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Comprehensive training for nursing practitioners: a literature review of ethical, cognitive, and communicative dimensions

Formación integral del practicante de enfermería: una revisión bibliográfica de las dimensiones ética, cognitiva y comunicativa

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Abstract

Currently, nursing professionalism is becoming increasingly practical, and training requires comprehensive changes in values, critical thinking, and interrelationships to strengthen care. Therefore, the information search process focused on how comprehensive training influences nursing practitioners from an ethical, cognitive, and communicative perspective. The methodology was based on a literature review of 102 journals indexed in SciELO, Scopus, and Web of Science, of which 41 were relevant to the analysis of the dimensions. The results show that nursing is comprehensive in nature and influences ethical, cognitive, and communicative training. In conclusion, comprehensive nurses access scientific knowledge through the application of bioethics, as well as through the analysis and management of communication skills with colleagues, users, and teachers.

Keywords: comprehensive training, practical, nursing

Resumen

En la actualidad, el profesionalismo de enfermería cada vez es más práctica y la instrucción requiere cambios integrales en los valores, el pensamiento crítico y las interrelaciones para fortalecer los cuidados. Por ello, el proceso de búsqueda de información se centró en cómo influye la formación integral en el practicante de enfermería desde el enfoque ético, cognitivo y comunicativo. Su metodología se basó en la revisión bibliográfica de 102 revistas indexadas en SciELO, Scopus y Web of Science, de las cuales 41 fueron relevantes para el análisis de las dimensiones. Los resultados demuestran que la enfermería tiene un carácter integral e influye en la formación ética, cognitiva y comunicativa. En conclusión, los enfermeros integrales acceden a los conocimientos científicos desde la aplicación de la bioética, así como mediante el análisis y manejo de habilidades comunicativas con colegas, usuarios y docentes.

Palabras clave: formación integral, práctica, enfermería

Introduction

The comprehensive training of nursing professionals is fundamental for the delivery of healthcare, as graduates require theoretical instruction, methodologies, and values (Oviedo Rodríguez & Baute Alvarez, 2023). Cognitive skills in practice enable logical reasoning in the face of clinical problems (Liu et al., 2024). Communication is essential for therapeutic management and teamwork (Hurtado Astudillo, 2020). However, Zambrano Bermeo (2020) notes that although universities provide comprehensive training for students, they still encounter instances of negligence. This context raises questions about the educational capacity to cultivate holistic students. In this regard, cognitive self-regulation modules (NCST-C) have been adjusted for reflection in China (Shasha et al., 2022). In the United States, therapeutic and cultural communication competencies are proposed (Schulenberg et al., 2024). In Venezuela, there is a reinforced commitment to clinical practice (Duran López, 2023). In Ecuador, it was acknowledged that 78% of professionals are unaware of procedures due to a lack of communication (Herrera Velázquez et al., 2022).

Ultimately, nursing education is a process of teaching humanized care (Torres & Fierro, 2020). The International Council of Nurses (Consejo Internacional de Enfermeras, 2021) defines bioethics as the deontological study of justice, beneficence, non-maleficence, and autonomy. Cognitive preparation is the education aimed at enhancing critical knowledge (Hutson et al., 2024). Communication is the precise transfer of

information (Kerr et al., 2022). According to Nightingale's theory, ethics transforms compassionate behavior (Quishpe Cocha & Chipantiza Barrera, 2023), ensuring humanized care. Cognitive theory, as proposed by Vygotsky, Dewey, and Leininger, reflects the learning and understanding of clinical foundations (Moreira Chóez et al., 2021). Notably, the theories of Peplau, Watzlawick, and Austin, cited by Jiménez et al. (2023), assert that communication involves feedback, which is influenced by body language, tone of voice, and non-verbal therapeutic language.

This review seeks to answer the question: How does comprehensive training influence the ethical, cognitive, and communicative dimensions of nursing practitioners? Theorists suggest that ethical influence involves moral knowledge (Zulkifli et al., 2024), awareness, and social responsibility (Qu et al., 2024). Cognitive training strengthens critical thinking and logical reasoning (Shasha et al., 2022), while communicative influence involves therapeutic social interaction (Kerr et al., 2022).

