

Husserlian phenomenology of the lived experiences of Filipino male nurse educators in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Filipino nurse educators are confronted with many difficulties, such as cultural adjustment and working in a female-dominant healthcare system, especially in Saudi Arabia. This is exacerbated by societal stereotypes and the restricted scope of male nurses in this part of the world. This study aimed to understand the lived experiences of Filipino Male Nurse Educators in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Methods: This study employed a Husserlian phenomenology with six male nurse educators working at the University of Hail, College of Nursing. The data were collected between April and May 2019.

Results: Four themes and subthemes emerged from the verbatim accounts of the six nurse educator participants. This includes; theme 1 'Cultural Shock and adaptation' with a subtheme 'perceived inequities in culture and society,' theme 2 with 'Governance of cultural and professional boundaries and interculturalism and pluralism' with subtheme 'bridges of cultural relevance as a strategy,' theme 3 'Balancing work and personal life in a foreign country' with a subtheme 'Future Career Path'; and theme 4 'Existential concerns and making sense of existence and experience' with a subtheme 'Cultural Identity and Belonging.'

Conclusion: The four main themes identified shed light on pertinent issues and successes of nurse educators. These included the themes of: 'Cultural Shock and Adaptation' with a subtheme 'Perceived Inequities in Culture and Society,' 'Governance of Cultural and Professional Boundaries and Interculturalism and Pluralism' with the subtheme 'Bridges of Cultural Relevance, "Balancing Work and Personal Life in a Foreign Country' with the subtheme 'Future Career Path' and finally, 'Existential concerns: Making sense of Existence and Experience' with a subtheme 'Cultural Identity and belonging.' The present study, in the context of the experiences of Filipino nurse educators, seeks to enhance the existing literature pertaining to expatriate healthcare providers focusing on nursing education, culture, and mental health issues. These results may assist in the development of cultural change mechanisms designed for future restructuring, training, and policy improvement in international nurses' welfare and professional development enhancement.

Keywords: Husserlian phenomenology, lived experiences, Filipino male nurse educators, Saudi Arabia

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Introduction

The continuous flow of Filipino nurses to various countries around the world, particularly the Middle East, has encountered problems related to acculturation and professional practice in foreign countries (Mutair et al., 2020). These nurse educators often spend years integrating themselves into a different country's healthcare system to understand how to effectively carry out their educational roles and practices in diverse contexts (Aloush & Alsarairh, 2018). A phenomenological perspective can illuminate the unique

experiences of these individuals, including their self-perception of ill-defined roles, their understanding of clients' expectations, and the boundaries of acceptable emotional and cognitive responses. Such perspectives may significantly impact work, well-being, and sense of identity in the workplace (Lillehagen et al., 2018). Historically, the nursing profession in Saudi Arabia has been predominantly female dominated, with male nurses facing significant stigma and prejudice. As noted by Banakhar et al. (2021), there is a notable lack of understanding of the role of male nurses in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia context. This perspective is intensified by the few nursing institutions in Saudi Arabia that admit men to nursing programs, thus leaving a void of role models or mentors in the profession. The historical growth of nursing programs in Saudi Arabia, as well as the significance of the policies in the background, have consequences on male nurses' professional identity (Aljohani, 2020). Conservative attitudes that disapprove of men in the nursing profession impose further challenges on Filipino male nurse educators, who are already dealing with challenges related to expat issues.

The migration and adjustment process of Filipino nurses in Saudi Arabia is complicated by cultural and professional challenges. While Filipino nurses often believe that their qualifications are equally competent in the Saudi context, which boosts their confidence and pride (Dahl et al., 2021), adapting to the Saudi health system can be challenging due to cultural differences and expectations. This is especially true for male nurse educators in the Middle East, who must navigate both their roles as educators and expectations of masculinity within a patriarchal society (Al-Momani, 2017). Nurses' professional involvement and work satisfaction in Saudi Arabia significantly shaped their lived experiences. According to Aboshaiqah et al. (2016), higher education levels and professional positions are crucial for job satisfaction and motivation. This is particularly relevant for Filipino male nurse educators seeking professional establishment and recognition within Saudi Arabia. However, tension between academic work and clinical practice can lead to stress and frustration (Alboliteh et al., 2017).

This study, employing a Husserlian phenomenological approach, aimed to explore the lived experiences of Filipino male nurse educators in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). In exploring their sociocultural, educational, and professional contexts, this research seeks to understand how these individuals perceive their professional selves in relation to their cultural identities, the challenges they encounter in applying their educational practices, and the coping mechanisms they utilize within the complexities of the Saudi healthcare system. Hence, this study aimed to contribute to the ongoing discourse on nursing education and cultural diversity in healthcare, providing a deeper understanding of the experiences of Filipino nurse educators working in Saudi Arabia.

