

Title:

Phenomenological Exploration of Male Combat Veterans in Baccalaureate Nursing Programs

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Session Title:

Rising Stars of Research and Scholarship Invited Student Posters

Keywords:

Interpretive phenomenology, Male combat veterans and Pre-licensure baccalaureate degree

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Abstract Summary:

This dissertation study explored male combat veterans as students in pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing programs to reveal themes and meaning within the experience. The study used written lived-experience descriptions, photo elicitation, and unstructured interviews.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learner will be able to state themes related to the lived experience of male combat veterans in pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing programs.	Themes related to the lived experience of the research participants will be presented through a poster format.
The learner will be able to identify barriers and supports to academic success for male combat veterans in pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing programs.	Themes related to the lived experience of pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing programs will include barriers and supports to academic success.

Abstract Text:

As a result of a nationwide shortage of nurses in the United States, the increased need for baccalaureate prepared nurses, and the lack of diversity within the nursing workforce, it is necessary to identify potential sources of recruitment. In addition to lacking racial and ethnic diversity, the nursing workforce specifically lacks gender diversity as fewer than 10% of nurses are male. As the United States military is predominately male, veterans who separate from service may provide a ready source for future nurses. However, both combat veterans and male nursing students may experience challenges within higher education such as feelings of isolation and academic difficult. Veterans may struggle with financial barriers, difficulty forming relationships, and may feel unprepared for the rigorous academic work in a more casual college setting. Time in service, and specifically time in combat, may worsen the ability to succeed academically. Male nursing students also struggle with feelings of isolation, gender stereotypes, and difficulty maintaining academic success. As there is limited general education and nursing education research into this unique population, this dissertation study seeks to explore the lived experience of male combat veterans in pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing programs. Using an interpretive phenomenological approach guided by van Manen's framework, this study recruited nationally through professional organizations. Participants were males who were enlisted personnel separated from the United States military, having received an honorable discharge, experienced at least one combat deployment, and were enrolled in at least one pre-licensure baccalaureate degree nursing course. Multiple methods of data collection were used, including written lived-experience descriptions, photo-elicitation, and unstructured interviews. Written lived-experience descriptions allow participants time to reflect and process their experience, which may aid in managing the distress that can occur when discussing experiences. Photo elicitation allows participants an aesthetic approach to sharing their story by selecting which images to capture. This also allows a holistic view of the participant's experience, and has been shown to provide a feeling of empowerment by giving greater voice to the story. Unstructured interviews allow a relaxed approach to building rapport between researcher and participant to further explore the lived experience. Data analysis, using van Manen's approach to identification of themes with a goal of discovering barriers and supports to academic success, was supported through use of ATLAS.ti software. Data analysis included wholistic, detailed, and selective readings to uncover essence and meaning within the lived experiences.