

Moral Challenges in Nursing Practices

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The job of nurses is in the heart of healing and medical care, where the members form an essential element of health care. Together with other healthcare providers, nurses offer health services to millions of people in clinics, nursing homes, hospitals, and birth centers, in which the members of this profession provide nursing assessments, nursing interventions, and counselling tailored to the clients' needs. Along with the health services provided by nurses, the principle of harm prevention is applied to optimize and protect the health of the clients besides preventing ailment and alleviating their suffering. The terminology of prevention primarily denotes the action to avoid, forestall, or circumvent a happening, conclusion, or phenomenon (1). In nursing vocabulary, prevention is referring to the practices that are set to avert illness and promote health, thus, reduces the need for further health care (2). The nurses' preventive tasks include assessment of risk, early diagnosis, early recognition of disability limitations, and the application of prescribed measures such as immunization, health teaching, and rehabilitation. On top of that, some preventive nursing interventions can also be therapeutic.

The nursing profession is a rapidly growing field that often encounters practical and real-time challenges. Some of these challenges are coping with the newly discovered medical facilities and instruments, and the issues of continuous training on using the newly designed medical technologies. Besides that, providing health services to clients from different cultures also poses many challenges considering the cultural sensitivities to certain

healing practices and taboos (3). Additionally, absence of individual moral integrity may also lead to a failure in producing a desirable outcome that constitutes to another challenge. For example, as reported by Los Angeles Times and ProPublica, between 2002 until September 2009, there are nearly 2,400 nurses in California who have been sanctioned, due to moral malpractices such as negligence, cheating, corruption, stealing, murder, slander, rape, and more (4). Given the fact that clients depend on the moral decency and moral responsibility of the nurses, without which will risk the lives of millions in hospitals and other nursing places. Similarly, as nurses have the access to the confidential health information and personal data of their clients, without having the sense of moral integrity, the information could end up in the wrong hand, which leads to a breach of the right to privacy for the clients. Likewise, lack of moral sense will also endanger the safety of both clients and their families. For instance, in the issues of fertility treatments, such as artificial insemination, contraception, and abortion, the safety of the clients highly depends on the moral integrity of the nurses. Thus, the researcher believes that it is important to understand the concept of moral virtues in the nursing profession.

Nurses also faces difficulties related to the prioritization of ethical choices, including the moral dilemmas of pro-choice versus pro-life, decision-making on quantity versus quality, freedom versus control, truth telling versus deception, as well as research-based knowledge versus personal beliefs (5,6). For instance, what shall a nurse do if she or he is

required to offer nursing treatment for someone who chooses to go for abortion, while the nurse does not believe in abortion? With the mind of saving the life of the respective patient, or reducing his or her pain, can a nurse have the right to force the patient to take the prescribed medicine if the patient chooses not to take it? For the sake of transparency and clarity, should the nurse tell the patient everything related to his or her health condition? Should the right and wrong, as well as good and bad decisions in nursing practices be based on the number of patients affected or such decisions should be built on the moral norms? There is also an instance in which the research-based knowledge and traditional or religious beliefs seem to be in contradiction; however, what should be the criterion of the moral decision in such cases? Fair distribution of nursing services and medical facilities among the patients constitute to another ethical challenge in the nursing profession. These are among the many difficulties and moral challenges faced by nurses in their profession. In order to solve the moral dilemmas, some nurses would emphasize on the preventive laws, while others may argue based on the utilitarian approach in which achieving a good result of the given conduct. With the mind that moral dilemmas of nursing profession must address in a comprehensive manner, more scholarly articles should discuss these moral dilemmas through and within the Islamic moral teaching, whereas the researcher also can do so in a comparative manner. Up to now, some paper relates to abortion (7), resuscitation (8) and confidentiality (9) have been published with the integration of Islamic moral teaching in nursing practices.

Scholars in the nursing field have developed ethical codes based on the utilitarian and deontology approaches to assist nurses to answer these moral dilemmas in the nursing profession (10). The concern is whether these ethical codes could be developed as a foundation in moral judgment since it is limited to explain the right and wrong based on an Islamic perspective. Particularly, the theories developed are predicated on mental conceiving, reasoning, sensory perception, and personal experiences of the pioneers who turned out to be very inhibited in nature. The ontological foundations, epistemological

methodologies, and modes of investigation of Islamic and Western international ideas collide (11). Deontology judges an act to be right or wrong depending on the nature of the act, rather than its consequences. It means that if the action follows the principle or the rule, the action is considered ethical even the effects are harmful or wrong. Meanwhile, the utilitarianism judge action to be moral when the work gives happiness to a greater number of people regardless of whether the act is immoral or not. For example, the act of someone that is stealing other's property and gives to the poor is considered permissible even the act is corrupt, but the benefit goes to the majority of individuals. Both theories are limited in justifying whether the action is right or wrong with regards to the Islamic perspective. Therefore, the foundation of moral judgment in nursing actions should be addressed in a more comprehensive and holistic manner because the nurses deal with the human life and a bad moral judgment will risk human lives.

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