Methods

Study Design

The researchers utilized Husserlian phenomenology to devise a research design that addressed the experiences of nurse educators in practice. More specifically, Husserlian phenomenology focuses on the description and exploration of phenomena, avoiding as

much as possible unexamined prejudgments and improving the clear imagery of the presentation (Gonzalez-Soto et al., 2022). The same applies in this case as to the Sic of nurse educators' notion of presence and form, which can be learned through a thick description of the educator's subjective experience (Tuohy et al., 2013).

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the College of Nursing, University of Ha' il. The University of Ha' il is a non-profit, public higher institution that offers academic education and advanced degrees, relocating to Baqaa, Ha' il, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and opened its doors in 2005. The consideration of the university was due to it being the only institution in the entire kingdom which accommodates educators who are male nurses from different cultures as well as of different religions. In fact, the highest number of Filipino male nurse educators in Saudi Arabia was at the University of Ha' il. Other universities do not compare to the University of Ha' il, which has affirmative action to only one nationality, male nurses of other cultures and religions but expect respect at all times. The College of Nursing at the University of Ha' il opened in 2011. It accommodates eight thousand students and has 14 male and female colleges of nursing. The College of Nursing for males was selected as the research study location.

Informants of the Study

The informants of this study were six Filipino male nurse educators currently teaching at the University of Ha' il, Saudi Arabia. They work as nurse specialists/lecturers or assistant professors and have at least two years of experience in academe and nursing practice. Only male nurse educators were chosen as participants due to socio-cultural reasons such as limitations for the non-Muslim to enter into other universities, and safety and security reasons for the researchers.

The study utilized purposive sampling wherein the participants were handpicked and were able to meet the requisite characteristics of the intended participants. According to Polit and Beck (2012), phenomenologists tend to rely on very small samples, typically ten or fewer participants. However, the researchers terminated the data gathering on the sixth informant, as there was no data that led to more information related to the research questions. As such, no data can be found to build new categories and the connections linking the categories are disentangled.

As a guiding principle in selecting the sample, all participants must have experienced the phenomenon and be able to articulate what it is like to have lived that experience. The inclusion criteria for this study were based on participant characteristics. This includes: (a) A Filipino nurse educator who has had experience teaching in the Philippines; (b) a master's or doctorate degree; (c) at least two years' experience as a nurse-educator at Hail University; and (d) willingness to participate in the study.

Establishing Trustworthiness

There are four dimensions of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness is the most challenging

aspect of qualitative research; however, it is equally important, as it preserves the quality of research and the reliability of the conclusions drawn.

Credibility denotes the level of belief in the findings. To enhance credibility, the researchers adopted a number of measures, such as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, and member checking. Prolonged engagement gives researchers the opportunity to interact with participants and therefore create a space where they are free to express themselves (Alsaigh & Coyne, 2021). This is particularly necessary in phenomenological research, as the purpose of this type is to comprehend the essence of experienced reality. Persistent observation illuminates the focus on the most important threads of the phenomenon and the precision of the audience's view, capturing the essence of the narration by the participants (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In employing credibility in this study, the researchers conducted multiple in-depth interviews with each participant, allowing for the development of rapport and deeper understanding of their experiences.

Triangulation enhances the integrity of a claim because it aims to address the puzzle from at least two different perspectives (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In this case, triangulation was accomplished through individual interviews and focus groups, which increased the depth of understanding of participants' experiences. Member checking involves research participants evaluating and approving the accuracy of transcriptions and themes and is equally important in asserting the credibility of the findings. This not only confirms the outcomes but also gives the participants a voice in the research (Cook et al., 2023). In carrying out triangulation, we collected data from multiple sources, including interviews, focus group discussions, and field notes.

Transferability pertains to the extent to which the outcomes can be applied to other situations. To improve transferability, the researchers provided detailed and thick accounts of the research context and the subjects of the study to determine the applicability of the findings to their contexts (Alsaigh & Coyne, 2021). In addition, this strategy resonates well with the focus of phenomenological research on context since it is understood that experience is contextually bound. Reliability in this context refers to the trustworthiness of the findings over time or throughout the life of the study. This was handled by the application of an audit trail where the research procedures, choices made, and modifications effected during the course of the study were established (Thomas and Magilvy, 2011). This further eliminated doubts about the credibility of the researcher, since all findings were well supported or linked with the data collected. The researchers provided detailed descriptions of the participants, settings, and research processes.

