

The experiences of male nursing students during clinical placements

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Introduction: Nursing has been portrayed as a female-dominated profession in the healthcare system. As gender minorities, male nursing students' experiences in undergoing nursing programme are different as compared to their female colleagues. This study aimed to explore the experiences of male students enrolled in nursing in the Bachelor of Nursing Programme.

Method: A descriptive qualitative study was employed. In-depth interviews with the use of semi structured question guidelines were conducted among male nursing students who volunteered to participate. Using thematic analysis, data saturation was achieved at the eighth participant.

Results: Three major themes were emerged: 1. Experiences (changes in perception after clinical practicum and perceived support from female staff nurses), 2. Challenges (caught in an awkward situation; communication barriers; restriction, rejection and willingness of male nursing students and embarrassment during procedures) and 3. Coping (sharing of

experiences; deviation from stress and gradual adaptation.

Discussion: The findings revealed how they came to choose nursing in the first place and their educational as well as clinical experiences throughout the nursing degree programme. It highlighted the challenges that they faced and the coping mechanisms that they used to overcome those perceived barriers during their clinical placement.

Conclusion: The findings of this study could help to provide a better understanding towards the experiences and challenges faced by male nursing students which, in turn aid in the reconstruction of men's role in nursing. Further understandings regarding the barriers encountered by male students in nursing could assist clinical supervisors to enhance their clinical skills. The findings from this study would be valuable for future research.

Keywords: challenges, clinical settings, coping, experiences, female dominated, male student nurse