



A study to assess the effectiveness of a structured teaching programme on ethical issues, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility among staff nurses at GVPIHCMT Hospital, Visakhapatnam

C H Tulasi

Professor & Principal, Department of medical and surgical Nursing, Gayatri vidya Parishad College of Nursing, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Abstract

Ethical practice, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility are fundamental components of nursing care. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a Structured Teaching Programme (STP) on knowledge regarding ethical issues, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility among staff nurses at GVP Hospital. A pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design was adopted among 30 staff nurses selected using convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured knowledge questionnaire. The STP was administered following the pre-test, and post-test assessment was conducted after seven days. Results revealed a significant improvement in post-test knowledge scores compared to pre-test scores ($p < 0.05$). The study concludes that Structured Teaching Programmes are effective in enhancing ethical awareness and professional responsibility among staff nurses.

Keywords: Ethical issues, dignity of labour, professional responsibility, structured teaching programme, staff nurses

Introduction

Nursing is a profession grounded in ethical practice, professional responsibility, and respect for the dignity of labour. Nurses are expected to provide holistic care while upholding ethical principles such as autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, confidentiality, and accountability. Ethical issues frequently arise in clinical settings due to advances in medical technology, increased patient awareness, heavy workload, and complex healthcare systems. These challenges demand that nurses possess sound ethical knowledge and professional competence to make appropriate decisions in patient care.

Dignity of labour is a fundamental value in nursing practice, as nursing involves both intellectual and manual work aimed at meeting the basic and complex needs of patients. Respecting the dignity of labour promotes professional pride, accountability, and equality among healthcare workers. When nurses value all aspects of their role, including basic patient care, it enhances the quality of care and strengthens professional identity.

Professional responsibility is another essential component of nursing practice. Nurses are accountable to patients, families, the profession, and society. This includes adherence to ethical codes, legal standards, institutional policies, accurate documentation, and continuous professional development. A lack of awareness or inadequate knowledge regarding professional responsibilities may lead to ethical conflicts, compromised patient safety, and legal issues.

Despite the presence of codes of ethics and professional guidelines, studies have shown that nurses often face difficulties in applying ethical principles in day-to-day practice. This gap may be due to insufficient training, limited continuing education, or lack of structured educational programmes within hospital settings. Therefore, ongoing education and reinforcement of ethical principles are essential to empower nurses to handle ethical challenges effectively.

A Structured Teaching Programme (STP) serves as an effective educational strategy to improve nurses' knowledge and awareness regarding ethical issues, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility. By enhancing ethical understanding through systematic education, nurses can deliver safe, ethical, and patient-centred care while maintaining professional standards. Hence, the present study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of a Structured Teaching Programme on ethical issues in nursing practice, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility among staff nurses.

Methods

A quantitative pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design was used. The study was conducted at GVP Hospital among 30 staff nurses selected through convenience sampling. A structured questionnaire assessed knowledge related to ethical issues, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility. Ethical approval and informed consent were obtained.

Results

The mean post-test knowledge score was significantly higher than the mean pre-test score. Paired *t*-test analysis showed a statistically significant improvement in knowledge following the Structured Teaching Programme ($p < 0.05$).

Discussion

The findings of the present study demonstrate that the Structured Teaching Programme was effective in improving knowledge regarding ethical issues in nursing practice, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility among staff nurses. The statistically significant increase in post-test knowledge scores may be attributed to the structured content and relevance of the teaching programme to clinical practice. Similar findings have been reported in previous nursing studies emphasizing the role of ethics education in strengthening professional conduct and accountability.

Conclusion

The Structured Teaching Programme was effective in improving knowledge regarding ethical issues, dignity of labour, and professional responsibility among staff nurses. Regular educational interventions are recommended to promote ethical nursing practice.