Lastly, confirmability is simply the neutrality of the researchers with respect to the study and the extent to which the study beneficiaries themselves shape the findings rather than the researcher's interests. To fulfill this requirement, researchers practiced reflexivity, that is, self-introspection in regard to their prejudices, perceptions, and biases at different stages of the study (Berger, 2013). Such self-scrutiny is important in qualitative research in the sense that it assures that the researchers' prior knowledge and biases about the topic of research do not excessively impact the final stages of the research process, that is, data analysis and data interpretation. In this context, the researchers maintained a reflective journal to document their biases, assumptions, and values.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected through in-depth interviews. The study was initiated with a request letter addressed to the Dean of the College of Nursing, which requested a sit-down interview with Filipino male nurse educators. The researchers started one-on-one interviews after approval was granted. It began by clarifying the purpose of the study and endorsing the participants' consent forms to sign their names.

The interviews were conducted in a setting that was convenient for the participants and researchers. The researcher ensured that the site of the interview maintained confidentiality, was convenient and quiet, and would not have interfered with the audio recording or the possibility of interruptions. The informants were oriented to the grand tour questions and probing questions before the first interview. This method ensures that researchers are not silenced women who have the right to gather all information, dictate their own words, embellish and overelaborate their answers, and make illustrative and explanatory comments. In addition, the researchers obtained consent from the participants to audio record the interview to ensure that no relevant information was left out in the transcripts and data analysis.

A notebook as well as an audio recorder recorded the most important things that the interviewer might say during the interview. Informed consent was obtained from the participants, and the researchers obtained their consent to audio record the interview prior to its commencement. Likewise, the researchers employed a semi-structured interview approach, with primary emphasis directed towards the use of open-ended questions on the respondents as a data collection tool. The semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researchers based on the objectives of the study and research questions. It was designed to elicit detailed and in-depth information from the participants regarding their experiences, perceptions, and beliefs. To maintain both the reliability and validity of the semi-structured interview questionnaire, several validation exercises were conducted. Three nursing education professionals reviewed and validated this tool. These professionals provided suggestions regarding the ambiguity, coverage, and significance of the items. Thereafter, the tool was pretested against two male nurse educators for its feasibility, clarity, and ability to generate rich informative responses. From the suggestions of experts and those of the pretesting, deficiencies in the clarity, structural arrangement, and flow of the tool were addressed in the revision of the tool. Once the interviews were completed, the researchers carried out some transcription of the responses from the participants, giving room for analysis and final interpretation of the data collected.

Interviews were conducted by researchers (one male and one female). Both interviewers received training in qualitative research methodologies, including semi-structured interviews. The male interviewer concerned himself with participant experience (which was the main focus), while the female interviewer's primary concern was to 'introduce' herself to the participants and create a suitable and reassuring ambiance. These two interviewers were present to reduce the likelihood of gender bias and secure diversity in understanding participants' perspectives. Each participant was interviewed by the researchers. This format allows for more focused and in-depth exploration of individual experiences and perspectives.

The objectives and purpose of the study were thoroughly discussed with the informants, and those who did not find the purpose of fitting their personal beliefs were not forced to participate. The possible risks and benefits of participating in the study were explained to participants. The site or location for conducting the interview was chosen based on vested interest in the outcomes of the study. The researchers were cautious about meeting the need for confidentiality and anonymity of the informants. Thus, assumed names were used to maintain the identity of the informants during the interviews and in the discussion of the results. The researchers also assigned code numbers to the informants for the focus group discussion to triangulate the gathered data. The researchers knew that data or pieces of information should not be disclosed in order not to hurt the informants, and that their respected workplace will not be affected. The previous positions and workplaces of the informants that might give readers hints about their identity were avoided, and confidentiality was observed with utmost care.

Similar to many researchers adopting a qualitative type of inquiry, the researcher holds pre-existing ideas, profound convictions, and emotions towards the study at hand. It is clear that he fully understands that he will be active in the process and procedures of this particular study. For this study, the researchers sought to explain the phenomenon, which is the experience of male Filipino nursing instructors teaching at the University of Hail. In this study, manipulation of the situation is absent as the researchers do not control or stimulate it, as the human instrument has qualitative methods as practical tools. The roles played by the researchers included observers, field note takers, interviewers, and perception facilitators. In collecting data, the researchers strived for taking a stance of openness, which can be described as a 'neutral' stance. Researchers should possess the following abilities: listen and observe without bias, respect the subjects and their environment, have clear channels of communication about the research, establish trust relations, and follow ethical anecdotes.

Finally, the researchers employed a debriefing session to find and solve problems resulting from the interviews. The researchers monitored the participants during the interview with regard to any possible physical or emotional distress that may be the aftermath of the interview. The researchers performed all precautionary measures to reduce any discomfort to the participants. Data collection was conducted between April and May 2019.

Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations that were considered in conducting the study included the following: First, the informed consent was obtained. The researchers obtained consent from the participants before gathering the data. The researchers provided adequate information and explained the details of the study very well at the participants' level of understanding. The researchers prepared written consent, the participants were given the chance to read it, and they were given the opportunity to ask any questions before signing the consent form. The second was the Privacy, Confidentiality, and Anonymity of the participants. Codes were assigned to each participant so that the identification of each participant was not known by anyone, even to the researchers themselves. The use of tape recorders

and videos were included in the consent form. The participants must understand that the purpose of the videos and tape recorder was only for verification and review during data analysis.