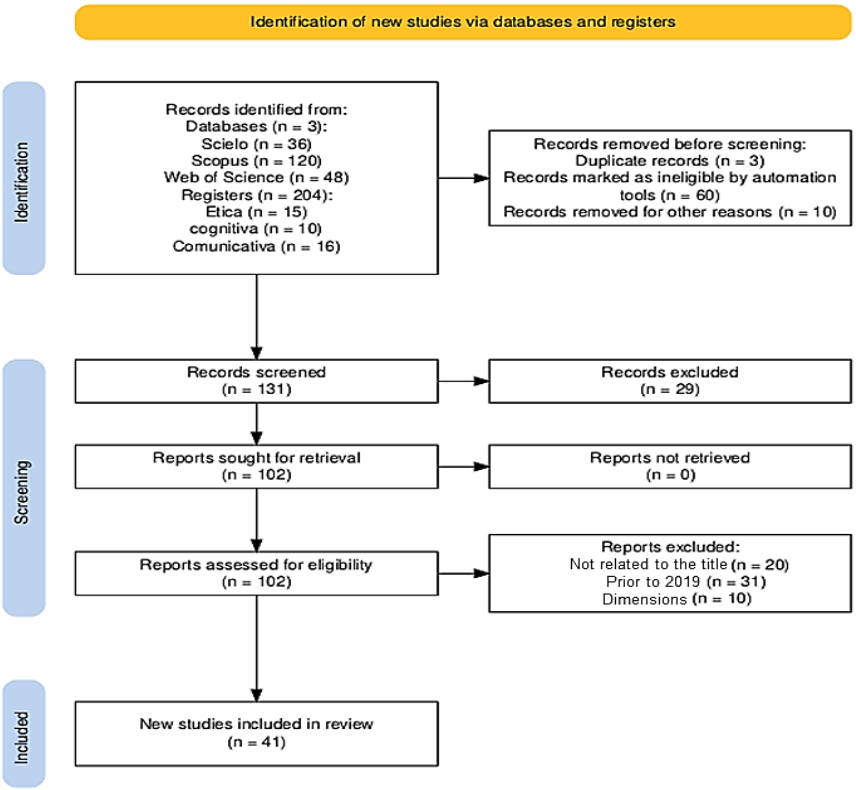
Methodology

The research was qualitative, based on a documentary review with a bibliographic design in the educational context. It focused on analyzing the comprehensive training of nursing practitioners. Categories were organized in a table that included titles, author names, and DOIs. The unit of analysis consisted of scientific journals published between 2020 and 2025. Data selection was conducted using Boolean operators (AND and OR) entered into the SciELO, Scopus, and Web of Science databases, in English, Portuguese, and Spanish, for registration in the PRISMA flow diagram.

Articles published prior to 2019 were excluded, along with ambiguous information not related to the titles, as well as dimensions not aligned with the objectives. The bibliographic manager Mendeley was employed to obtain references. The study of dimensions was analyzed qualitatively from a holistic perspective to identify how ethical, cognitive, and communicative training influences nursing practitioners. Integrity criteria considered the rights of authors, references, acceptance by the journal for publication, and validation against plagiarism.

Figure 1

Analysis registration process



Note. Source: Haddaway et al., 2020.

Results and discussion

The findings from the journals clarified that comprehensively training future nursing professionals is significant, influenced by ethical, cognitive, and communicative education. Ethical projects, articulated within the deontological principle, were highlighted (Zhifei et al., 2024). In cognitive preparation, audiovisual materials, psychodrama, and training were employed to enhance reflection and adaptability in practical procedures (Shasha et al., 2022). In communicative training, tools such as the Calgary-Cambridge framework (Chen et al., 2023), psychodrama (Cataldas et al., 2024), virtuality (Dong et al., 2024), and on-site simulation for therapeutic communication were emphasized, although limitations were noted in emotional expression (Ross et al., 2024).

