

Review of: "Pain Assessment and Management in Children at Lusaka Children's Hospital: Nurses' Experiences - A Qualitative Study"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

General:

The manuscript titled "Pain Assessment and Management in Children at Lusaka Children's Hospital: Nurses' Experiences - A Qualitative Study" explored nurses' knowledge, experiences and perspectives on paediatric pain management at Lusaka Children's Hospital using a mixed-methods approach. While the study is well-structured and presents moderately insightful findings, there are opportunities to improve clarity, rigor, and overall impact.

Specific Comments:

Title and Abstract:

- The title accurately represents the content of the study and the hospital location.
- The abstract succinctly summarizes the purpose, methods, findings, and implications of the study. However, it could benefit from explicitly mentioning the qualitative nature of the study and its mixed-methods design, as well as the ethical approvals obtained.

Introduction:

- The introduction could be expanded to better contextualize pediatric pain management in low-resource settings.
- Discuss the significance of qualitative research in uncovering nurses' experiences.
- Highlight additional roles of nurses in pediatric pain management, such as communication facilitators.
- Provide specific evidence for challenges in low-resource settings and elaborate on the unique constraints faced.
- Clearly explain the significance of Lusaka Children's Hospital as a representative low-resource context.
- Clearly state the research gap and knowledge void that this study aims to address.
- Consider providing a concise overview of the subsequent sections in the introduction.

Methods:

- The ethical approvals obtained from ethical committees (UNZABREC and COMREC).
- Clearly indicate the participant recruitment process (e.g. snowballing) and criteria, including the rationale for including nurses from all wards since in most situations, only nurses in paediatric wards manage pain of paediatric patients.
- It would also be beneficial to include the number of participants.

- Specify whether the self-administered questionnaire was given to all focus group participants or a subset (section 2.2).
- Provide details about the facilitation and duration of focus group discussions, and the process of audio recording and interviewer roles.
- Consider including the focus group discussion questions and the questionnaire in the appendix for transparency.

Results:

- The presentation of themes is well-structured, but consider providing a brief overview or context for each theme before discussing subthemes.
- Including illustrative quotes from focus group discussions or questionnaires could enhance understanding and provide direct evidence.

Discussion:

- Strengthen the link between study themes and cited references.
- Elaborate on the impact of identified challenges on patient outcomes and discuss reasons for these challenges in more detail.
- Discuss the limitations of the study, such as potential biases in nurse responses or the generalizability of findings beyond Lusaka Children's Hospital.
- Consider suggesting future research directions or potential interventions based on the study's outcomes.

Conclusion:

- The conclusion effectively summarizes key findings and interventions to enhance pediatric pain management. Consider reiterating the broader implications and relevance of the study's findings beyond Lusaka Children's Hospital.

Additional points:

- Provide clarity on the meaning of "FGD3 PX" format, as it appears multiple times.
- Ensure consistency in formatting references and citations throughout the manuscript.