The interview was conducted in an area that was silent, destructive, and comfortable for the participants to express their thoughts. The researchers allowed time for the feedback and discussion of the participants. After each interview, the researchers informed the participants for another meeting to verify if there was vague information and to validate the correctness of the data gathered, and the participant agreed with the understanding of the researchers. In the final manuscript, the researchers were careful to present the data accurately and did not reveal the identities of the participants. The information gathered was deemed confidential and all materials were kept in a locked file.

Data Management

The data gathered from the interviews, which included both written transcripts and audio recordings, were thoroughly examined as many times as possible to come up with codes, categories, themes, or patterns that were developed during the course of the interviews. This study employed Collaizzi seven (7) steps method (Streubert, 2011).

In step 1, familiarization, in this stage of the study, the investigator read through all the interviewer transcripts a number of times to get an insight into the data. Then, the researchers progressed to Step 2, identifying significant statements.

In step 2, the researchers searched all accounts focusing on aspects pertinent to the subject matter being studied.

In Step 3 involves formulation of meanings where authors seek to establish meanings that in her opinion arise from a thoughtful analysis of the significance of the critical statements. They are not supposed to hold any presumptions that are not in line with the experiences investigated.

Step 4 is data analysis, where the researchers clustered the themes from the different researchers' accounts. As explained, bracketing suppositions are important for this and other steps to limit the anxieties of being guided by existing theory.

In step 5, the investigators provided a comprehensive account. At this stage, the researchers formulated a complete and comprehensive verification of the phenomenon, embedding all the themes framed in Step 4. Step 6 is described as, "producing the fundamental structure." This included crafting a concise phrase that encompassed the techniques most crucial to the subject's framework and structure. Finally, in step 7, "Looking for verification of the fundamental structure," the authors turned to the fundamental structure provided for the participants to ask them whether their experience is consistently represented in the statement.

Results

Based on the verbatim accounts of the six nurse educator participants, four themes and four sub-themes emerged. This includes; theme 1 'Cultural Shock and adaptation' with a subtheme 'perceived inequities in culture and society,' theme 2 with 'Governance

of cultural and professional boundaries and interculturalism and pluralism' with sub-theme 'bridges of cultural relevance as a strategy,' theme 3 'Balancing work and personal life in a foreign country' with a subtheme 'Future Career Path'; and theme 4 'Existential concerns and making sense of existence and experience' with a subtheme 'Cultural Identity and Belonging.'

Table 1

Summary table of themes, subthemes, and descriptions

Themes	Subthemes	Description	Verbatim Account	Coding/ Categories
Cultural shock and adaptation	Perceived inequities in culture and society	Participants' emotional responses to the new environment	P1, P3	Emotional response, initial impression, cultural difference, cultural awareness
Governance of cultural and professional boundaries and interculturalism and pluralism	Bridges of cultural relevance as a strategy	Development of strategies that bridge the culture gap and promote relationship building. They modify their communication and the way they conduct patient care.	P2, P6, P5	Intercultural communication, cross-cultural competence
Balancing work and personal life in a foreign country	Future career path	The challenges of managing work and personal life in a foreign country	P2, P5, P3	Work-life balance, stress management
Existential concerns and making sense of existence and experience.	Cultural identity and belonging	Questions about the meaning of life and purpose	P5, P3	Existential questions, meaning making

Theme 1. Cultural shock and adaptation

The theme of cultural shock and adaptation refers to the experiences of the participants as they started their journey in the arid land of Saudi Arabia. It is described as full of emotions and struggles by many people. It is also possible that there may exist gaps between what the participants already know and what is new to them, which may lead them to frustration, anxiety, and even to a sense of isolation.

P1: "Upon my arrival in Saudi Arabia, there were mixed emotions of excitement as well as fear. The thought of going to a place of work and being in a different nation, which is full of an Islamic culture and history, was amazing."

P3: "Initially I still had some mental doubt about how I would survive in another culture, especially in the workplace...the separation from my country and, particularly, one's family was indeed very worrying."

Subtheme 1. Perceived inequities in culture and society

This subtheme relates to the perceptions of the participants regarding the values and practices of other societies with specific reference to Saudi Arabia. As the participants explained, the new culture contained aspects such as religion, communication, gender relations, etiquette, family ties, attitudes toward time, and work with people. Although the participants acknowledged these cultural variations, they expanded their scope to appreciate people from diverse backgrounds and actively relate to them, including those who appear strange to them.

The participants stated that:

P4: "It can be noticed that there are many aspects that concern the culture and society that is of the peoples of Saudi Arabia and the Philippines. One of the very basic is the observance of Islamic laws and customs without any shadow of a doubt."

