The Nature of Learning to Nurse Through Clinical Practice Experience for International Culturally and Linguistically Different Students in Sydney, Australia: An Interpretive Description.

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Doctor of Nursing

University of Technology, Sydney

January 2013
Certificate of Authorship/Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.
Acknowledgement

The writing of this thesis has been many years in the making. I have watched the flowering cherry outside my study window flower, drop its leaves, and then bloom again for many seasons. I often wondered how many more seasons would it take to complete. During that time I have had the fortune of being supported, encouraged and motivated by my wonderful husband Peter and my two children Matthew and Kaitlyn. Without them taking up the mantle of the everyday, this work would not have eventuated. With all my heart I thank them and love them for that. Today, the flowering cherry is full of leaves and beautifully green.

I have also been encouraged by my parents, and brother and sister to become the first Doctor in the family. By achieving this status I know that my parents, who worked tirelessly for my education, will be very proud. I have always believed that I could achieve my goals if I worked hard enough.

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I declare that I have received editorial assistance in the preparation of this thesis.
## Table of Contents

List of Tables ........................................................................................................................................... xiii

List of Figures .......................................................................................................................................... xiii

List of Abbreviations ............................................................................................................................... xiv

Abstract ..................................................................................................................................................... xvi

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study ........................................................................................................ 1

Problem Statement ..................................................................................................................................... 3

Impetus for This Study .............................................................................................................................. 3

Student Attitudes and Behaviors Raising Concern ................................................................................ 4
  Performing personal body care ............................................................................................................... 5
  Authority of doctors over nurses and their practice .............................................................................. 5
  Care and western nursing practice ........................................................................................................ 6

Overall Expectations of ICALD Students ................................................................................................. 6
  International students and adjustment .................................................................................................... 6

Implications for Nurse Academics ......................................................................................................... 9

Significance ................................................................................................................................................. 9

Structure of the Thesis ............................................................................................................................. 10

Chapter Conclusion ............................................................................................................................... 10

Chapter 2: Concepts Informing the Study ............................................................................................ 12

Nursing and its Practice in Australia ...................................................................................................... 12

The Importance of the Clinical Practice Learning Experience ............................................................ 14
  The clinical learning environment ........................................................................................................ 15

Ethnocentrism in Nursing ...................................................................................................................... 17

Cultural Frameworks Articulated in Nursing Practice .......................................................................... 19

The Concept of Learning ....................................................................................................................... 20
Data collection................................................................................................................................................. 51

Data Analysis ..................................................................................................................................................... 54
Step 1. Questioning the data............................................................................................................................ 54
Step 2. Deciphering patterns............................................................................................................................ 56
Step 3. Conceptualizing subthemes ............................................................................................................... 56
Step 4. Conceptualizing themes....................................................................................................................... 56

Establishing the trustworthiness of the study ................................................................................................. 57
Epistemological integrity..................................................................................................................................... 59
Representative credibility................................................................................................................................. 59
Analytic logic.................................................................................................................................................... 59
Interpretive authority......................................................................................................................................... 60

Summary ......................................................................................................................................................... 60

Ethical Considerations .................................................................................................................................... 60
Informed consent.............................................................................................................................................. 61
Confidentiality/anonymity................................................................................................................................. 61
Freedom from harm/fair treatment.................................................................................................................... 62
Unequal power relationship/coercion................................................................................................................ 63
Ethical issues related to the researcher........................................................................................................... 63

Chapter Conclusion ......................................................................................................................................... 64

Chapter 5: Findings of the Thematic Analysis ................................................................................................. 65

Introduction .................................................................................................................................................... 65

Theme One: Motivation Binding the Personal with the Professional ............................................................. 69
Entanglement of Obedience, Obligations, and Opportunity ........................................................................... 69
Vicarious fulfillment........................................................................................................................................ 69
Securing the future: the parental push............................................................................................................ 70
The silent contract.......................................................................................................................................... 71

Control of One’s Destiny ............................................................................................................................... 73
You don’t always get what you want................................................................................................................. 73
Get what you want somewhere else ................................................................................................................ 74
Escaping the personal...................................................................................................................................... 74
The unspeakable ambition: Nursing a means to an end................................................................................ 75

Summary......................................................................................................................................................... 76
Confidence crisis: Searching for familiarity and understanding.................................................. 105
Deciphering the written word........................................................................................................ 107

Engaging in Clinical Language .................................................................................................. 108
Engaging with diversity............................................................................................................. 108
Engaging with ill patients......................................................................................................... 109
Breeding frustration.................................................................................................................. 110
Engaging with written language............................................................................................... 112
Striving for improvement......................................................................................................... 113
Placement for improvement...................................................................................................... 115
Clinical language ability develops over time........................................................................... 115

Summary.................................................................................................................................. 116

Theme Five: Impressions of Nursing....................................................................................... 117

Nursing: Variations on a Theme ............................................................................................ 118
Passion and desire for the care encounter................................................................................ 118

Perceptions of the Profession ................................................................................................ 119
Globalization of medical dominance....................................................................................... 120
Excrement and elitism: Contaminates in the reputation of nursing........................................ 122

Opinions of and Influences on Nurses’ Work........................................................................ 123
Nurses in my country do......................................................................................................... 123
The omission or commission of care...................................................................................... 125
Primacy of treatment over ethical behavior........................................................................... 126

Female Nurses and Male Patients......................................................................................... 128
Prohibited contact.................................................................................................................... 128
Intimate interactions lead to physical reactions....................................................................... 129
Compromised reputations......................................................................................................... 130

Summary.................................................................................................................................. 132

Theme six: Ownership of the Clinical Placement-Crafting Success..................................... 132

Situating the Self ..................................................................................................................... 134

Understanding the Purpose of Clinical Experience............................................................. 134
Determination to learn ............................................................................................................ 134

An Authentic Australian Nursing Experience...................................................................... 135
Trust vs. mistrust....................................................................................................................... 136
List of Tables

Table 1. Participant information ................................................................. 50
Table 2. Establishing Trustworthiness .......................................................... 58
Table 3. Structure of Themes .................................................................. 66
Table 4. Linking knowledge development with informing practice ............... 238

List of Figures

Figure 1. Student Inquiry and Learning Framework (UWS, 2006) .................. 22
Figure 2. Construction of Findings ............................................................... 57
Figure 3. Interlocking Policy Sectors Influencing Nursing Education for ICALD Students ........................................................................................................ 239
Figure 4. How nursing profession influences and shapes nursing education in Australia ........................................................................................................ 250
Figure 5. Integrated Competing Values Framework (ICVF) .......................... 254
### List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEI</td>
<td>Australian Education International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHPRA</td>
<td>Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANMAC</td>
<td>Australian Nurses and Midwives Accreditation Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANMC</td>
<td>Australian Nursing &amp; Midwifery Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BN</td>
<td>Bachelor of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALD</td>
<td>Culturally and Linguistically Different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINAHL</td>
<td>Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEI</td>
<td>Clinical Learning Environment Inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRICOS</td>
<td>Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEEWR</td>
<td>Department of Education, Employment &amp; Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELP</td>
<td>English Language Proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESOS</td>
<td>Education Services for Overseas Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade Point Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICALD</td>
<td>International Culturally and Linguistically Different</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICN</td>
<td>International Council of Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICVF</td>
<td>Integrated Competing Values Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS</td>
<td>International English Language Testing System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHMRC</td>
<td>National Health and Medical Research Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NMBA</td>
<td>Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>Non English Speaking Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>School of Nursing &amp; Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STTI</td>
<td>The Sigma Theta Tau International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TALES</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning Enhancement Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCN</td>
<td>Transcultural Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEQSA</td>
<td>Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOEFL</td>
<td>Test of English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UTS</td>
<td>University of Technology, Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWS</td>
<td>University of Western Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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</table>
Abstract

Nursing in Australia is a practice based discipline that is governed and structured by national authorities that aim to maintain safe, effective and professional standards of care for the population. These standards reflect the notion of care, the role of the nurse, and the language of nursing as it is constructed in the Australian social culture. Undergraduate nursing courses are expected to prepare students to meet the professional and social expectations of the Australian nurse, so that they are prepared for graduate practice. These courses rely on the clinical practice learning experience to socialize students into the profession as well as integrate theory with practice. International culturally and linguistically different students (ICALD) who come to Australia to study nursing have been found to experience difficulty with learning to nurse in the clinical environment.

Through the method of interpretive description, this study presents a comprehensive understanding of learning to nurse in the clinical environments of Sydney, Australia, for international students who come from countries where their language and culture is not western. The findings reveal the complexity of the nature of learning that often remains hidden to clinical educators and facilitators. ICALD students’ motivation to learn to nurse is underpinned by cultural pressure and personal circumstance that sustained them for the three years of the degree. The participants in this study came to Australia with very little knowledge of the culture or the population, armed with a learner level of English that was inadequate for full engagement in the clinical environment. Their ideas about nursing were constructed by their own experience and culture and therefore varied from the Australian ideal; therefore having ‘to do’ nursing as it is constructed here, often placed participants in moral peril and at risk of damaged reputations. The participants also felt that they were different to the Australian nurses they worked with, which affected their socialisation into the role. Despite these issues, the participants took ownership of their clinical learning experience and sought to become Australian nurses.

The doctoral portfolio completing this thesis provides an examination of current and pertinent policy that influences the education of nurses and has informed the actions undertaken to address clinical learning issues. The ICALD student should be seen as a
student of cultural literacy, for the wider Australian society and for the nursing profession, and the clinical learning environment as a space for language learning.