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### Exploring Nurses' Feelings On Floating: A Phenomenological Study.

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## EXPLORING NURSES FEELINGS

### **Abstract**

**Title:** Exploring Nurses' Feelings on Floating: A Phenomenological Study.

**Introduction:** Mandatory floating nurses is a strategy used to address changes in staffing caused by unforeseeable staff call outs or low patients census. Floating has an impact on nurses' satisfaction and retention. Therefore, it was important to understand nurses' feelings when mandated to float and the effect floating could have on nursing practice. Husserl's transcendental phenomenological design guided the study. Karasek's Job Demand Control (1979) assisted in gaining a richer understanding of the phenomenon. The purposive sample consisted of 11 male and female RNs working full time in a southern city of the United States. After Institutional Review Board approval data collection was done through individual, semi-structured interviews. Giorgi's six steps served as a basis for data analysis.

**Results:** Nurses believed that changes needed to be made to the floating process to ensure safe continuity of patient care. Six themes emerged: workflow process, patient-care assignment, work environment, psychological components, sociological factors, and physiological needs.

**Discussion:** Nurses do not like to float but will do so for patients' safety, and to remain in institutions, which meet their beliefs of excellence in the delivery of patients care.

**Conclusion:** Nurses will float comfortably if there were some measures in place to ease the process. Health care leaders may play an important role in alleviating nurses' feelings of stress and anxiety about floating and the ensuing effects on patients care by standardizing the process and creating friendly working environment for floating nurses.

Marie-Paule LaFontant, EdD/CI, MSN, RN-BC

## Background

Floating was voluntary but became mandatory. Issues with reimbursement occurring in health care prompted cost containment measures. A literature review conducted from 1978 to 2014, did not reveal phenomenological studies on nurses' feelings on floating.

## Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore nurses' lived experiences floating in an acute health care facility within a large southern city of the United States.

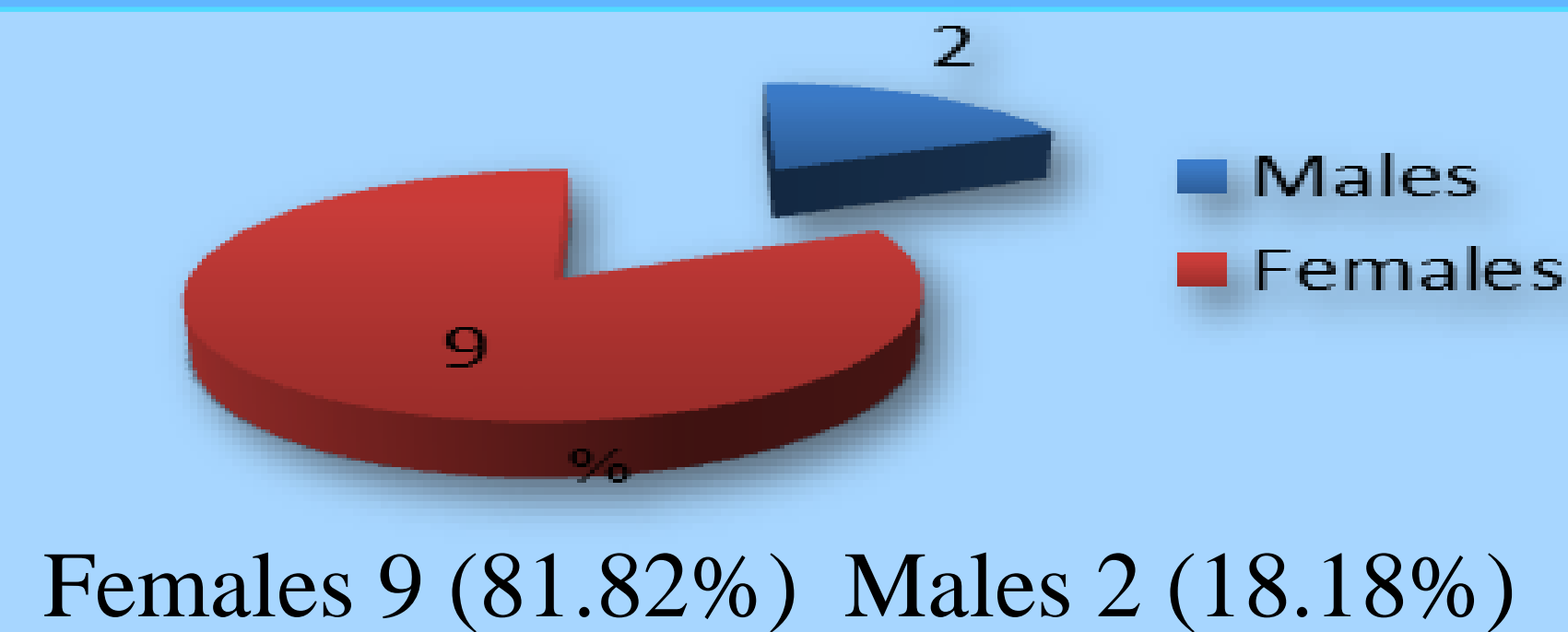
- ❖ Research Question 1: What are nurses' experiences when it comes to floating?
- ❖ Research Question 2: What are nurses' feelings when floating?
- ❖ Research Question 3: What factors influence nurses' feelings when floating?