P1: "The first issue concerning the women, their roles in the family and the appropriate behavior in public spaces in Arabic culture was incredibly distinct from the Filipino culture.... Noong una, sobrang malungkot [initially sad]. But I have also been impressed by the fact that there is so much history, so much culture in Saudi Arabia, Islamic culture, and not only."

P3: "Some time ago, I remember working for the first time in a cross-cultural team. I found it as a good possible experience of learning new things and integrating new energies into myself as working with people from different races and cultures."

Theme 2: Governance of cultural and professional boundaries and interculturalism and pluralism

This is related to the idea that one can be a foreigner in a different society and simultaneously be an expert in the area. Many Filipino Male Nurse Educators in Saudi Arabia find themselves in a rather paradoxical situation with regard to self-identification because they are culturally educated outsiders in some contexts but professionally educated insiders in others. They embrace the uncertainty of being in a different place and performing culturally defined nursing practices within the scope of the acquired new nursing practice.

P2: "As Filipino male nurse educators here in Saudi Arabia, we are often torn between our Filipino culture and that of Saudi Arabia. Understanding and recognizing the intricacies of Saudi Arabian culture is part of our intercultural interaction."

P6: "In order to encourage more diversity and cross-cultural competency in health care, we change our educational practices, style of communication, and ways of providing nursing care in terms of cultural context."

P5: "...we do all these by developing empathy, respect and maintaining open-ness so as to establish amicable relationships with Saudi Arabian colleagues, students and patients with the aim of facilitating comprehension and cooperation"

Subtheme 2: Bridges of cultural relevance as a strategy

This refers to the concern that male Filipino nurses have formal education on cultural diversity, and that nurse educators can fill in the cultural gaps between Saudi patients, colleagues, and students. Similarly, this can be achieved by adapting their ways of teaching, interacting, and, to a certain extent, patient management of the cultures. From this perspective, building cultural bridges enhances the development of intercultural competence and relations through active listening, clear dialogue, and affection.

P2: "As Filipino nurses, we learned to adapt to different cultures. In Saudi Arabia, we have had to adjust our communication styles and patient care approaches to respect local customs and beliefs".

P3: "...para sa akin [For me] ... A lot of it is about trust, I guess, and about common interests, it is about building relationships one step at a time.

P1: "One of the biggest challenges is understanding cultural nuances in health care. As such, we have to practice a great deal of patience, pay close attention to the details, and ask questions to clarify things so that we do not miss anything. Establishing good relationships with our Saudi colleagues and patients is critical in the delivery of good care".

Theme 3: Balancing work and personal life in a foreign country

This study examined the prospects redefined by male nurse educators concerning professional and personal aspects, most critically in a host country. It examines the challenges of work-life balance, cultural assimilation, and homesickness. Thus, it speaks about people who manage their daily schedules, how they control their pressure, and how they cope with working away from their home country. The respondents maintained the following condition:

P2: "Well, the absence of a family during holidays is difficult. In addition, the shift in time zones makes it hard to talk to relatives who are in the home country".

P5: "We sometimes depend on late-night phone calls or early morning texts to communicate. It is a little inconvenient, but it is well worth it to support our families'."

P3: "Yes, working long hours is tedious and exhausting. I have to say, it is hard to juggle between work and family life. There is always concern regarding overwork. It is possible to get weary and give up."

Subtheme 3: Future career path

This subtheme highlights individuals' long-term career objectives and plans in their current assessment as well as in their return home. It examines the strategies of the participants' professional enhancement, acquisition of new abilities, and movement up the ladder. It pertains to how they see their advances in their careers, including what profession they would like to pursue, what level of education they would like to achieve, and how much leadership they intend to administer. The participants stated the following:

P1: "Once I acquire of extensive experience in Saudi Arabia, I intend to go back to my country the Philippines and develop a nursing review center. I wish to assist future nurses in preparing for their board examinations and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to be successful."

P2: "I have plans of continuing with a doctoral degree in either Nursing Education or Nursing administration. By this, I would be able to hold posts of leadership and participate in the advancement of nursing education within the Philippines."

Theme 4: Existential concerns and making sense of existence and experience

This theme contemplates fundamental psychological and philosophical aspects, especially for a person who resides and works in a different culture to which he is used. Questions of self, questions of meaning, and questions that one of the scholars could ask, what is the point of life in the first place? Moreover, it emphasizes the existential concerns of Filipino male nurse educators in Saudi Arabia. It focuses on their adaptation to cultural differences, language differences, and the nursing profession in its entirety. It further seeks to understand how they derive their sense of meaning and purpose from their work with regard to the fact that they may operate within a different cultural sphere.

P5: "There are times when I feel lonely due to the fact that my family and friends are not around. In a foreign culture, such circumstances can be challenging and even tougher to retain a strong sense of self. For me, however, I take comfort in my responsibilities, and with my students too."

