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# Nursing Students' Learning Experience Under Cross-cultural Background

A descriptive literature review

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Cross-cultural nursing learning plays an important role under the influence of globalization. Therefore, it is significant for nursing students to have cross-cultural learning. There are many advantages and disadvantages in nursing students' experience in cross-cultural learning.

**Aim:** The purpose of the literature review was to describe the cross-cultural learning experience of nursing students under cross-cultural background.

**Method:** A descriptive literature review. 9 qualitative and 1 quantitative studies were included. Searches of databases including PubMed was undertaken to select articles to find advantages and disadvantages in nursing students' experience in cross-cultural learning.

**Main Results:** 9 qualitative and 1 quantitative studies were included in the inclusion criteria. This review showed that nursing students under a cross-cultural background had both advantages and disadvantages. Cross-cultural learning could help nursing students learn more about global nursing knowledge and experience cross-cultural interpersonal relationships. The results also showed that, due to the different environment, nursing students were prone to different degrees of psychological problems in different background, some people were afraid of this. Therefore, self psychological encouragement could relieve fear. Besides, many studies showed that the biggest difficulty that nursing students encountered in cross-cultural learning was language problems.

**Conclusions:** Nursing students had different strengths and weaknesses in learning nursing knowledge under cross-cultural background. Nursing students had gained many learning skills in cross-cultural learning. In addition, in the face of challenges, nursing students were trying to overcome difficulties in different ways, and it could achieve better results in cross-cultural learning.

**Key words:** Cross-transcultural, Learning experience, Nursing students

## 摘要

**背景：**跨文化护理学习在全球化的影响下扮演着重要的角色。

**目的：**是描述跨文化背景下的护理学生跨文化学习体验。

**方法：**描述性文献综述。通过检索包括 PubMed 来选择文章。

**结果：**跨文化背景下学习护理专业学生既有优势也有劣势。跨文化学习可以帮助护生了解更多的全球护理知识。由于环境不同，护生容易出现不同程度的心理问题。此外，护生在跨文化学习中遇到的最大困难是语言问题。

**结论：**护生在跨文化背景下学习护理知识的优势和劣势各不相同。护生在跨文化的学习中得到了许多学习技能。在面对挑战，护生尝试用不同的方法来克服困难。

**关键词：**跨文化, 学习体验, 护生

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**Appendix 2: Table 4 The aim and results of the selected articles**

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**Appendix 4: Table 6 The key words of selected articles**

# 1 Introduction

With the rapid development of society, more and more cross-cultural began to integrate into our local culture. Nursing students should not only learn nursing knowledge, but also learn how to meet the cultural needs of different patients under cross-culture background. Leininger (1978) was the first person who put forward the theory of cross-cultural nursing, and guided nursing students to understand cross-cultural knowledge. Nursing students often helped others when they enter the profession. They often wanted to take part in tasks, serve, study abroad or develop their cultural competence. The nursing students could understand that every culture had its own advantages and should be discovered, valued and understood as the best medical care for patients (Wright, 2011). Therefore, the nursing students learned and gained experience in a cross-cultural background, and people of different local could get better quality of care in the future clinical.

Before 2010, there was few researches about cross-cultural nursing learning in the world (Allen, 2010). In the early stage, only two studies talked about the effect of integrating cross-cultural nursing into the three year nursing course (Felder, 1990; Hagey & Mackay, 2000). Then Allen began to study the contents of learning regarding cross-cultural care for nursing students in 2010 (Allen, 2010). With the increasing frequency of international exchanges and the improvement of medical standards, the demand for cross-cultural patients would become more complex and harsh. The scope of cross-cultural nursing education was not extensive, and limited resources were only from the Western or a few domestic resources to determine which teaching strategies and content were most suitable for the development of culture (Lenny & Peng, 2014). Nursing students acquired early cross-cultural knowledge when they received nursing education, which enriched knowledge and laid a good foundation for clinical work, therefore, exploring the nursing students' learning experience under the cross cultural background could improve the learning effect of nursing students and promote the quality of nursing care in cross-cultural nursing in the future (Wittmann-Price *et al.*, 2010).

