Teaching and learning nursing ethics in 2015: state of art and best practice

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Academic nursing education in Finland /Universities – university master and PhD

Åbo Akademi (Swedish language)
Caring science
- Health care administration
- Health care education

University of Oulu, Faculty of Medicine
Department of Health Sciences
Nursing science
Health care education

University of Tampere, Unit of Health Sciences/Nursing science
Nursing science
- Nursing administration
- Health care education

University of Turku, Faculty of Medicine
Department of Nursing Science
Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Older people nursing care
- Clinical nursing science
- Mental health and psychiatric nursing care
Health care education
(Health care administration)

University of Eastern Finland, Faculty of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing Science
Nursing administration
Preventive nursing science
Health care education

*) Erillisvalinta
**) Ei kiintöity
Health Care Education

Clinical Nursing Science and Health Care Services

Gerontological Nursing Science and Health Care Services

Value Basis and Ethics in Nursing

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Starting point

Nursing/Health care is an ethical profession

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Every nurse/professional has high ethical requirements

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Every nurse/professional has to have ethical education

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Need for research in nursing/health care ethics education

* International Care Ethics Observatory, http://www.surrey.ac.uk/fhms/research/centres/ICE/
* OECD: http://www.oecd.org/health/health-systems/healthworkingpapers.htm
“Another domain in which new ground may be turned is that of ethical issues in nursing education. The nursing literature does contain articles on specific ethical issues that arise within the context of nursing education. 

However, there is nothing in the nursing ethics literature in English that comprehensively or systematically addresses ethical issues arising within the context of nursing education; here is a point at which new ground is ready to be plowed.”
Perspectives of ethics education  
(Leino-Kilpi 2001)

1. ETHICAL KNOWLEDGE BASE - EVIDENCE BASE
   ABOUT HEALTH, HUMAN BEING, NURSING

2. DIDACTIC/PEDAGOGIC STRUCTURE

3. NURSING STUDENT
   Ethical knowledge and action base

NURSE EDUCATOR
Ethical knowledge and action base
1. Ethical knowledge and action base of nurse educators
Research in nursing/health care ethics

Ethics is part of practical philosophy; human beings

• 1970-1980s: nursing ethics as a discipline in applied ethics
• 2013 two decades of Nursing Ethics-journal (Nursing Philosophy, Medical Ethics, Clinical Ethics, Hastings Center Report...)
• Theoretical research (main) – consequentialism/non-consequentialism (deontology)
• Empirical research in ethics (Borry et al 2006):
  Prevalence of empirical studies in 1999-2003:
  Bioethics 6.6%,
  Cambridge Quarterly of Healthcare Ethics 5.6%,
  Hastings Center Report 0.9%,
  J of Clinical Ethics 15.4%,
  J of Medical Ethics 16.8%,
  Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics 3.2%,
  Nursing Ethics 39.5%


• 12
Characteristics of health care/nursing ethics research (health care ethics integrates elements of medical/nursing/professional/organisational theories)

Principlism (e.g. autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, Beauchamp & Childress 1979-2012/7 ed, eg Quaghebeur et al 2009, Kangasniemi 2010)  
  critique: one act-process, life/death-daily care, professional-health care team, clinical context – institutional and societal context

Characteristics of human beings (e.g. virtues)

Rights – duties of professionals/patients (McCormick 2011)

Lived experience of human beings (e.g. vulnerability, dignity - care)

Ethical decision-making is multidimensional/-professional (dialogue between all)
Future areas of research in ethics (e.g. Kaaron & O’Ferrall 2000, Morrison 2009, Chadwick et al 2011)

- Philosophical foundations of nursing ethics
- **Ethics in educational activities** (e.g. Redman 2005, 2008, Numminen et al 2007, Salminen et al 2013)
- Ethics of health promotion (school health, health habits)
- Ethics of aging population (e.g. van der Dam et al 2014, Suhonen et al 2010)
- Ethics of patients with memory disorders/dementia (e.g. Buller 2014)
- Ethics of eHealth (ambulatory/outpatient care, Pagno 2002, Barina 2014)
- Ethics of genetics (genomic, biobanks, e.g. Clarke 2014, Master et al 2014)
- Ethics of screening (e.g. Juth & Munthe 2012)
- Ethics of pandemics/travelling of people/tourism (e.g. Bustamante 2014)
- Ethics of organisations/leadership/management (e.g.

