

“It feels like you do not belong”

Discrimination among migrant nurses in their daily work routine

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Background

Few studies have examined the challenges faced by migrant nurses in their daily work.

Problem

In the nursing field of Germany, discrimination against migrant nurses in the workplace has not been studied; a problem that can lead to a reduction in the quality of nursing care and increase nurse turnover.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of migrant nurses in the acute setting with social and institutional discrimination, challenges in the workplace and strategies to cope with those experiences.

I had patients before who said that because I was not German, I had no specialist knowledge. That really hurt me and I felt very discriminated.

You don't feel like you belong to the team.

Methods

- Qualitative approach by using a qualitative content analysis.
- Purposive sampling method.
- Seven semi-structured and in-depth interviews with migrant nurses between April and June 2017 in different German hospitals.
- All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed.

Results

Four main categories were identified:

1. Migrant nurses` daily work routine
2. Daily challenges
3. Social and institutional discrimination
4. Coping strategies

Although migrant nurses claimed to have experienced social discrimination from their patients more often than from their nurse colleagues and/or other hospital personnel, institutional discrimination still occurred.

Then I had actually left the room and avoided all contact.

And then the patient suddenly said, “I don't let foreigners take care of me. I could be infected by you somehow.”

Well, I think that discrimination in everyday working life definitely takes place.

One patient said “you're the ones who bomb everyone here all the time, kill them and come here walking around with the Koran in your hand”

My colleagues have made a distinction between German and foreign nurses, which has encouraged a certain distance

Conclusion

- Discrimination experiences can result in the disempowerment of the role as a professional nurse.
- Hospitals need to strengthen policies to effectively address this problem.

Contact



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Literature

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