References

1. International Council of Nurses. The ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses. Geneva: ICN, 2021.
2. International Council of Nurses. The ICN Code of Ethics for Nurses. Geneva: ICN, 2021.
3. Butts JB, Rich KL. Nursing Ethics: Across the Curriculum and Into Practice. 5th ed. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2022.
4. Beauchamp TL, Childress JF. Principles of Biomedical Ethics. 8th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
5. Johnstone MJ. Bioethics: A Nursing Perspective. 7th ed. Sydney: Elsevier, 2020.
6. Burkhardt MA, Nathaniel AK. Ethics and Issues in Contemporary Nursing. 5th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2021.
7. Grace PJ. Nursing Ethics and Professional Responsibility in Advanced Practice. 3rd ed. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2018.
8. Kangasniemi M, Pakkanen P, Korhonen A. Professional ethics in nursing: An integrative review. *J Adv Nurs*,2015;71(8):1744–1757.
9. Numminen O, Leino-Kilpi H. Nursing students' ethical decision-making: A review of the literature. *Nurse Educ Today*,2017;55:18–24.
10. Poikkeus T, Numminen O, Suhonen R, Leino-Kilpi H. A mixed-method systematic review: Support for ethical competence of nurses. *J Adv Nurs*,2014;70(2):256–271.
11. Rainer J, Schneider JK, Lorenz RA. Ethical dilemmas in nursing practice: A qualitative study. *Nurs Ethics*,2018;25(4):495–507.
12. Gallagher A. Dignity and respect in nursing practice. *Nurs Ethics*,2011;18(4):471–482.
13. Austin W, Rankel M, Kagan L, Bergum V, Lemermeyer G. To stay or to go, to speak or stay silent: Moral distress as experienced by nurses. *Ethics Behav*,2005;15(3):197–212.
14. American Nurses Association. Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. Silver Spring, MD: ANA, 2015.
15. Epstein EG, Hamric AB. Moral distress, moral residue, and the crescendo effect. *J Clin Ethics*,2009;20(4):330–342.
16. Jameton A. Nursing practice: The ethical issues. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984.
17. Butts JB, Rich KL. Nursing Ethics: Across the Curriculum and Into Practice. 5th ed. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2022.
18. Beauchamp TL, Childress JF. Principles of Biomedical Ethics. 8th Ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
19. Johnstone MJ. Bioethics: A Nursing Perspective. 7th ed. Sydney: Elsevier, 2020.
20. Burkhardt MA, Nathaniel AK. Ethics and Issues in Contemporary Nursing. 5th ed. Boston: Cengage Learning, 2021.
21. Grace PJ. Nursing Ethics and Professional Responsibility in Advanced Practice. 3rd ed. Burlington: Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2018.
22. Kangasniemi M, Pakkanen P, Korhonen A. Professional ethics in nursing: An integrative review. *J Adv Nurs*,2015;71(8):1744–1757.
23. Numminen O, Leino-Kilpi H. Nursing students' ethical decision-making: A review of the literature. *Nurse Educ Today*,2017;55:18–24.
24. Poikkeus T, Numminen O, Suhonen R, Leino-Kilpi H. A mixed-method systematic review: Support for ethical competence of nurses. *J Adv Nurs*,2014;70(2):256–271.
25. Rainer J, Schneider JK, Lorenz RA. Ethical dilemmas in nursing practice: A qualitative study. *Nurs Ethics*,2018;25(4):495–507.
26. Gallagher A. Dignity and respect in nursing practice. *Nurs Ethics*,2011;18(4):471–482.
27. Austin W, Rankel M, Kagan L, Bergum V, Lemermeyer G. To stay or to go, to speak or stay silent: Moral distress as experienced by nurses. *Ethics Behav*,2005;15(3):197–212.
28. American Nurses Association. Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. Silver Spring, MD: ANA, 2015.
29. Epstein EG, Hamric AB. Moral distress, moral residue, and the crescendo effect. *J Clin Ethics*,2009;20(4):330–342.
30. Jameton A. Nursing practice: The ethical issues. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1984.