## 1.1 Cross-cultural – definition

Cross-culture is a culture that crosses the boundaries of different countries and nationalities and cross-culture refers to various cultural forms, meaning various forms

of interaction among members of different cultural groups (Jirwe *et al.*, 2010). Culture had developed into a separate discipline in nursing, which was devoted to the knowledge and practiced of culture (Critchley *et al.*, 2009). It helped us form human identity, provide the basis for being considered normal behavior, and change over time as a lifelong learning experience (Abitz, 2016).

Besides, culture could be understood relative to another one and that a specific behaviour could only be understood within a particular cultural context, furthermore, difference of culture was neither good nor bad, it was just different (Koskinen & Tossavainen, 2004). Therefore, with the influence of cross cultural, human beings would consciously participate in different cultural contacts in life and would promote the development of cultural knowledge, skills and aspirations, and enrich the necessary skills to get new results (Abitz, 2016).

## **1.2 Learning Experience – definition**

Experience is that actual contact or observation with related facts or events, and knowledge or skill acquired through the actual process of something, especially the knowledge or skill acquired in a particular field (Oxford Living Dictionaries, 2018). Learning experience is that the students' learning process, including listening, speaking, reading and writing, and learning all useful things, can also be influenced by negative events, and students will also generate many emotions in the process (Kirkham *et al.*, 2009). Students improved their communication and listening skills, developed hands-on skills, learned to rely on their judgments in consultation with teachers, and increased their awareness, made use of limited resources to develop the world (Axley, 2009). Experience can enrich nursing students' learning experience about cross-culture, and feel more things in learning, and lay a foundation for their future work and life (Ayaz *et al.*, 2010).

## **1.3 Nursing theory- Leininger' s cross-cultural nursing theory**

Leininger (1978) first proposed cross-cultural nursing in the 60 century of 20 century (Maier-Lorentz, 2008). The overall goal was to use this accumulated foundation based on cultural knowledge to develop nursing action, promoted patients' positive health behaviors, and promoted cultural sensitivity and consistent care (Prosen, 2014; Leininger, 1997). Leininger described that with regarding to the preservation or maintenance of cultural care, the culture and customs of patients would not have a

negative effect on the health of patients (Abitz, 2016). The cross-cultural care theory of nursing educators in cultivating students' cultural consistency has great potential for changing nursing education (Lancellotti, 2008). The theory of cross-cultural nursing can help nursing students understand cross-cultural nursing knowledge better and provide theoretical supports for patients with different cultures in the future (Wittmann-Price *et al.*, 2010). See Figure 1.

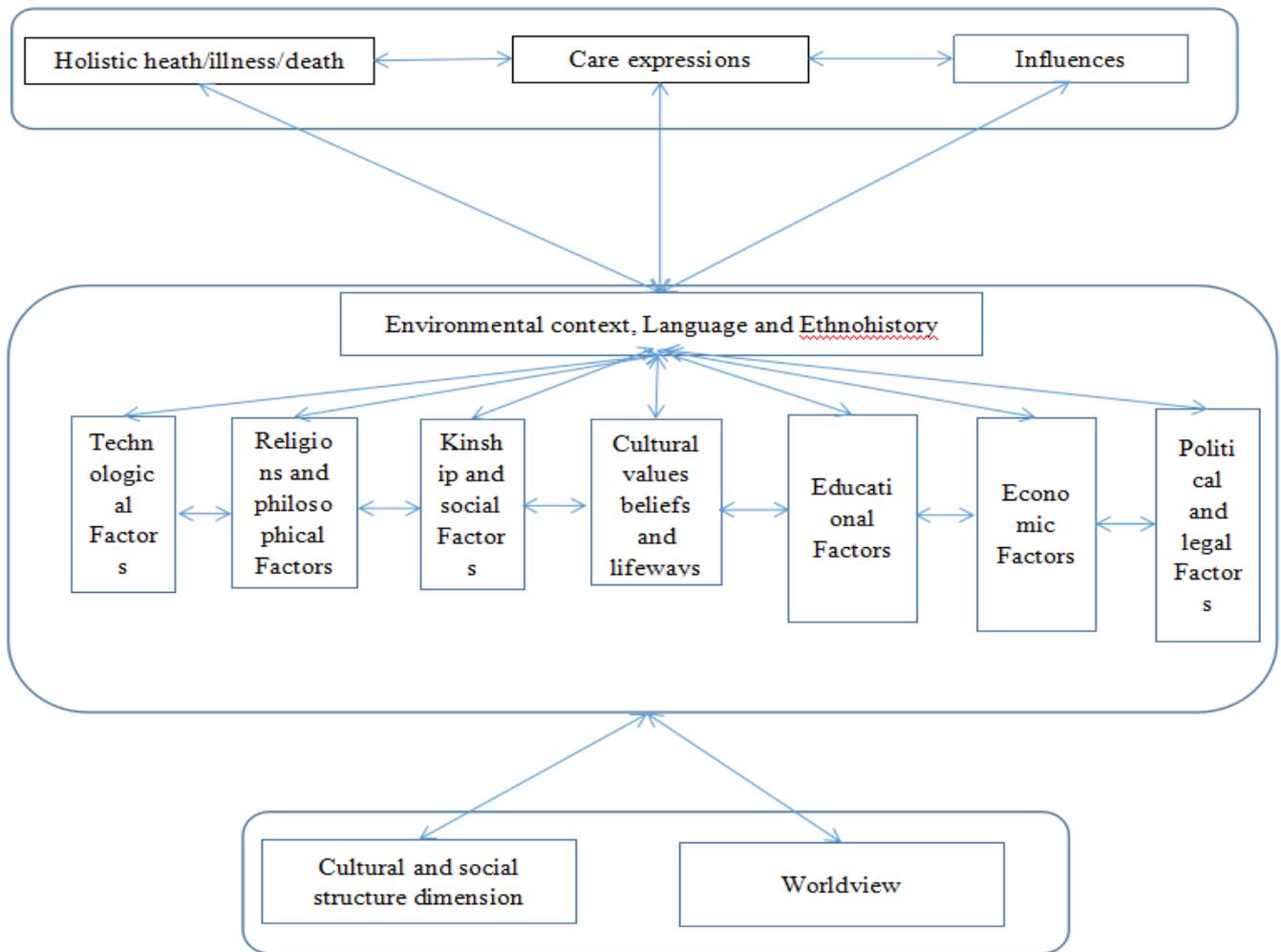


Figure 1 Leininger's Sunrise Enabler (McFarland M.R., 2014, Cultural Care Theory of Diversity and Universality, *Nursing Theorists and Their work*, Chapter 22. pp. 426 )

## **1.4 The nursing students' role**

Nursing student would become a nurse in the future. Nurses had four responsibilities: to promote health, prevent illness, restore health and alleviate suffering (International Council of Nurses, 2012). With the acceleration of cultural exchanges, the nursing students would encounter patients with different cultures in the future. Nursing in different countries had common beliefs and values, it made nursing students have enlightenment by contacting different nursing managements during cross-cultural learning, which could improve their cognitive ability, enrich their personal growth and lead different countries' medical services (Green *et al.*, 2008). Because of studying in the cross-cultural background, many nursing students were more likely to acquire a global awareness, in other words, they could face cultural shock and adapt themselves to the new environment as quickly as they could when they study in a different environments in their culture (Maas-Garcia, 2009).

## **1.5 Earlier review**

After consulting the literature, some of the reviews were identified as the experience of cross-cultural nursing students in clinical learning environments. A review by Allen (2010) was recognized as a guide for teaching to promote cross-cultural nursing among nursing students, which reviewed the types of cross-cultural nursing teaching strategies, any cultural assessment theories related to nursing education, and the results of teaching intervention. Other review (Mikkonen *et al.*, 2016) was confirmed the experiences of international healthcare students in learning clinical settings. The review focused on clinical education settings in clinical hospitals. Another review (Hooven, 2015) was identified the qualitative experience of nursing students in the context of clinical learning in medicine and surgery. This review explored and analyzed the themes that emerge from multiple studies included in the review, multiple qualitative studies from different geographic locations supported the common problems facing students in clinical learning environments, and the ability to summarize and synthesize these findings was of great significance for improving the level of nursing education. These reviews had implications for the effectiveness of education in the development of cross-culture nursing (Allen, 2010; Mikkonen *et al.*, 2016; Hooven, 2015).

