantly adhere to truthfulness, whereas lying is absolutely prohibited except in the cases that are excluded by Shari'ah (Islamic law) [68]. However, this fatwa does not supply the criteria in which the lying is permissible. Sheikh Muhammed Salih Al-Munajjid, on the other hand, who is known as an Islamic scholar and founder of website *IslamQA.info*, wrote in the articles entitled *The Importance of Being Truthful*, emphasized the circumstances in which telling lies is allowed to attend a greater purpose or prevent harm [69]. In the bearing of two evil which is telling lies and severe consequences had been topped off by narrating the truth, the judgment should look into which one constitutes a greater harm. If the consequences of telling the truth may cause greater harm, therefore, it may avoid by the commission of the lesser, otherwise not [70].

By adverting to the hadith that had been narrated by Umm Kulthum, providing false information or lying is allowable in reconciling between people [71,72]. This condition, however, only can be applied after other mechanism fails and regard as a last resort. In health care, nurses abide by the regulations and law to tell the truth which reflects the Amānah towards other people. So, the nurse may go through various ways to experience their culture and patient's preference first before disclosing a bad news subsequently. For the Muslim patient, giving up hope is not welcome in religious teaching even though the news is severely defective.

On the other hand, for confidentiality issue, in 1998, the Islamic Fiqh Council of the Muslim World League issued a fatwa that addressed the ethical obligations required in both genetic research and stem cell research [73]. This fatwa was very narrow in focus, and the issue of confidentiality was given very little attention by stressing to fully preserving the secrecy of results. As an outcome, this fatwa is insufficient to elaborate the issue of confidentiality in a whole context.

Prior to that, the fatwa provided by the International Islamic Fiqh Academy in 1993, is worth of citing. The jurist affirmed that a break of confidentiality could be met only if the harm of maintaining confidentiality overrides its benefit [74]. Repelling the harm is to be preferred mostly since refrained from the forbidden is prior and much more emphasized compared to implementing the orders as far as the Shari'ahis concerned [70]. This fatwa, however, supplies two forms of breaching information, which are obligatory and allowed but not required. The former denotes the act to prevent harm to individual or society, while the latter symbolizes the human action of bringing benefit to individual or society or prevent general harm [74]. Therefore, the nurse's involvement in accounting the assigned authorities, such as cases of child abuse, serious communicable disease, notification of birth and deaths, and medical error, is justified in Islam, as the activities preventing harm or bringing benefit to individual or society. In his translation and commentary of the Qur'an, *The Meaning of the Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Abdullah Yusuf Ali explains that, the activity may be conducted by a person not vested with authority, but acting either from motives of public spirit, or in order to help someone who has been wronged; here again the exception will apply [56]. However, the act of breaching information arbitrary without solid reason is strictly forbidden, and the information should be disclosed only to the right person, as stated in chapter 3; verse 118 [75]. Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Abdullah Ibn Baz insisted on the other hand, if the secret only involves the person's only or harm does not involve the society. Response to questions asked by a doctor to the Permanent Committee for Research and Fatwa, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, should a doctor reported to the authorities does find out his or her patients do crime such as drinking alcohol, taking drugs, sodomy, adultery, and the response given by Abdul Aziz is to use the approach of advice and told her patients to repent, compared to divulge their secrets [76]. This assertion in line with the instructions of God so that do not reveal the secrets of someone in chapter 49; verse 11, [77] and

advise each other humans as in clear in chapter 103; verse 1-3 [78].

In summary, the findings showed the application of transparency and confidentiality from the Islamic point of sight across all philosophy, jurisprudence, and related ethical principles. Grounded along the previous expositions, several important points may now be offered.

Foremost, Islam puts a clear position concerning the subject of transparency and confidentiality. Telling truth and secrecy is a very admirable morals demanded in the teachings of Islam. Both are compulsory trust (Amānah) assumed by humans when interacting with other human beings in the world. A reward will be paid to people who assume this trust, while consideration of sin will be devoted to those who fail the trust for no reason allowed by the religion.

Second, in the presence of two evils which is telling lies and severe consequences had been passed off by telling the truth, the judgment should look into which one forms a greater harm. If the consequences of telling the truth may cause greater harm, therefore, it may avoid by the commission of the lesser, otherwise not. From one angle, the sentiment from the Western in the moral consideration in this issue is the same with Islamic perspectives.

Third, a breach of confidentiality could be satisfied only if the harm of maintaining confidentiality overrides its benefit. Nevertheless, if the secret only involves the person's only or harm does not involve the society, the act of breach of confidentiality is not tolerated.

Nursing Implication

Health workers like nurses have the responsibility to provide health services to patients. By doing so, nurses are expected to contribute to the preservation of health, and thus save the lives of their patients. Health workers like nurses are tasked to ensure the delivering of information to the patient is accurate and their privacy stuff is well kept confidential. Indeed, this duty is a part of the core values in nursing to "respect for human rights, including cultural rights, the right to life and choice, to dignity and to be treated with respect." [79]. In Malaysian context as well, the Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses obliged the nurses to abide by the standard practices and to uphold the proper manner, including transparency and confidentiality when dealing with the patient's information [49]. However, as lifestyle is rapidly

changing, there are instances in which health workers have to deal with cases which involve breaching of transparency and confidentiality like telling lies and disclose the private information, respectively. In this regards, nurses cannot avoid from entering the moral and ethical debates of this issue when the possible therapeutic value of nursing brings into questions.