P3:2: "I encounter a conflict where, what my job places expect of me and what I hope to achieve for myself is often at odds. I always want this balance. Yet my job as a nurse educator is in my opinion, rather necessary as only then will I see my students shaping into individuals'.

Subtheme 4: Cultural identity and belonging

This subtheme deals with the problem of maintaining one's sense of identity and belonging while on a foreign land. Particular focus is placed on how these aspects affect Filipino male nurse educators: their cultural adjustment, exposure to different languages, and homesickness.

P6: "Homesickness is one battle I must encounter time and again. I am long for my family, my friends, and the weather and places in the Philippines. The distance away from everything that I know and am used to is painful."

P3: "In order to deal with the issues due to residing in a different culture, I tend to seek out other Filipino expatriates. We have been through the same things: we lend a hand

and preserve our culture together. It is nice to know that there are people who can relate to what I am trying to do.”

Discussion

This study aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on nursing education and cultural diversity in healthcare by providing a deeper understanding of the experiences of Filipino nurse educators working in Saudi Arabia. The idea of cultural shock and cultural transition is distinctive in the case of Filipino male nurse educators in Saudi Arabia who are in a foreign environment that is not their native culture. The complexities of emotions brought about by such changes are well established in the literature. In connection with this, it has been observed that feelings such as eagerness and fear are common, as participants anticipate going to a foreign environment and educational system. This duality of emotions is substantiated by evidence that shows that the adjustment to new cultures is accompanied by stress, anxiety, and a sense of alienation as a person adjusts to the new beliefs and practices of that country (Germack et al., 2015).

The difficulties and challenges brought forth by these educators are also seen in the subtheme of perceived inequities in culture and society. The variation that exists in culture, particularly with regard to social structures, or the manner in which individuals communicate can be disturbing. Participants have noted that there are clear differences in how women are treated in Saudi culture as opposed to the Philippines, which can sometimes make one feel depressed and lost at first sight. One is exposed to a new cultural framework that can simultaneously be an area for development and learning at the same time. It has been established that the use of many cultural perspectives increases a person's ability to appreciate differences and regard other people's views, which is essential for normal interaction in multi-ethnic settings (Humbbeck et al., 2020). The adaptation process also depends on the systemic variables that exist in the healthcare context. Perceived cultural differences impact qualified overseas nurses within the context of their qualifying and working within the healthcare institution. Research studies have proven that successful adaptation, especially in multicultural scenarios, depends on good synergy between healthcare providers (Philip et al., 2019). Language and education differences constitute some of the barriers between interactions; hence, there is a great need for organizations to promote the integration of overseas qualified nurses. This is in line with findings that stress the value of knowing the beliefs and behaviors of both nurses and patients if effective patient-centered care is to be achieved (Humbbeck et al., 2020).

Some of the lived experiences of Filipino male nurse educators working in Saudi Arabia include aspects of the governance of cultural and professional boundaries, as well as interculturalism and pluralism. They normally find themselves in a dilemma as they are outsiders who have gone through cultural education and professionals in educated insiders. This presents itself as a unique duality that shapes self-identification and professional practices. As described by one of the research participants, it is indeed a challenge to try to fit in between Filipino and Saudi cultures, as there is so much to learn about Saudi culture, which is important for intercultural communication (Germack et al., 2015). In this respect,

the ability to customize the educational process as well as the style of communication to that employed in Saudi Arabia is crucial to the development of cross-cultural sensibility in healthcare. Filipino nurse educators working in Saudi Arabia underline the need to encourage compassion, deference, and open-mindedness when they relate to their Saudi counterparts, students, and patients. The literature suggests that this is consistent with current paradigms in ethics, whereby cultural competence is not an individual quality solely, but rather enhances care in multicultural settings and is a team responsibility (Humbeeck et al., 2020). To build trust, which is a prerequisite for effective health care delivery, there is a need to establish friendly relationships by actively listening and speaking so that the parties' needs are clearly understood (Philip et al., 2019).

The sub-theme "Bridges of Cultural Relevance as Strategy" stresses 'cultural bridging,' which has to be exercised by Filipino nurse educators to be able to integrate with their Saudi colleagues. They can improve intercultural relations and competence by changing their ways of teaching and managing patients to suit their prevalent culture and beliefs. Lin et al. (2016) reported that such cultural bridging strategies can facilitate the communication and interaction of healthcare professionals, thereby providing better care to patients. The idea of trust and common interest in building relationships is also supported by studies that have demonstrated the positive effects of interpersonal relationships in healthcare delivery (Facchinetti et al., 2019). The literature also highlights the need for nurse educators to have formal training in cultural studies. This education prepares them to handle the intricacies associated with intercultural relationships. Communication and cultural barriers are some of the challenges cited by Giske et al. (2018) as affecting overseas qualified nurses (OQNs) and resulting in strife in their employer establishments and delivery of services to patients. With the help of education in cultural sensitivity, the majority of the bits of Filipino nurse educators will be overcome, thus making it easy for the Saudi healthcare system to recover. The issue of work and family life balance while working in another country is especially pronounced for Filipino male nurse educators in Saudi Arabia, as they juggle professional commitments with family and culture. Among the challenges that they encounter are heavy feelings of homesickness, the struggle to keep bonds with family across the world, time difference, and volatility.

