Experience of Ethical Conflict in Advanced Practice Nurses and Nurse Managers

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Advanced Nursing in Taiwan

- Traditional
  - Nurse Management/Administration
  - Nursing Education/Research
- New and immerging
  - Advanced Practice
    - Nurse practitioner, case manager, clinical nurse specialist, nurse midwife, nurse anesthetist, etc.
Advanced Nursing Roles

- Management/leadership, teaching/mentoring, consultation, research, and specialty nursing roles
- Increasing power, authority
- Complexity in intra-professional, inter-professional and nurse-client/family relationship
- Requiring in-depth knowledge and skill
Competency for Ethical Decision-Making in Advancing Nursing Roles

- Moral sensitivity
  - theory, recognizing, identifying

- Moral action
  - active participating, responding, facilitating

- Creating an ethical environment
  - promoting, role modeling, teaching, mentoring

(Hamric & Reigle, 2005)
The position in promoting health of clients, ethical practice and professional integrity are more complex and new challenges emerges.
This study aimed to describe ethical conflicts and distress experienced by these nurses.
Method

- A qualitative inquiry with open-ended questions was used
  - to elicit the ethical conflict, as the most from their day-to-day nursing practice as nurse managers, nurse educators or advanced practice nurses;
  - to describe the context of the ethical conflict
Participants

- A purposive sample from hospitals and nursing schools, Taiwan
- 10 master prepared nurses, ages of 32 - 45
  - 3 nurse practitioners,
  - 2 case managers/care coordinators,
  - 3 nurse managers
  - 2 clinical nurse educators
- 6-24 years in nursing, for 5 to 7 years in advanced roles
- In ICU, oncology, mental health or management,
- in acute care, community or nursing education setting.
Data Collection and Analysis

- IRB & informed consent
- 1-2 Voice-recorded interviews per participants
- open-ended questions
- Constant comparative method
- QRSNvivo software
Sense of stressed, unsecured, “professional fatigue,”

“...stressed, wanting to just run away; but they (nurses) looked up to me.” (#6)

“I can’t do much! They can’t hear you. Just wait and wait!” (#1)

“.....Sometimes, I questioned myself on this job...” (#8)

“ It is so hard! We have tried so many ways; still we didn’t do a good job.” (#9)
Result – Ethical Conflicts

- 26 types of ethical cases
- care and nurse-client relationship,
  - End-of-life treatment and decision
  - Adequate, equal, affordable care/treatment
  - Honest, accountability, privacy
- collaboration with nurses and non-nurse colleagues
  - Nurse v.s. administrators
  - Nurse v.s. educators
  - Practice v.s. role model
- conflict between profession and job/organization
Result – Ethical Conflict

- Jameton’s typology
- Moral dilemma
  - Moral principles applied but inconsistent
- Moral distress
  - Knowing the right thigh to do, but with constraint
- Moral uncertainty
  - Unsure what to do
The experience challenged their professional accountability, professional value, and was a personal stressful, fatigue experience, which evoked by situational factors, institutional culture or policy, role function in the era of advanced nursing.
Discussion

- Different focus for different specialty or role function
- More power, more complexity in conflict and resolution.
- Ethical dilemma or distress were more dominant.
- Rooted on Codes of Nursing Ethics
- Further support and training are needed.
Thank you for your participating!