

MORAL NURSING LEADERSHIP, NURSE STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS AND CONCEPT CLARIFICATION ON IDENTITY FORMING.

Background

Nowadays the demand for nurses is high due to population ageing. At the same time too many nurses leave their jobs and work dissatisfaction is high. Therefore, the question rises if nurse education prepares them well enough now and for the future. Key competences such as being responsive, adaptable and compassionate are required. Moral leadership could be an important key to retain nurses and it seems to lead to more job satisfaction. Knowledge of how these concepts relate and how students apprehend them ensure a better understanding which can benefit nursing curricula.

Aim(s)

This study explores how professional identity and moral leadership relate to each other and how baccalaureate students reflect on these concepts and implement them in practice. These insights will be used to substructure a curricular workshop focused on professional identity, moral leadership and job satisfaction.

Methods

In an explorative qualitative study semi-structured in-depth interviews with nurse students was conducted. Personal experiences about professional identity and moral leadership and how they relate were asked. 8 pairs and 3 focus groups participated.

Results

All students assess moral leadership as the basis of their profession, professional identity is seen as the underlying concept. Remarkably, the same values and competencies were mentioned within both concepts, such as self awareness, reflecting and person-centred care. The influence of student coaches on the development of identity and moral leadership was also mentioned. Working from a personal experience strengthens the comprehension and application. Reflecting these concepts in peer groups resulted in recognition, a broader perspective and self-awareness of their own identity and moral leadership.

Discussion

The results corresponds to the literature in which other studies also state that moral leadership is formed by developing a professional identity. Providing a supportive working environment and reflecting with peers is essential to internalize professional values to form identity and moral leadership. Highly developed moral leadership and organisational support lead to better stress tolerance, greater job satisfaction and a smaller gap between education and work. The workshop will be implementing the results, such as the use of personal experiences and reflecting in peer groups. It helps to apprehend the concepts and the process of forming identity and moral leadership. Follow-up research will focus on how moral leadership and job satisfaction relate and the implications of this for education.

References

1. Ten Hoeve, Y. (2018). From student nurse to nurse professional: The shaping of professional identity in nursing. Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.
2. van der Cingel, M. (2022). *Moreel verpleegkundig leiderschap* (1st edition). Boom.
3. Ruijters, M.C.P. (2019). *Mijn binnenste buiten* (1ste edition). Boom.
4. Haghighat, S., Borhani, F. & Ranjbar, H. Is there a relationship between moral competencies and the formation of professional identity among nursing students?. *BMC Nurs* **19**, 49 (2020).
5. van der Cingel, M. and Brouwer, J. (2021), What makes a nurse today? A debate on the nursing professional identity and its need for change. *Nurs Philos*, 22: e12343.