Table 1

Sources of ethical, cognitive, and communicative dimensions

	ARTICLE TITLES	AUTHORS	CONTRIBUTIONS
1	Overview of Nursing Ethics Education in Brazil's Public Higher Education Institutions	Bueno AA, Evangelista RA, Potrich T, Figueredo LP, Silva CCR, Silva GTR	In Brazil, ethical projects are included in clinical, community, pharmacological, surgical, epidemiological, and mental health training (Bueno et al., 2023).
2	From Ethics to Bioethics in Health Sciences	Zambrano Bermeo Rosa Nury, Myriam Bermeo de Rubio	The deontological code of bioethics emphasizes autonomous care, beneficence, justice, and freedom from harm (Zambrano Bermeo et al., 2020).
3	The Effect of Simulated Problem Learning on Nursing Ethics: Impact on Moral Sensitivity, Empathy, and Critical Thinking of Students	Zhifei Qu, Jingjing Sun, Li, Lijing Zhao, Nan Jiang, Jia Fan, Jiaxin Zhang, Bing Liang,	Simulators addressing ethical problems significantly contribute to sensitive and empathetic training ($P < 0.05$) (Zhifei et al., 2024).
4	Ethical Practice in Nursing Care	Mirtha Flor Cervera Vallejos	Strengthens the vocation to serve, with commitment and respect for life (Cervera Vallejos, 2023).
5	The Ethics of Nursing Care for Transgender Individuals	Oltra-Rodríguez E, González-López E, Osorio-Álvarez S, Rodríguez-Alonso A.	Ethical training requires coordinated plans to understand the diversity of vulnerable individuals (Oltra Rodríguez et al., 2023).
6	Addressing Moral Harm in Nursing Education	Linda S Johanson, Victoria Hughes, Marianne Logan Fingerhood, Emily Mewborn	Autonomous ethical strategies recognize structural issues in traumatic events (Johanson et al., 2023).
7	Practical Ethics of Pain Management in the Perioperative Setting	Esther I. Bernhofer	The nurse, from a humanitarian perspective, values subjective and priority data for patient pain management (Bernhofer, 2023).
8	Bioethics in Cardiovascular Surgery: Applied Ethical Theories	Rubén Darío Camargo Rubio	The principle-based theory endorses autonomous and just reflection in cardiovascular surgeries (Camargo Rubio, 2023).
9	The Effect of Moral Sensitivity on Professional Values of Nursing Students	Emine Türkmen, Doğancan Vaizoğlu, Tuğba Yeşilyurt, Nurcan Uysal	Moral training focused on empathy and leadership determines the quality of care (Türkmen et al., 2023).
10	Exploring the Education of Multicultural Students: Ethics in the Australian Nursing Curriculum	Angela Dawn Sheedy	Multicultural education fosters the resolution of discriminatory conflicts and prejudices (Sheedy, 2024).

