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### How public health nurse educator conceptualize inequalities in health: A qualitative study

**Background:** Nurses have long been identified as key contributors to strategies to reduce inequalities in health. However, health inequalities increased in the UK despite measures put in place to reduce them. This raises questions about: The effectiveness of strategies to reduce health inequalities, and nurses' understanding of how inequalities in health are created and sustained, their nature and level of contribution to reducing inequalities and their preparedness in terms of political consciousness and or educational preparation.

**Aim:** The aim of this qualitative research project is to determine nurses' understanding of public health as a strategy to reduce inequalities in health.

**Methods:** 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted with higher education institution-based public health nurse educators.

**Findings:** Public health nurse educators described inequalities in health as the foundation on which a public health framework should be built. Two distinct views emerged of how inequalities should be tackled: Some proposed a population approach focusing on upstream preventive strategies, whilst others proposed behavioral approaches focusing on empowering vulnerable individuals to improve their own health.

**Conclusion:** The synthesis of data from the current study findings and data from the previous studies, informed the development of conceptual framework that describes three dimensions; science, ethics and human right that frames argument about health inequalities.

### Biography

M A Mabhala is a Reviewer for the National Institute of Health Research, *International Journal of Preventive Medicine* and *International Journal for Public Health Research and Environment*. He is a Senior Research Fellow at Newman University and Fellow of the Royal Society for Public Health. His research interest is in the area of inequalities in health and social justice. His research has been published in several international peer-reviewed journals. He was an invited speaker at the "UK public health Festival in Manchester in 4 July 2013, presented a research paper at the International Public Health Conference in Kuching, Malaysia in August 2013 and International conference for nursing and healthcare in Chicago, USA, 2014. He has contributed several chapters and London: Sage edited book "Key Concepts in Public Health" (2009). He has contributed a chapter "Policy Drivers" in *Key Concepts in Palliative Care* (2010). His recent book is "Health Improvement and wellbeing" published in October 2014.

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