Author’s response to reviews

Title: Exploring the experiences of being an ethnic minority student within an undergraduate nursing education: A qualitative study

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Exploring the experiences of being an ethnic minority student within an undergraduate nursing education: A qualitative study
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To
Panayota Sourtzi
BMC Nursing

I hereby send you a revised version of the manuscript for publication in BMC Nursing, written by Sylvi Flateland, Maxine Pryce-Miller, Anne Valen-Sendstad Skisland, Anne Kristin Flaatten Tønsberg and Ulrika Söderhamn, entitled “Exploring the experiences of being an ethnic minority student within undergraduate nurse education: A qualitative study”.

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The authors are grateful for the comments from the reviewers. We have considered them with care and have made the following amendments to the manuscript and have written comments to editor and reviewers. Track changes are used in the manuscript.

Reviewer reports and our answers:
Tarja Heponiemi (Reviewer 1):
It was very difficult to review the revised version of the manuscript given that the authors have not made a proper point-by-point response letter which clearly indicate the changes that were made regarding each comment. For example, they have not provided text quotations showing what exactly was done regarding clear questions but instead they connect many questions into one and refer "see discussion". Thus first of all, I would suggest that in the future the authors would pay much more effort to make the proper point-by-point response letter in which they clearly indicate what they did and if the change is no longer than couple of paragraphs also put the text quotation to the response letter (and also clearly mark where this change exists in the manuscript). Moreover, it might be better to send a track changes version to reviewers where the changes in formulation in the side are done (accepted) so that the whole paper is in text use (and better without comments as well in the side; their place is in the response letter).

Our answer: We are sorry that the reviewers have had difficulty seeing our previous changes. However, we resubmitted a version of the article with track changes at the request of the editor.

Please find below some points that might help to improve the manuscript:
The language editing has improved the manuscript, but I am under impression that language editor has been added as a second author of the manuscript. I think that editing doesn't entitle to an authorship, and also, she's not mentioned in the Author's contribution- chapter (page. 33)

Our answer: We are sorry, but we do not understand who the reviewer has mentioned here. The second author belongs to our research team and has contributed substantially with writing of the article.

Questions of the topic guide is now appropriately described, however, I'm questioning why in the end of the interviews the participants were asked about their reasons for becoming a nurse and what it meant for them. If the aim of the study was to describe the lived experiences of these students undertaking an nursing degree, I find the question about reasons / motives slightly unrelevant. And it may even be considered a bit unethical, as the researcher should only collect data/ ask questions that are needed for the study. Basically, I'm wondering whether the students were able to answer that question freely, for example in a situation where he/she wouldn't have
been motivated at all about working as a nurse. Would the student dared to say it to the teacher/researcher. At least I think that the possibility that students provided desirable answers in the interviews could be discussed as a limitation. Even because the Motivation for being a nurse is one of the main categories in the article.

Our answer: Thank you for your comments about interview questions and the category about motivation for being a nurse. We agree and have decided to delete the interview question about motivation to be a nurse and thereby the category about the motivation to be a nurse. See text in the Data collection (page 7, lines 13-14), and the deleted text in the Findings (page 14-15, lines 10-23 and 1-11), and in the Discussion (page 20-21, and lines 2-25 and 1-3). We have also added a sentence in the Limitations: Another limitation could be that it was difficult for participants to be completely honest with the teacher about their experiences of being a nursing student. See page 22, lines 18-19.

In our review we suggested to add a table about structure of the interview. Authors did not add this table but instead they now quite well explain the interview in the text, but I still think that Table would be good and very helpful for the readers.

Our answer: A table can be helpful for the readers. However, we have rewritten the text about interview questions and we sincerely hope that it will be clearer for the reader. See rewritten text (page 7, lines 4-13).

Analysis: page 10, line 14 à I think the meaning units were not "sentences or paragraphs with similar content" (?) but sentences or paragraphs where students describe the experiences about being a minority student.