11	The Importance of Professional Values from the Perspective of Clinical Nurses	Rutmauli Hutagaol Enie Novieastari, Suharmanto, Savitri Kurnia Widya S	74% perceive that ethical professionalism inspires clinical care (Hutagaol et al., 2024).
12	Humanization, Humanism, Ethics	Fernando Lolas Stepke	The tutor raises awareness of immoral behavior and promotes reflection (Lolas Stepke, 2024).
13	Perspectives of Nursing Educators on Facilitating Ethical Education: A Descriptive Qualitative Study	Yusrita Zolkefli, Siti Hanna Muharram, Nursalam Nursalam, Ashikin Atan	Ethical curricula of educators shape students' moral awareness in clinical preparation (Zolkefli et al., 2024).
14	Beyond Right and Wrong: Ethics from a Relational Perspective of Academic Entrepreneurship	Nuria Toledano, Juan D. González Sanz,	Self-regulated ethical norms develop wisdom, manage emotions, and control behavior without supervision (Toledano & González Sanz, 2024).
15	To Silence or Act? Challenges in Integrating Ethical Theory in Gerontological Nursing Care During Students' First Clinical Rotation	Karin Mattsson,	Educators require more time to cultivate moral values, transitioning from listener to protector in ethical dilemmas involving the elderly (Mattsson, 2024).
16	Effect of a Comprehensive Training Course in Nursing Skills (NCST-C) on Students' Metacognitive Awareness	Shasha Li, Minerva de Ala, Dandan Mao, Afeng Wang, Chongwen Wu	Training improved metacognitive knowledge, reflection, and adaptation of students in practice (Shasha et al., 2022).
17	Centrality and Bridge Connections Between Cognitive Emotional Regulation Strategies and Professional Identity Among Chinese Nursing Students	Jingya Liu, Haoran Zhang, Siyu Tao, Jie He, Shuwen Li,	The research confirmed that planning serves as central educational nodes for cognitive regulation (Liu et al., 2024).
18	Cognitive Maturity of Portuguese Nursing Students for Disaster Intervention: Contribution of Initial Training	Paulo Alexandre Figueiredo dos Santos Bautista, Rui Carlos Negrão Coutinho, Verónica Rita Días y Rabiais, Isabel Cristina Mascarenhas	Revealed that disaster training provides cognitive resilience, intelligence, and protection in emergencies (Santos et al., 2024).
19	Psychometric Testing of NASA-TLX to Measure Cognitive Load of Students in Individual and Group Nursing Simulations	Jeremy W. Hutson, Ashley E. Franklin, Beth A. Rogers y Danielle Walker	The NASA-TLX task load index proved to be a reliable instrument for measuring students' cognitive load; however, it has not yet been explored in group nursing simulations (Hutson et al., 2024).
20	Improving Validity Through Cognitive Interviews: A Methodological Example Using	Zhuming Bao, Jenny Harris, Verna	The application of the questionnaire and cognitive interview were valid for evaluating oncological labor (Bao et al., 2024).

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	the Registered Nursing Forecasting Survey	Lavender, Anne Marie Rafferty, Jo Armes,	
21	Cognitive Engagement of Nursing Students in Blended Learning: A Parallel Mixed-Methods Study	Meng-meng Xu, Qi Tian, Shuang-Han Yu, Yan-Tong Liu, Ming-Lu Cao, Wei Zhang,	Reported that practitioner engagement is moderate in cognitive learning, recommending intervention in didactics (Xu et al., 2023).
22	Effects of an Active Learning Mechanism on Cognitive Load and Academic Performance: A Focus on Pharmacology Teaching for Nursing Students in Taiwan	Shuenn-Jiun Yiin, Chi-Liang Chern	Practical training in the second year of pharmacology nursing, through questionnaires and feedback, reduced cognitive load (Yiin & Chern, 2023).
23	Relationship Between Clinical Practice and Simulation: Its Impact on Success, Cognitive Load, and Mental Well-Being of Nursing Students in Quebec	Jane L. Pearsall, Ute Beffert, Denyse T.	An 8-hour simulation teaching (77%) facilitated academic achievements amidst stress and cognitive-perceptual challenges (Pearsall et al., 2023).
24	Cognitive Preceptorship: An Emerging Model for Transitioning from Professional Nurse Role to Practice	Viktoriya Pleshkan, Anita D. Boykins,	The cognitive perception model guides role adaptation for novices before and after job placement (Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022).
25	Cognitive Changes with the Acquisition of Psychomotor Skills Through Blended Learning Among Nursing Students: A Qualitative Study	Yoshida Y, Uno T, Tanaka H, Hakosaki I, Shigeta K, Yano R.	Blended learning using audiovisual instruments strengthened cognitive skills, assessment, and reflection in the absence of the instructor (Yoshida et al., 2022).
26	Communication Skills Training for Nurses: Is It Time for a Standardized Nursing Model?	Debra Kerr, Peter Martin, Lynn Furber, Sandra Winterburn, Sharyn Milnes, Annegrethe Nielsen, Patricia Strachan	Communication training is an essential challenge in quality care, demanding theoretical instruction for interaction; neglecting it increases errors or events in patient care (Kerr et al., 2022).
27	Application of Standardized Patient Education Based on the Calgary-Cambridge Communication Model in Training Nurses to Communicate with Patients	Chen, Di. Hua, Mingzhu. Liu, Xuechao. Liu, Chen. Yuan, Lingling. Li, Yunfeng	Demonstrated that the Calgary-Cambridge model improved the art of communicating with patients and teaching performance in training (Chen et al., 2023).
28	The Effect of Psychodrama-Based Interventions on Therapeutic Communication Skills and Cognitive Flexibility Among Nursing Students	Seda Karakaya Çataldaş, Fatma Atkan, Ayşe Eminoğlu	The communication course based on psychodrama improved therapeutic information; further studies with diverse samples in randomized control of cognitive flexibility are recommended (Cataldas et al., 2024).
29	Contextual Determinants Affecting Communication of Emergency Teams Among Final-Year Nursing Students	Sharon L. Bourke, Lisa McKenna, Simon Cooper, Louisa Lam	Revealed that contextual factors such as simulation, students, and team dynamics necessitate educational strategies and research

	During Deteriorating Patient Simulations		into experiential learning to enhance team communication (Bourke et al., 2024).
30	Application of Virtual Reality in Nursing Communication Training: A Systematic Review	Yueyang Dong, Juanjuan Sun, Meng He, Xiangning Zhu, Shuang Zhang, Wenxia Wang, Shuyan Fang, Haitao Song, Jiao Sun	Virtual reality for nursing students improved communicative skills and clinical cognition through communication strategies, theoretical design, and feedback (Dong et al., 2024).
31	Therapeutic Communication Through Reflective Interventions in Nursing Education: A Mixed-Methods Study	Seung Hee Lee, Hye Jin Yoo	Interview interventions improved therapeutic communication skills (79% to 89%) in experiential environments, enhancing self-awareness in nursing practice learning (Lee & Yoo, 2024).
32	Improving Communication Skills of Nursing Students with Deaf Patients: Impact of Workshops on Nursing Training Programs	Tannenbaum-Baruchi	Nursing training with workshops enhanced communication with deaf patients, with 82% reporting reinforced skills and demonstrating inclusive experiential learning (Tannenbaum-Baruchi, 2024).
33	The Impact of Standardized Patients on First-Year Nursing Students' Communication Skills	Jennifer Gunberg Ross, Gail Furman, Ann Scheve	In first-year training, simulation improved therapeutic communication skills in mental health, but further research in other contexts is suggested (Ross et al., 2024).
34	Communicative Self-Efficacy and Communication Apprehension in a National Sample of University Nursing Students: A Cross-Sectional Study	Shannon L. Schulenberg, Debora Goldberg, Gary Kreps, Kyeung Mi Oh	22% of students showed heightened communication apprehension in academic contexts, correlating negatively with communicative self-efficacy (Schulenberg et al., 2024).
35	Interactive Communication Simulation Based on Technology Addressing Challenging Communication Situations for Nursing Students	Yeseul Jeon, Heeseung Choi, Ujin Lee, Hannah Kim	Simulation enhanced compassion, efficiency, and practitioners' knowledge in managing geriatric patients at the end of life, with greater satisfaction in the program compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$) (Jeon et al., 2024).
36	Changes in Self-Efficacy and Communication of Nursing, Occupational Therapy, and Speech-Language Pathology Students Participating in a Patient Simulation	Ann Marie Knecht Potter, Morgan Dwyer, MS, Melanie May, MS, Louise Keegan, Glynnis Jones	Simulation with generalized patients resulted in increases in self-efficacy ($p < 0.001$) and communication ($p < 0.001$) for nursing and occupational therapy, reducing stress in practice (Potter et al., 2024).
37	The Role of Organizational Culture and Communication Skills in Predicting the Quality of Nursing Care	Wafaa F. Taan, Fadi Allama, Brett Williams	Determined a moderate positive relationship between organizational culture and communication skills ($r = 0.57$, $p < 0.05$) for care safety (Taan et al., 2024).
38	Learning to Communicate Together: Perspectives on an Interdisciplinary Experience Between Nursing Students and Physical Therapy Assistants	Stacie Sweet, Lori Wahl	46% of participants reported greater confidence in communicating with other providers, improving the effectiveness of their interactions (Sweet & Wahl, 2024).
39	Effectiveness of In-Situ Simulation to Determine Perceived Level of Communication Skills of	Hilal Yıldız Çelik, Tülay Demiray, Seda Er, Yasemin Uslu	In-situ simulation generated high satisfaction levels (4.48), self-confidence (4.42), and effective listening techniques, but weakness in expressing emotions was noted (Yıldız Çelik et al., 2024).

