Reviewer's report

Title: The consoling Power of Presence: Hospice Nurses' lived Experience with Spiritual and Existential Care for the Dying - a phenomenological-hermeneutical Study

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Reviewer: Kirsti Torjuul

Reviewer's report:

Review of the manuscript: The consoling power of presence: Hospice nurses' lived experience with spiritual and existential care for the dying – a phenomenological-hermeneutical study.

First, I would like to thank for the opportunity to review this manuscript. On the whole, it is a very interesting and well-written article about an important topic in nursing.

I have made my assessment according to the following points:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined?
   Yes

2. Are the methods appropriate and well described?
   Yes, except from the following recommendations:
   • (Discretionary) The participants in the study are described as “expert hospice nurses…” (Method, second paragraph). Here I find the use of the term “expert” problematic as inclusion criteria without further explanation. I recommend that the authors to remove the term “expert”, since it is both unnecessary and may cause misinterpretation.
   • (Minor essential revision) The method used in “Data analysis” is well described. However, the relationship between the “results” of the different phases in the analysis could be made clearer. For instance: When describing naïve reading, the authors write: “This gave access to the lived experience of the hospice nurses’ spiritual praxis and their encounter with teaching and supervising in palliative and spiritual care skills”. The relationship between “Encounter with teaching and supervising” and the themes and subthemes presented in ‘Results’ needs either to be clarified or removed. (See first paragraph in ‘Discussion’).
   • (Discretionary) In ‘Results’ the themes and subthemes are presented directly without any introduction. Some remarks about the relationship between the aim of the study, data analysis and the themes and subthemes could be helpful and strengthen the study rigour.
   • (Discretionary) The main theme is named ‘Consoling’ in Table 1, and ‘Consolation’ in the heading below.
2. Are the data sound?
   Yes
3. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition?
   Yes
4. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
   Yes
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
   Yes
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished?
   Yes
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found?
   Yes.
   (Discretionary) The title is: “The consoling power of presence”. In ‘Conclusion’ the authors write: “The findings suggest that through the power of consoling presence, nurses have a potential to alleviate existential and spiritual suffering”. Perhaps “The power of consoling presence” is a better title? These sentences (and in the abstract, conclusions) ought to be harmonized.
9. Is the writing acceptable?
   Yes

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests