

Ethical Considerations in Measuring Genetic and Genomic Competence among Nurses: Insights from Survey Instruments

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Background

With the establishment of genetic and genomic competence guidelines for nurses, competence research has been conducted globally. However, the ethical dimension, pivotal in both nursing and genomics, remains unexplored in these assessments.

Purpose

The objective was to elucidate how ethical considerations are reflected in instruments used to measure genomic competence in nursing.

Methods

Databases: CINAHL Complete and Medline.

The study design: a scoping review.

The period: 1/ 2010 to 1/ 2022.

Research type: qualitative and quantitative papers

Target group: practicing nurses

Context: instruments for assessing genetic / genomic competence

Critical appraisal tools: Joanna Briggs Institute tools for Analytical Cross-Sectional and Quasi-Experimental studies

Final inclusion: 25 articles, 19 different instruments

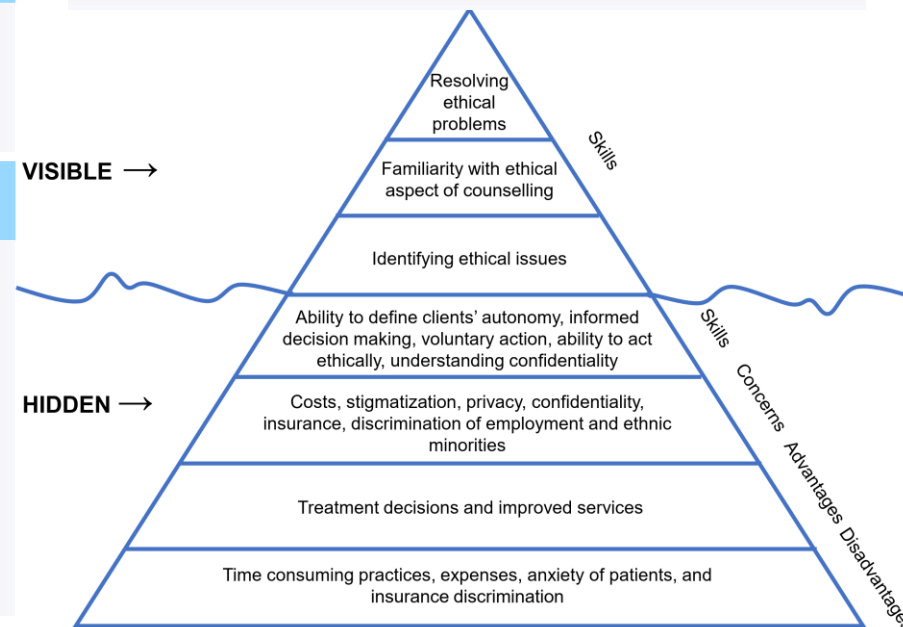
Analysis: Inductive thematic analysis

Results

Visible ethics in 3 instruments: nurses' confidence to resolve ethical problems, familiarity with ethical aspects of genetic counselling, and ability to identify ethical dilemmas.

Hidden ethics in 8 instruments: ethical themes in skills, concerns, advantages, and disadvantages.

Absent of ethics in 8 instruments: no ethics was included at all.



Conclusions

Ethics was acknowledged as a part of competence, but not all instruments incorporated ethical dimensions.

Ethical competence was often assessed alongside a broader range of genomic issues. This included ethical, legal, social, religious, cultural, and ethnic issues in one question.

Ethics did not receive proper emphasis within the instruments.

Proposed Measures

Researchers, educators, and nurse management need to consider ethics as essential part of genomic-informed nursing. Development of competence measurements need to be considered to include ethics.



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