	Nursing Students While Using Personal Protective Equipment		
40	Preparing Nursing Students to Communicate with Psychiatric Patients	Suzanne Casey	Identified communicative strategies in learning and simulation that enhanced knowledge and skills for managing anxiety and confidence in mental health care (Casey, 2024).
41	Experiences of Registered Nurses' Communication with Patients After Communication Breakdowns at the End of Life: A Pilot Study of Interviews	Rebecka Nilsson, Ami Homel	Highlighted strategies in continuous education for follow-up, sustenance, and existential engagement in more humane palliative care communication (Nilsson & Hommel, 2024).

The comprehensive training of nursing students is closely tied to practical application. Zambrano Bermeo et al. (2020) emphasize that ethical values such as autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice strengthen critical thinking, fostering sensitivity (Zhifei et al., 2024), a vocation to serve, and respect for life (Cervera Vallejos, 2023). They highlighted coordinated plans associated with structural risks (Johanson et al., 2023) in clinical, community, and psychological approaches (Bueno et al., 2023) to understand the diversity of vulnerable individuals (Oltra Rodríguez et al., 2023). In this regard, interventions become humanitarian in pain management (Bernhofer, 2023), just and autonomous in cardiovascular procedures (Camargo Rubio, 2023), determining empathy and leadership in practice (Türkmen et al., 2023) free from discrimination and prejudice (Sheedy, 2024). Seventy-four percent demonstrated ethical behavior in complex care situations (Hutagaol et al., 2024), supported by tutors (Lolas Stepke, 2024; Zolkefli et al., 2024) and without supervision in geriatric care (Toledano & Gonzáles Sanz, 2024; Mattsson, 2024).

Furthermore, other authors proposed active methods for cognitive training, such as workshops (Shasha et al., 2022), risk assessments (Liu et al., 2024), disaster simulations, interviews, pharmacological manuals, questionnaires, and feedback (Yiin & Chern, 2023), as well as theoretical models (Xu et al., 2023) that strengthened self-protection against various phenomena (Santos et al., 2024); they also supported the development of critical judgment (Bao et al., 2024) and self-efficacy (Xu et al., 2023) in adapting to cognitive-perceptual stress (Pearsall et al., 2023) before and after graduation (Pleshkan & Boykins, 2022).

In all these perspectives, student preparation influences communication, which today has a significant direct impact on the quality of care and user safety. However, clinical omissions and errors still exist (Kerr et al., 2022). Therefore, models such as Calgary-Cambridge (Chen et al., 2023), technological tools (Bourke et al., 2024), and therapeutic approaches (Dong et al., 2024) have been proposed for mental health education (Ross et al., 2024). Clinical interviews (Lee & Yoo, 2024) and workshops on non-verbal communication with hearing-impaired patients (Tannenbaum-Baruchi, 2024) strengthen sensitive practices. Nevertheless, prejudice and high levels of work-related stress persist (Potter et al., 2024), limiting communicative interaction (Schulenberg et al., 2024). To counter this, Taan et al. (2024) suggest multicultural communication, simulations in clinical professions (Sweet & Wahl, 2024), and learning in palliative care (Yıldız Çelik et al., 2024; Nilsson & Hommel, 2024).

Conclusions

The findings from the 41 consulted journals indicate the influence of training ethical, communicative, and cognitive students through tools, methods, theories, strategies, and planning for critical reflection and adaptation in clinical practice. This training enhances the interpersonal communication of students, committed to justice and equitable treatment, while exploring hospital knowledge and perceptions of learning in real and potential health issues. Therefore, it is recommended to improve professional competencies to meet the challenges in health and education services.

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