- **Empirical clinical ethics** (e.g. Berger 2014)
Research in nursing ethics education

- Medline search, 10 yrs/ethics education AND nursing Or health care → 71 → 31 references

  - **Country specific** descriptions of ethical education:
    Lithuania (Toliusiene & Peicius 2007), Brazil (Souza Ramoes et al 2013), Danemark (Birkelund 2000)

  - **Specific for different disciplines** (Egan et al 2004/medicine-law)

  - **Specific for teachers** (Warnick & Silverman 2011, Salminen et al 2013)

  - **Personal views/experiential views** (Benari 2009)


  - **Variation in structure and curricula in nursing education** (Lahtinen et al 2014)

  - **Variation in the role of nursing and goal of it** (Woods 2005)

Ethical issues of nurse educators


- How do nurse educators assess their knowledge of ethical principles inherent in the professional codes of ethics governing their work? N=342 Finnish nurse educators/questionnaire
- How do nurse educators assess the implementation of ethical principles of fairness and respect in their work in relation to their students, colleagues, clinical instructors, superiors, and society?

Knowledge about ethical principles:
Educators assessed their knowledge of ethical principles as guiding their work as good (mean 4.43, Sd 0.67). Educators in the age 46-56 assessed their knowledge of the ethical principles as better than educators under-45 age (p = 0.021).
Educators whose experience in health care or as an educator was 10-20 years assessed their knowledge of the ethical principles as better than those 0-5 years (p < 0.006).

Implementation of ethical principles:
Educators fairness towards others Mean 4.38 (SD 0.52)
Educators respect for others Mean 4.03  (SD 0.56)
Other persons respect towards educators Mean 3.98  (SD 0.54)
Respect of educators in society Mean 3.17  (SD 0.83)
2. Didactic/pedagogic structure of teaching ethics
Different curricula decisions - no best practice

- Discipline-specific courses (e.g. Silva & Gillett 1996)
- Interdisciplinary courses (Caldicott & Braun 2011)
- Distinct / stand-alone courses
- Courses integrating ethical concepts and/or frameworks
- Both distinct/stand-alone courses and nursing courses integrating ethical content
Burkemper et al 2007 Ethics education in MSN programmes in USA (174 programmes participated)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHING METHOD</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecture or discussion with instructor (on-site or online)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing assignments</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student presentations (online or on-site)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online discussion among students</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual media</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site small-group discussions</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at institutional ethics committee meetings</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role playing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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3. Educators’ and students’ descriptions of the used evaluation methods

- Discussion
- Diary
- Essay at home
- Essay at exam
- Portfolio
- Other
- Oral exam
- No evaluation
- Performance assessment
- Multiple-choice exam
Experiential learning of empathy in a care-ethics lab

Linus Vanlaere
sTimul: Care-Ethics Lab, Moorsele, Belgium

Trees Coucke
sTimul: Care-Ethics Lab, Moorsele, Belgium

Chris Gastmans
Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
3. Ethical knowledge and action structure of nurse students
Cannaerts N et al 2014 Contribution of ethics education to the ethical competence of nursing students: Educators’ and students’ perceptions. Nursing Ethics 21(8), 861-878.

* Review with 15 articles 1992-2012:
* The goal was to identify best practices for effective teaching in ethics.
  • Most of the studies descriptive in nature, lack of intervention studies (only 1 randomized experimental design), limited evaluation of psychometrics of instruments, convenience sampling, self-developed questionnaires.
General results (Cannaerts et al 2014)

• Ethical competence defined: ethical perception, ethical reflection, ethical behaviour (see Gallagher 2006)
• Education in general increased:
  Ethical perception (importance of ethics, complexity of ethical issues);
  Ethical reflection (awareness, positive argumentation)
  Ethical behaviour (changes in own practice- minor)
• Contribution of teaching methods:
  High variation in methods (case, group discussions, elearning, blended, story telling, …. Ethics-lab) and outcomes. Students’ participation/personal involvement important.
General results, cont

