

**Lengthening Cords and Strengthening Stakes:
A Case Study in the Provision Of Nurse
Education in A Global Context**

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

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

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE	i
CERTIFICATE	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
ABSTRACT	ix

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study	1
Programs of Study	3
Contextual Issues Around the Programs	5
Epistemological Issues Around the Programs	8
Purpose and Focus of the Study	13
Research Aim	14
Research Questions	15
Significance of the Study	16
Research Process	16
The Thesis as it Unfolds	17

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

Introduction	19
Arguing for a Choice of Methodology	20
A Case for Social Critical Theory as the Chosen Methodology	24
Processes Implicit in Social Critical Theory	30

Methodology Determines Choice of Method	33
Case Study Approach to this Research	34
The Research Design	37
Informants	37
Academics in Australia	38
Academics in Hong Kong	38
Data Collection	39
Ethical Considerations	41
Validation by Informants	41
Power Relationships	41
Confidentiality and Anonymity	42
Option to Withdraw from Study	43
Availability of Data to Informants	44
Limitations of the Study	44
Conclusion	45

CHAPTER THREE: SETTING THE SCENE THE EVOLUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Introduction	47
The Response of Higher Education Globally to Economic Changes in Post World War Two Period	48
Higher Education in Australia	51
Australia in the Global Context of Higher Education	53
Forging Alternate Educational Relationships with Asia	55
Australia's Future in Higher Education Trade with Asia	57

Implications of Changes in Higher Education for Educators	59
Globalisation	59
Conclusion	67

CHAPTER FOUR: EDUCATION IN A CROSS-CULTURAL CONTEXT – THINKING GLOBAL, TEACHING LOCAL

Introduction	68
Theories of Cultural Influence Pertaining to Education: The Notion of Cultural Imperialism	68
The Prevalence of Instrumentalist Thinking and Stereotypical Beliefs about Asian Students	77
Learning Approaches Adopted by Asian Students	78
Dealing with Issues of Collectivism in Chinese Culture	87
The Role of Teachers in the Asian Learning Context	89
Expectations of Asian Students	92
The Use of Information Technology by Asian Students	94
Conclusion	95

CHAPTER FIVE: NURSE EDUCATION AND THE PROFESSIONALISATION OF NURSING

Introduction	97
Nursing: Its Evolution As a Profession and the Accumulation of a Body of Knowledge	98
Nurses as an Oppressed Group	99
Ways of Knowing in Nursing	102

Developing Courses which are Relevant to Post-registration Students in Nursing	107
Conclusion	113

CHAPTER SIX: EMERGING THEMES FROM THE ACADEMICS' EXPERIENCES

Introduction	115
Economic Rationalism and the Dominance of Management	116
Management and Administration	117
Day to Day Administration	117
Policies	119
Awareness of Development and Existence of Policies	120
Transparency of Policies	122
Appropriateness of Policies to Work Context	123
Need for Policies to be Responsive to Hong Kong Context	125
Medical Dominance	127
Medical Dominance Within Hong Kong Health Context	127
The Implications of Medical Dominance for Nurse Education	132
Cultural Dominance	135
Dominance of One Culture Over Another	135
Western Bias of Material	136
Redressing Dominance to Make the Material More Relevant	143
Material that is Relevant to Hong Kong Culture	147
Group Work as Culturally Appropriate Strategy	151
Cultural Relevance of English as the Mode of Instruction	154
Assessment	158

Role of the Facilitator	162
Conclusion	164
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE	
Issues Related to Program Content and Modes of Delivery: Application to the Hong Kong Health and Education Context	167
Issues Related to Content and Models of Delivery in a Cross-Cultural Context	170
Issues Related to Management and Administration	175
Implications for Future Educational Practice	176
BIBLIOGRAPHY	180
APPENDIX ONE: QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT	199
APPENDIX TWO: CONSENT FORM	205

ABSTRACT

The development of educational programs in one culture for the delivery in another is not a new phenomenon. Practices associated with colonial and cultural imperialism have been documented in the literature. In recent decades, higher education programs in cross-cultural contexts have proliferated. As enrolments at universities in many western countries have increased and funding has been reduced, these universities have sought markets in other cultural contexts to provide them with a financial lifeline. This trend is consistent with the forces of globalisation and has not only economic implications but also cultural, social and political dimensions that need to be addressed.

Universities in developing countries have often found it necessary to expand their educational options to respond to the evolving needs of their students. Partnerships with universities that offer their programs in the cross-cultural marketplace have attempted to satisfy these demands. This study investigates the experiences of academics who have participated in such a marketing relationship. They were employed by two universities, one in Australia and one in Hong Kong, involved in an agreement to provide post registration nursing courses in Hong Kong.

A number of issues are explored in this study. These issues include the implications of developing and delivering education in a cross-cultural context specifically Hong Kong given the learning experiences of students from that culture. There are also important implications arising from the fact that nursing education has a history that has been shaped by the relationships nursing has had with other disciplines, particularly medicine.

The study adopts a qualitative methodology and uses social critical theory to explore the experiences of the academics employed by these two universities. It is argued that their experiences have not been openly articulated. This has meant that educational programs have been marketed and delivered without input from those who are involved at the grass roots.

Through revealing the reported experiences of the academics, this study aims to identify forces of dominance in the education and health systems that have kept nursing academics in a subordinate position. The thesis argues that these forces have prevented them from articulating the issues that impact on their work, including the quality of the educational programs that are delivered.

The findings suggest that the nursing academics have been subjected to several forces that have subjugated them. These forces include the more powerful rhetoric advanced by management and the medical profession. In this cross-cultural context, the academics in Hong Kong have also been dominated by the Australian academics. This study identifies some of the points of resistance to the dominance and also strategies that nurse academics have adopted in becoming agents of change within the field of nursing education. Implications of these findings for the future of cross-cultural education in nursing are also discussed.