The theme of achieving work-life balance in a different culture and environment takes on a new meaning for expatriate male nurse educators who struggle to look after themselves and their duties simultaneously. This advances the understanding of the concepts of work-life balance and adjustment and family problems of expatriates in host countries by integrating the existing literature on the subject. Expatriates face the threat of not achieving work-life balance due to workaholism and excessive workload. Malek et al. (2019) stress that these factors can lead to stress and emotional imbalance, which are common among expatriates. Bader et al. (2016) note that it is important for expatriates to change their work-life balance as a result of their cultural experiences in the new countries and that as a result of improper cultural practices, there is an increase in work-life conflict. There are various ways in which expatriates can integrate with their new cultures, including cultural assimilation is one of them. As Apriyanti et al. (2021) noted, employees in resource management sectors where work-related stress is high tend to experience the

need to integrate their work with personal life balancing. Emphasis is placed on incorporating the understanding of how the work-life balance aspect can be incorporated into workplace well-being approaches to minimize the risk of workaholism or emotional discontent. Similarly, Wurtz (2022) argues that expatriates are not fully addressed in the literature on individual-level factors that may moderate stressors facing expatriates and their effectiveness for adjustment and well-being in a cross-cultural context. Effective intervention strategies for behavior and other pre-departure activities, as well as institutional support on return, are useful for expatriates to improve their emotional and psychological stability abroad. Furthermore, the narratives of expatriate university instructors in Saudi Arabia showed that strategies such as stereotyping and emotional regulation are, in fact, used in managing the intricacies of intercultural encounters. Such strategies may impact one's self-image and feelings, which are important for job satisfaction and execution. Mello et al. (2023) add that knowing how living overseas would affect one's career should be an advantage to expatriates in using their experiences successfully in the future, and thus increase adjustment.

The subtheme that deals with the future career avenues of expatriates, in particular male nurse educators, needs to be understood within the context of their overall career goals, professional development needs, and their sought positions of influence. This discussion brings together information from the literature to demonstrate how expatriates develop their careers when dealing with the multifaceted issues of working overseas. For many expatriates, international mobility is perceived as an exposure that provides useful experiences and skills. Studies confirm that when people go abroad for work, there is the potential to improve their career progression substantially if there is a commitment to lifelong learning (Zhang et al., 2022). This is consistent with the data brought forward by Zhang et al. (2022), which stresses the need for acquiring new relevant skills and competencies to remain informative in the labor market. Effective cross-cultural management has also been seen as an additional important factor in expatriates' career progression (Faran et al., 2022). There are also recommendations in the literature on strategic planning as an approach that clients can use to structure their career transition. For these reasons, expatriates should establish specific career goals that target certain roles, education, and leadership. As an illustration, Mello and colleagues (2021) argued that career-managed expatriates tend to receive a greater number of positive outcomes than those that just go with the flow. This is extended by the fact that expatriates who practice boundary management or work-life balance are more likely to progress in their careers (Kempen et al, 2017). Additionally, the role of work-life balance in career advancement should also be emphasized. Based on the results of the research, Osah and Šarkiūnaitė, (2022) revealed that expatriates should achieve work-life balance since they have an impact on their health and work performance. Malek et al. (2019) claim that a proper work-life interface encourages expatriates to target their career growth and not stay stressed and burnt out, which would hinder career growth. This is especially important for male nurse educators, who may be under different types of tension in their professional roles and personal goals.

The issue of making sense of existence and experiences and the concern for existence takes precedence for Filipino male nurse educators serving in Saudi Arabia. This

theme explores their personal lives more in relation to their adjustment to a new culture, even as they seek answers about their identity, the purpose for which they work, and the meaning of their work in a given culture. Considerations of cultural perspectives and the significance of one's work tend to prompt self-evaluation and the need to understand their existence and role in a foreign environment. In this context, the search for orientation and the need to assimilate certain values become a subtheme of wide significance. In most instances, Filipino male nurse educators find themselves in a situation in which they are pulled between their own culture and that of their host country. Having to go through this change in culture is worsened by the language barrier, which in turn makes one feel more alienated and causes communication breakdown with peers and students.

