

Male Students' Perceptions of the Nursing Profession: A Qualitative Study [Letter]

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Dear editor

With great interest, we have carefully read an original article titled “Male Students’ Perceptions of the Nursing Profession: A Qualitative Study” by Huang et al.¹ This is a very valuable qualitative study aimed at exploring the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of male nursing students and male nursing professionals towards the nursing profession. This study has the following strengths: (1) Male nurses, as an integral component of the nursing team, have made significant contributions to the development of the nursing profession. Paying attention to the perceptions of male nursing students and professionals towards the nursing profession, changing their negative cognition, is crucial for stabilizing the nurse workforce and improving their retention. This is also the responsibility and mission of nursing educators and managers. This study provides scientific evidence for nursing educators and managers. (2) The authors employed a heterogeneous purposive sampling method to recruit participants, which effectively reduced bias. (3) The interview guideline developed by the authors based on literature review and practical experience was relatively scientific and reasonable. (4) This study achieved good rigor and credibility by following Lincoln and Guba’s qualitative research guidelines.² (5) In response to academic hurdles faced by nursing students, this study provided some valuable suggestions for nursing educators and nursing schools.

Nevertheless, in addition to the limitations mentioned in this study, there were still some areas that need further improvement: (1) This study did not report specific dates of data collection in the methods section, we suggest that the authors supplement this content in the future. (2) Although the authors developed an interview protocol based on their literature analyses and vast experiences as intervention nurses and nursing teachers, we believed that the interview guidelines for participants in figure 1 of page 1029 were not comprehensive enough. In order to make the interview outline more comprehensive and obtain more vivid and rich results, we suggest the authors add another question: “How did the students or professionals from other healthcare professions, such as doctors and medical technicians, react to you as a male nurse?”. Because in some medical schools or institutions, the students and professionals from other healthcare majors sometimes hold certain biases against male nursing students and male nursing professionals.³ The authors may consider integrating the results of this question into concept 1 “perceiving gender varieties” in the future.

The implications of this study for future research directions: (1) Multi-center studies involving participants from multiple nursing schools and hospitals are needed to improve the generalizability of conclusions. (2) The perceptions of male nursing students and professionals towards the nursing profession change over time;³ thus, we suggest that the authors conduct a longitudinal qualitative study on this topic to dynamically understand the changes in male nurses’ perceptions about the nursing profession. (3) Developing a nursing professional perception assessment scale suitable for Chinese cultural background, and conducting quantitative research to understand the levels of male nurses’ perception towards the nursing profession. (4) The authors can use a meta-synthesis method of qualitative research to summarize the perceptions of male nurses towards the nursing profession, in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of their

feelings and perspectives on the nursing profession, improve their professional values and professional identity, and create a good nursing practice environment.

Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

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