Reviewer’s report

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

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Reviewer: Tarja Heponiemi

Reviewer's report:

"Experiences of being a minority-language-speaking student in an undergraduate nursing programme: A qualitative study"

This manuscript examines qualitatively experiences of foreign-born students from undergraduate nursing programme. The topic is quite interesting and timely. The manuscript is basically logically written in many places, but there are some serious flaws and shortcomings in the manuscript. The authors should focus much more attention to writing, synthesis of the results and finalizing of this paper.

Listed below are some suggestions for improvement that I hope may be of use for the authors:

I think that one big problem of this paper is that it talks about minority-language speaking students, but the sample includes 8 foreign-born students coming from very different cultural and ethnic background compared to Norway (Africa and Middle East). With this sample I think that the results reflect more widely this migrant status than solely being minority-language-speaker. To get results from being a minority language speaker would demand that sample would include also those minority language speakers that come from countries that are closer to Norway culturally and ethnically such as Nordic and European countries. Thus, I strongly recommend that authors totally rethink the rationale of the study and revise study questions accordingly. It would be better to talk about migrant students, foreign-born students, visible-minority students or alike. Also results support this given that cultural differences seemed to be important factors here.

Altogether authors should also pay much more attention to the writing and finalizing of this paper. This paper needs language check by a native English speaker. In some places language is very difficult to read and sentences can be very long and confusing as well as there exist problems with proper tenses. For example, in background 1st sentence is unclear "..minority language studying within different countries, including undergraduate education…and their encounters within.." who's encounters with who? First sentence of the second paragraph of background starting with "Furthermore, identity…" is very difficult to understand. Discussion: "Despite many of the students facing faced traumatic experiences" etc.

Abstract: Methods could already describe how many interviews were conducted.

Background:
In order to strengthen the rationale of the study, it would be good to give some more information about the situation/system in Norway. For example, it could be useful to provide some number about the amount of migrant/minority-language-speaking nursing students in Norway. Is it typical that these non-native students are integrated to the programs with native students, or are there international nursing programs available for these students as well? How the minority-language-speaking/migrant students are selected to the nursing programs, e.g. is there some language test they need to accomplish? Are any of the education given in English or in other language that Norwegian?

Background is also rather confusing, given that authors mix minority speakers, students with dark skin etc, and it is difficult to know who authors are talking about in different places. Thus, I suggest that authors rewrite background totally and make it clearer and more logical.

Methods:
Recruitment of participants: I suggest that authors rewrite also sample section, given that for me it was rather difficult to understand. More information is needed. For example, in how many places are this kind of education given in Norway and how many students altogether. How many of these are migrants (according to this paper it seems that only 11 migrant students in Norway 3rd grade with finished bachelors thesis, is this correct?). From how many undergraduate programs? Much more information is definitely needed from this undergraduate system in Norway, such as where is this education given etc. Moreover, were all students from one educational unit/nursing school or all over the country? Some reasoning could be provided for the inclusion criteria, e.g why third year students (and not for example students in different phases of their studies?) and why specifically those who had finished their thesis?

Design: You describe that qualitative approach was chosen to gain an in-depth insight into the subjective experiences of students. Whether you can get an in-depth insight with semi-structured interviews depends on the type of questions that were asked, which is not described in the manuscript. The structure of the interview should be added as a table. Also, were some prompt questions asked or were participants free to lead the discussion and elaborate in the way the preferred?

Data collection: As said earlier, some examples could be added about the questions that were asked in interviews.

Analysis: To increase the transparency of the analysis, you could add information about 1) what were seen as meaning unit (e.g. words? phrases? whole description of some situation? ) 2) how many meaning units/codes in total emerged from the data and 3) how the trustworthiness of the analysis was ensured; How the codes and categories were verified and how the underlying meaning behind the categories (latent analysis) was determined?

Discussion:
Line 54: I think that the sentence starting with "This confirms that minority-language-speaking students are highly dedicated.." is quite a strong statement for a qualitative study.

Line 21: "In this way, the nursing programme was more challenging for these students than for native students." Since there's was no comparison between the minority-language-speaking and
native student, such conclusion can't really be made. And as you write later, lack of certain role models can also be a problem for native students. This is a good point and can be the case also with other few findings of this study. E.g the transition from high school to university, negative experiences related to clinical practice and challenges in the supervisory relationships and importance of peer-support during studies and when transitioning into working life.

Discussion about the language skills of minority-language-speaking/migrant students is relevant. As I mentioned earlier, some discussion could be added about how the language skills are checked in the student selection (or are they?) before starting the program.

Implications for nursing education practice
You write that cooperation between universities and clinical practices should be more aligned. This makes the reader to wonder what is the current role of university/nurse educators in the clinical practice of nursing students in your country. And also, what is the role and responsibility of nurse educators in integrating minority-language-speaking/migrant students to the class? Based on the findings it seems that the role of the nurse educator was not that central (except for the support that was obtained for academic writing), since participants mostly expressed the need to get support (e.g. mentoring) from other students. This could be discussed in the 'Discussion' section.

In the end of the chapter it's not clear who's cultural competence should be improved?

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

No

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

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