As male nurse educators have had the chance to witness, a sense of community is important for expatriate Filipinos who seek comfort and understanding from other Filipinos facing the same situation (Nguyen et al., 2020). In addition to these emotional aspects, such ties contribute to the preservation of ethnic identity amid the "overwhelming" cultural differences (Eze et al., 2017). In addition, these educators' existential issues are embodied in their professional role as nurse educators. This chasm between their dreams and expectations required of them creates a controversial state of affairs that is easy to describe but difficult to resolve. The job is a cruel place, noted by one educator, but I find its necessity painful, suggesting that such challenges of being an expatriate are more than manageable because of the purpose their work provides (Angel et al., 2021). This is not only consistent with the experiences of our study subjects, and the existing literature serves as an illustration that work influences the perception of one's identity and meaning to a significant extent, where professional roles provide an anchor in dealing with existential crises in strange settings (Santos et al., 2017).

The subthemes of cultural identity and belonging further complicate the existential landscape of Filipino nurse educators. Assimilating within a new culture while retaining one's cultural identity is never easy, and can, in some cases, trigger feelings of dislocation. One participant shared, "It feels somewhat like homesickness, which is one battle I have to encounter time and again" (Germack et al., 2015), which embraces this feeling. A sense of homesickness is very common among expatriates and can be detrimental to expatriates' health as well as personal satisfaction (Facchinetti et al., 2019). A self-concept is informed by culture and is valuable for emotional strength, which suggests that individuals with stronger ties to their ethnic communities cope better with the strain of adapting to a new environment (Giske et al., 2018). Faced with these situations, Filipino nurse educators relate closely with Filipino expatriates; as a participant explained, "I seem to always look for Filipino expatriates." Furthermore, it has been observed that these are not one-sided matters, "we have been through the same things" (Germack et al., 2015). Forming these types of networks is important for building a sense of belonging, alleviating solitude, and improving well-being (Phua et al., 2013). Literature indicates that the availability of social support is among the most important factors facilitating adjustment for expatriates in a new environment and may be decisive for their mental health (Morgan et al., 2019).

Study Implication

Findings from a study of Filipino male nurse educators in Saudi Arabia indicate important contributions to nursing education, cultural sensitivity, and mental health services. Cultural competence needs to be added to nursing education programs for educators to be effective in dealing with cultural aspects. For instance, specific knowledge about traditions, creating welcoming places, and a high appreciation of the plurality of views. Moreover, it is vital that these health institutions have measures that focus on the emotional and interpersonal psychological needs of expatriates. This entails flexible working hours, mental health services, and peer support programs that will help in managing work-life balance to avert premature exhaustion. Furthermore, it is common for expatriate educators to connect with others in the same profession to share experiences, assist in fostering a community, and have a purpose in what they do. Mentorship, check-ins, and other types of networks for expatriates can accomplish this. Finally, Saudi Arabian healthcare systems can be gradually advanced with the exposure of Filipino male nurse educators. Accordingly, this would advance health organizational communication and collaboration to optimize patient-centered care.

Limitation of the Study

Despite the richness of the findings derived from phenomenological tenets, in this case Husserl's, the analytic work was constrained by the few participants, which could limit the transferability of the outcomes. Moreover, the data analysis may be affected by the researcher's personal bias. The possibility of concentrating on purposive sampling, which simultaneously targets the University of Ha' il as a focal point, may limit the transferability of the outcomes to other institutions, or possibly other areas in Saudi Arabia. Although purposive sampling was able to address this issue and was teacher-focused, it could also affect the range of perspectives explored in the research. Self-reported data may pose a source of bias and have several limitations.

Conclusion

Through phenomenological inquiry, four primary themes emerged, offering valuable insights into these professionals' multifaceted challenges and triumphs. The "Cultural Shock and Adaptation" with subtheme "Perceived Inequities in Culture and Society", the "Governance of Cultural and Professional Boundaries and Interculturalism and Pluralism" and the subtheme "Bridges of Cultural Relevance, the third theme is the "Balancing Work and Personal Life in a Foreign Country" with subtheme "Future Career Path" and lastly, the theme "Existential Concerns and Making Sense of Existence and Experience" with the subtheme "Cultural Identity and Belonging" In light of the experiences of these Filipino nurse educators, this study adds another dimension to the existing literature in the area of expatriate healthcare providers concerning nursing education, culture, and mental health issues. These results may guide the formulation of cultural adaptation strategies for further restructuring, training, support, and policy enhancement of international nurses' welfare and professional growth.

Availability of data statement

Access to the data may be limited due to privacy considerations.

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Authors' Contributions

The authors (R.M. & J.B.) were in charge of all components of this study including conceptualization, methodology, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and writing.

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Declarations**Ethics Approval Statement and Consent to Participate**

The respect for the people who took part in this study is in line with the regulations of the Declaration of Helsinki. Informed consent was obtained from all the study participants before taking part in the study.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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