- Contribution of ethics content:
  High variation (ethical theories, utilitarianism/deontology, decision-making, codes, four-principles approach)

**Essential features:** combination of theory and practice, organisational elements (eg timing), characteristics of teacher (inspiration, support, explicit knowledge base, ability to promote participation and group dynamics)

**Summary:** positive findings, but level of evidence is not high - need for further research
Students ethical competence (Kajander-Unkuri et al 2014, see also Epstein & Carlin 2012, Numminen et al 2008)

- Nurse Competence Scale NCS/Graduating nursing students in Finland (n=154)

**NCS category (highest level competence, max 100)**

**Helping role:**
- Decision making guided by ethical values 86.8

**Teaching-coaching:**
- Providing individualized patient education 83.1

**Diagnostic functions:**
- Analysing patients well-being from many perspectives 84.7

**Managing situations:**
- Prioritizing activities 77.4

**Therapeutic interventions:**
- Planning own activities 78.7

**Ensuring quality:**
- Commitment to my organisations care philosophy 75.7

**Work role:**
- Acting autonomously 78.1
Hendel et al 2006/NURSING STUDENTS’ PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES n=496

Figure 3. Differences in perception of values’ importance between years of study (N = 496). The percentages of participants with a mean score $\geq 6.5$ are shown. Scores ranged from 1 (the least important) to 7 (the most important).
Home work

Make an analysis about yourself/your unit/your group:

1. What is your ethical knowledge and action base – and how do you keep it evidence-based?

2. What are your actions for improving ethics/high ethical level of your work/work of colleagues? How do you keep these actions evidence-based?

3. What kind of ethical patient outcomes do you evaluate in your everyday practice? How do you keep your evaluations evidence-based?

4. How do you follow research in nursing/health care ethics? How could you be supported in that, by your colleagues or/and leaders?

7.5.2015

HLK2014
Actions improving ethics- content of education

Ethical reasoning and behaviour Goethals et al 2010 (39 studies), Dierckx de Casterle et al 2008 (9 studies)

• **Problems in conceptualisation** (used theoretical approaches: Kohlberg 1981, Beauchamp & Childress 1979, Gilligan 1982, deontological and theleological approaches)

• Lack of instruments

• **Differences** between ideal ethical decision and real ethical behaviours (Raines 2000, Kim et al 2007)

• **Conventional ethical reasoning** and practice (Dierckx de Casterle et al 2008)

Aitamaa E, Leino-Kilpi H, Puukka P & Suhonen R. 2010. Ethical problems in nursing management: The role of codes of ethics. Nursing Ethics 17(4), 469–482
Actions, cont.

- **Ethical rounds** (e.g. Svantesson et al 2007, 2008) → not stimulated ethical reflection - need to explore the leadership for reflective ethical practice (a follow-up intervention)
- **Ethical consultations** (e.g. Fox et al 2007) → high satisfaction of nurses
- **Ethics support, bioethicists, senior mentors** → needed for retaining workforce (e.g. Ulrich et al 2010)
- **Diaries/notes/electronic**
- **Nurse-led shared care** (e.g. for supporting autonomy, Moser et al 2007)
- **Plogs/chats/mobile applications for discussions** (Strandell-Laine et al 2014)
Perspectives of ethics education-summary (Leino-Kilpi 2001)

NURSE EDUCATOR
Ethical knowledge and action base

2
DIDACTIC/PEDAGOGIC STRUCTURE

NURSING STUDENT
Ethical knowledge and action base

1
ETHICAL KNOWLEDGE BASE - EVIDENCE BASE
ABOUT HEALTH, HUMAN BEING, NURSING

3
Summary – knowledge base

Ethical requirements are present in everyday nursing, in all context/countries, in all relationships, in all times:

- Nurse-patient
- Nurse-other professional
- Nurse-organisation

Ethical competence is fundamental for other areas of competence
Ethical courage is a) part of competence and b) channel to express competence

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*importance of ethics education
*need for stronger evidence


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