Our answer: A meaning unit consists of sentences or a paragraph with similar contents, which in our case consists the students’ described experiences about being a minority student. Earlier text: … The steps in the manifest analysis were as follows: (1) Individual interviews were read several times to achieve a sense of the entire picture; (2) a number of 300 meaning units were then selected, (sentences or paragraphs with similar content); (3) each meaning unit was condensed, based on each participant’s experiences of being an ethnic minority student in an undergraduate nursing programme; … has been changed to: The steps in the manifest analysis were as follows: (1) Individual interviews were read several times to achieve a sense of the entire picture; (2) a number of 230 meaning units were then selected (based on each participant’s experiences of being an ethnic minority student in an undergraduate nursing programme); (3) each meaning unit was condensed; … (page 7, lines 18-24). The number is reduced after deleting an interview question.

Findings: You say that "the findings are presented in an overall theme and the four categories". The categories are described but it remains unclear what is the role of the Overall theme in this article, as it is mentioned but not discussed. That needs to be elaborated somewhere in the text, otherwise it seems pointless. One option could be to construct the discussion section based on the overall theme: the 1) personal, 2) interpersonal and 3) cultural aspects that arose from of the students' experiences.
Our answer: Thank you for your comments! Since it can be difficult to understand the role of the overall theme, we have decided to delete it and we hope that the article now will appear more consistent. See deleted text in the analysis (page 7-8, lines 17 and 3-4) and the Findings (page 9, lines 1 and 5-7).

It's difficult to say what have been changed / added / removed in the discussion section because all the text is struck through and marked as rewritten. Our answer: We are sorry, that the it has been difficult to grasp the changes in the discussion part. However, we have earlier resubmitted a version of the article with track changes.

Discussion: page 27, line 15. You say that participants spent more than three years in completing the program, compared to native students. This kind of indicates that all the natives are able to complete the program within three years, which I doubt is not the case. Our answer: Thank you! You are right! The text is now deleted, since it belonged to the deleted category. See deleted text (page 15, lines 3-5).

It's a good addition that you now bring out that also the native students may lack role models among family and friends (p.28, line 4) but I would also add that some other issues that were discussed may as well concern the native nursing students, eg. experiencing negative behaviors or being overlooked in the clinical settings. Our answer: Thank you! The text has been removed and appear now on page 18, lines 13-14 and page 19, lines 5-6).

Page 26, line 6: It's not quite clear whose perceptions can impact on whose performance? Our answer: Thank you! The sentence: As a student you are more sensitive to non-verbal and verbal communication and their perceptions can impact their performance … has been rewritten to: As reported by Sedgwick et al. (12), the participants in this study tried to avoid nurse supervisors they perceived as being unfriendly. This can be detrimental on student morale and performance. See rewritten sentence (page 18, lines 14-16).

Implications for nursing practice: Since the concept of cultural competence is widely used and discussed in the literature, you may consider to mention that in the article. For example that there is a need to increase the cultural competence of the teachers, students, people in the clinical practice settings.etc or that there is a need to provide cultural competence training… something like that could be said instead of the "unconscious bias training" and "educating natives about the culture, diversity..etc". that is now used in the text (page.28, line12à). Our answer: Thank you! The sentence: A possible way can be, for example, to introduce mandatory unconscious bias training for all staff members within academia and clinical practice … has been changed to: In moving forward, diversity training should be mandatory for staff within academia and practise. This would go some way in promoting and enhancing diversity and inclusivity. See page 21, lines 10-12. The sentence: The introduction of multi-culturalism within the curriculum should be given due attention and sustained in educating natives about
culture, diversity and what it means in the context of nursing and care delivery … has been deleted. See page 21, lines 13-17.

Jayne Donaldson, PhD, MN, BN, PGCEHE, PGCEBOE, RN, RNT (Reviewer 3):
This is a very interesting project and one that can be of relevance to the international reader. There are a few minor edits on grammar but nothing of note in this version.
Our answer: Thank you! The English language has been editing by Maxine Pryce-Miller (is marked with blue colour in the article), who belongs to our research team and is also the second author in this article and is a native English speaker.

The resubmitted version has significantly improved the description of the research methodology used.
Our answer: Thank you!

Monday 12 August 2019
We have today referred to BioMedCentral’s editorial policies and hope that the manuscript following this policy. The result section starts on page 9 in the manuscript.