## Method/Theoretical Model

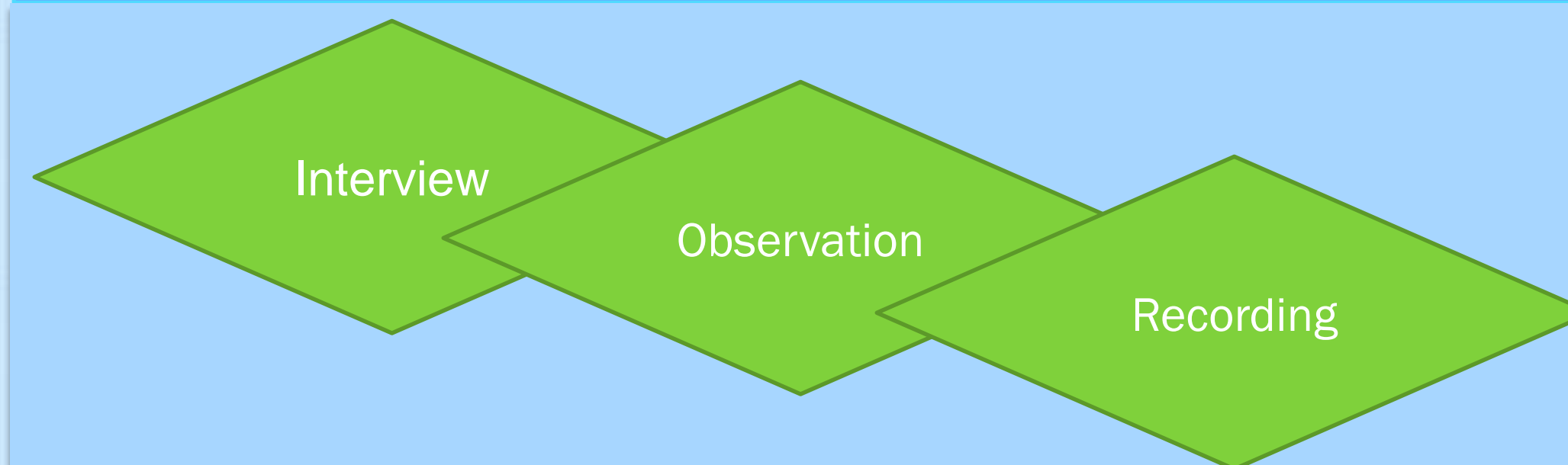
**Method:** Qualitative

**Design:** Transcendental Phenomenological  
Husserl's Model (bracketing)  
Karasek's job control-demand

## Population/Purposive Sample



## Data Collection

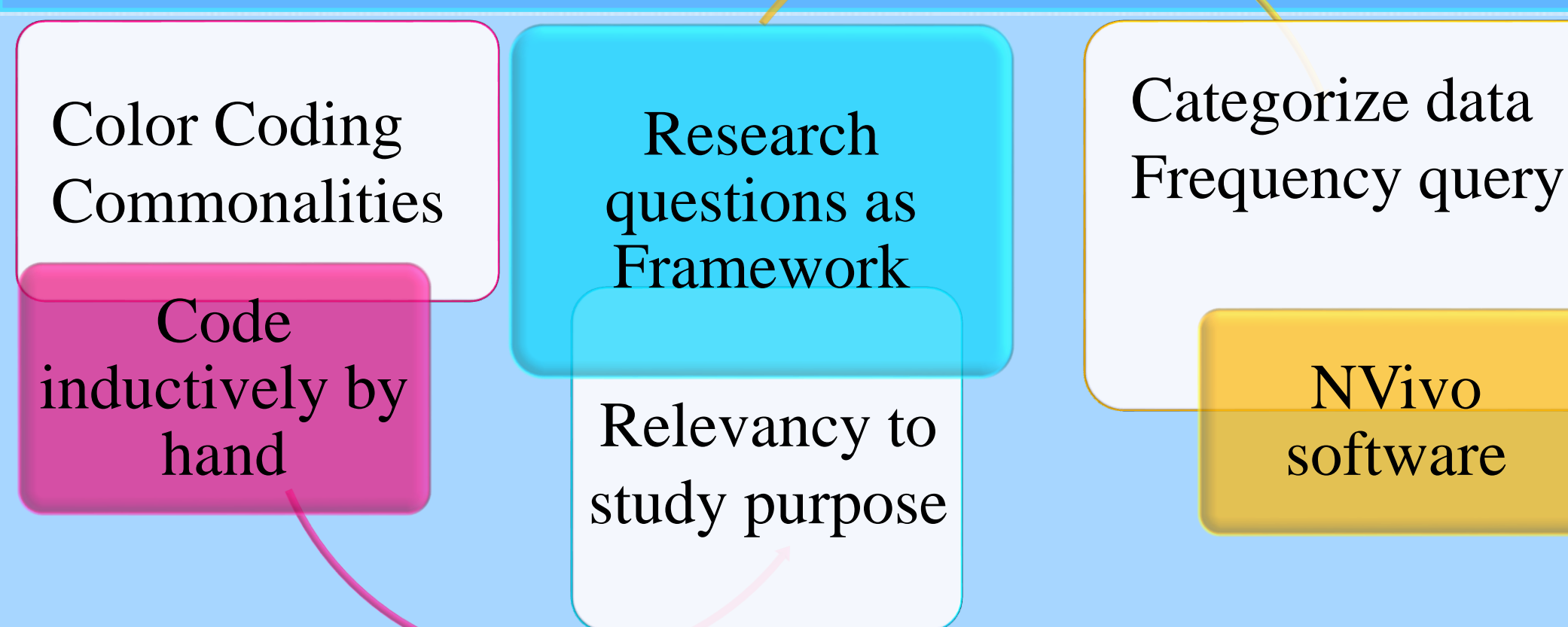


## Data Management & Analysis

Recording, Taking note, Observing, Upload interview in PC, Verbatim transcription, Word frequency query



## Coding Process



## Findings: Six main themes

Themes	NVivo References	NVivo Coverage %
Workflow Process	59	89.78
Patients Care Assignment	57	88.11
Work Environment	50	72.9
Psychological Components	37	41.27
Sociological Factors	23	37.85
Physiological Needs	10	13.1

## Recommendations

- 1-Create a task force include nurses
- 2-Purchase, update, or develop a database system
- 3-Institute zone floating
- 4-Assign patient-care by acuity
- 5-Standardize a "buddy" system
- 6-Document accurately floating occurrences (shared drive, folder, notebook, excel spreadsheet; or a word document)

## Lessons Learned

- Nurses not eager to float but agreed to float;
- Lack of phenomenological studies;
- Findings from the current study (and others in the US and abroad)/measure staff satisfaction, burnout, and costly turnover, and recruitment and retention issues, need for further research.