Nurses play a crucial role in delivering the news to the patient and their family [80]. Recent studies demonstrated that many healthcare providers are reluctant to tell the truth to the patient particularly when the situation involves a discussion of medical error [81,82,24] and terminal prognosis [83,84]. Another study shows that nurses intend to tell the whole truth to the patient even though it might difficult to do so, [85] but of course, the barriers such as the belief of telling the bad news is solely a physician's duty, [84] and patient's family preventing to disclose information, [86] is seen to be the main factors among nurses stunted to implement the intentions. In healthcare as well, the challenges to keep the information confidential seems to be higher because nurses are the largest user and gatekeeper of information, as well as many other healthcare providers also concern about the care of the patient, [17] such as physicians, physiotherapist, and non-related healthcare profession like ward clerk. Therefore, the concern, such as who receives access to the patient information, what are the information that can be disclosed, and when it is necessary to disclose private information for the sake of others, are always questioned [15]. To assist in decision making, all aspects should be taken especially standard practices, Code of Ethics, legal requirement, cultural belief, and moral considerations to reassure families that nurses are taking great concern of their sensitive information. If not, nurses may be held liable to a patient in a tort action for breach of confidentiality. Subsequently, nurses may face disciplinary action, fines, and even worst, they may lose their job [87].

The findings of this study can aid the growth of the related knowledge among nurses and leads towards the enrichment of the existing body of knowledge in nursing, especially the permissibility of telling lies and breaching of private information from an Islamic position. The nurses put a much concern whether or not to tell the whole truth and keep confidential of the information. Even though the policies and law allow nurses to disclose information for instance, however, Lachman argues in *Conscientious Objection in Nursing: Definition and Criteria for Acceptance*, that the reason for doing so should not be based on self-interest, discrimination, or prejudice, but

must be based on moral judgment is also supported by religious or secular views [88]. In this regards, Islamic view on this issue give a clear cut the condition for Muslim nurses to proceed or decline in maintaining the transparency and confidentiality of information.

Indeed, a recent survey carried out on 170 nurses working in Gonabad, Iran showed that there was a significant, positive relationship between internal religious orientation and moral sensitivity in the decision making process between them ($P = 0.01$, $r = 0.17$)[89]. Close to other study shows those healthcare providers who have religious belief likely to be more careful dealing with confidentiality issues, [90] as well as issue of transparency. Since the nurses instruct and help people in forming a decision as they engage in nursing care, employing a comprehensive view of transparency and confidentiality based on Islamic sources would provide an anchor linking to them as they interact with Muslim patients. Nevertheless, insufficient knowledge regarding this issue may put a nurse in doubtful and confusion state that contributes to an interruption in the decision-making process. For the future direction of this work, the investigation to explore the knowledge of Islamic moral judgment on this issue among nurses is extremely recommended.

Conflict of interest

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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55. The Qur'an state (33:72): We did indeed offer the Trust to the Heavens and the Earth and the Mousmilntains: but they refused to undertake it being afraid thereof: but man undertook it he was indeed unjust and foolish
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60. It was narrated that Abdullah said: "The Messenger of Allah said: Truthfulness leads to righteousness, and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man may speak the truth until he is recorded with Allah as truthful. Lying leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to the fire. A man may tell lies until he is recorded with Allah as a liar.
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62. The Qur'an state (9:119): you who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and deed).
63. The Qur'an state (11:18): Who does more wrong than those who invent a lie against Allah? They will be turned back to the presence of their Lord and the witnesses will say "These are the ones who lied against their Lord! Behold! the Curse of Allah is on those who do wrong!
64. The Qur'an state (47:21): Were it to obey and say what is just and when a matter is resolved on it were best for them if they were true to Allah.
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to one of his consorts and she then divulged it (to another) and Allah made it known to him he confirmed part thereof and repudiated a part. Then when he told her thereof she said "Who told you this?" He said "He told me who knows and is well-acquainted (with all things)." If you two turn in repentance to Him your hearts are indeed so inclined; but if you back up each other against him truly Allah is his Protector and Gabriel and (every) righteous one among those who believe and furthermore the angels will back (him) up.

67. Abu Saeed Al-Khudri said: "The Messenger of Allah said: 'One of the most evil people before Allah on the Day of Resurrection will be a man who is intimate with his wife and she is intimate with him, then he publicizes her secrets.'"
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71. Narrated Umm Kulthumbint Uqba that she heard Allah's Messenger saying, He who makes peace between the people by inventing good information or saying good things, is not a liar.
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77. The Qur'an state (49:11) ye who believe! let not some men among you laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): Nor let some women laugh at others: it may be that the (latter) are better than the (former): nor defame nor be sarcastic to each other nor call each other by (offensive) nicknames: Ill-seeming is a name connoting wickedness (to be used of one) after he has believed: And those who do not desist are (Indeed) doing wrong.
78. The Qur'an state (103: 1-3) By (the Token of) time (through the Ages). Verily Man is in loss. Except such as have Faith and do righteous deeds and (join together) in the mutual teaching of Truth and of Patience and Constancy.
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