## **1.6 Problem statement**

A large number of studies showed that cross-cultural application was becoming more and more popular in nursing education. With the development of globalization, it was very important for nursing students to improve their global awareness and nursing skills when they try to understand different meaning of health and nursing care. Students' understanding of cross-cultural theory helped them develop their reflective skills, strengthen a cross-cultural comprehension, improve their cultural competitiveness, and improve their clinical nursing quality in the future. However, there was few researches on this aspect about nursing students' learning experiences under cross-culture background. Owens (2012) and Westerbotn's group (2015) studied about the short-term learning experience of nursing students going abroad under cross-cultural background, and Jirwe, Gerrish and Emami (2010) studied the communication problems of nursing students under cross-cultural background (Owens, 2012; Westerbotn *et al.*, 2015; Jirwe *et al.*, 2010). The nursing students would have different feelings and experiences, but there was not enough articles to support the study about the learning experience under cross-cultural background.

## **1.7 Aim and research questions**

The purpose of the literature review was to describe the cross-cultural background learning experience among nursing students. Combine with the question:

- How did nursing students' describe their learning experiences under cross-cultural environment/background?

## **2 Methods**

### **2.1 Design**

A descriptive literature review was used in this study (Polit & Beck, 2012).

### **2.2 Database and Search strategy**

#### **2.2.1 Database**

Retrieve relevant articles in the bibliographic databases of PubMed. According to the description of Polit & Beck (2012), these databases were used. PubMed provided a list of articles referenced in the MedLine database of the research, an interesting feature of MedLine was that it could provide new articles in many journals to provide new research opportunities (Polit & Beck, 2012).

#### **2.2.2 Search strategy**

These articles found in University of Gävle by searching in database PubMed, and the limits of PubMed included: full text, from 2008/1/1-2018/7/23, Human, English, see Table 1. Search terms would be used “nursing students”, “transcultural OR cross-cultural OR intercultural”, “learning experience”. First, the authors searched each search term one by one. When combined them together, and these search terms would be combined with a Boolean operator "AND" and “OR” to find the articles which related to the aims of this study (Polit & Beck 2012). The authors used the search term “nursing students”, “transcultural OR cross-cultural OR intercultural”, “learning experience” in the database PubMed. The limits were full text, 10 years and English, 57 articles were found. Through further searching and screening, 10 articles were finally identified as available (see table 1).

Table 1 Results of preliminary database searches.

Database	Limits and search date	Search terms	Number of hits	Possible articles (excluding doubles)
PubMed	University of Gävle, Full text, From 2008/1/1-2018/7/23, Human, English,	“ transcultural ” OR “cross-cultural ” OR“intercultural ”	17708	
PubMed	University of Gävle, Full text, From 2008/1/1-2018/7/23, Human, English,	“learning experience”	21201	
PubMed	University of Gävle, Full text, From 2008/1/1-2018/7/23, Human, English,	“nursing students”	20037	
PubMed	University of Gävle, Full text, From 2008/1/1-2018/7/23, Human, English,	“ transcultural ” OR “cross-cultural ” OR “intercultural ” AND “learning experience” AND “nursing students”	57	10
Total				10

### 2.3 Selection criteria

Inclusion criteria should be relevant for the aim and research question. Articles included an empirical study with qualitative and quantitative researches and they were used to support the viewpoint. Exclusion criteria were the articles that related to nurse experience or life experience under cross-cultural background/environment and related review studies.

## 2.4 Selection process and outcome of potential articles

First, we found the articles in database by search terms, and read the title and abstract of the article, especially the purpose part, so as to determine whether the article was likely to be used in the degree project paper. One of the researchers looked up the article, and the remaining articles were checked one by one based on the limits, and 35 eligible articles were found in 1 database. After reading the articles, 10 articles were related to the research aim, inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected. Then was that 2 researchers downloaded the articles, and then examined the articles more carefully to see whether their contents were really related to the topics of the researchers' articles. See Figure 2.

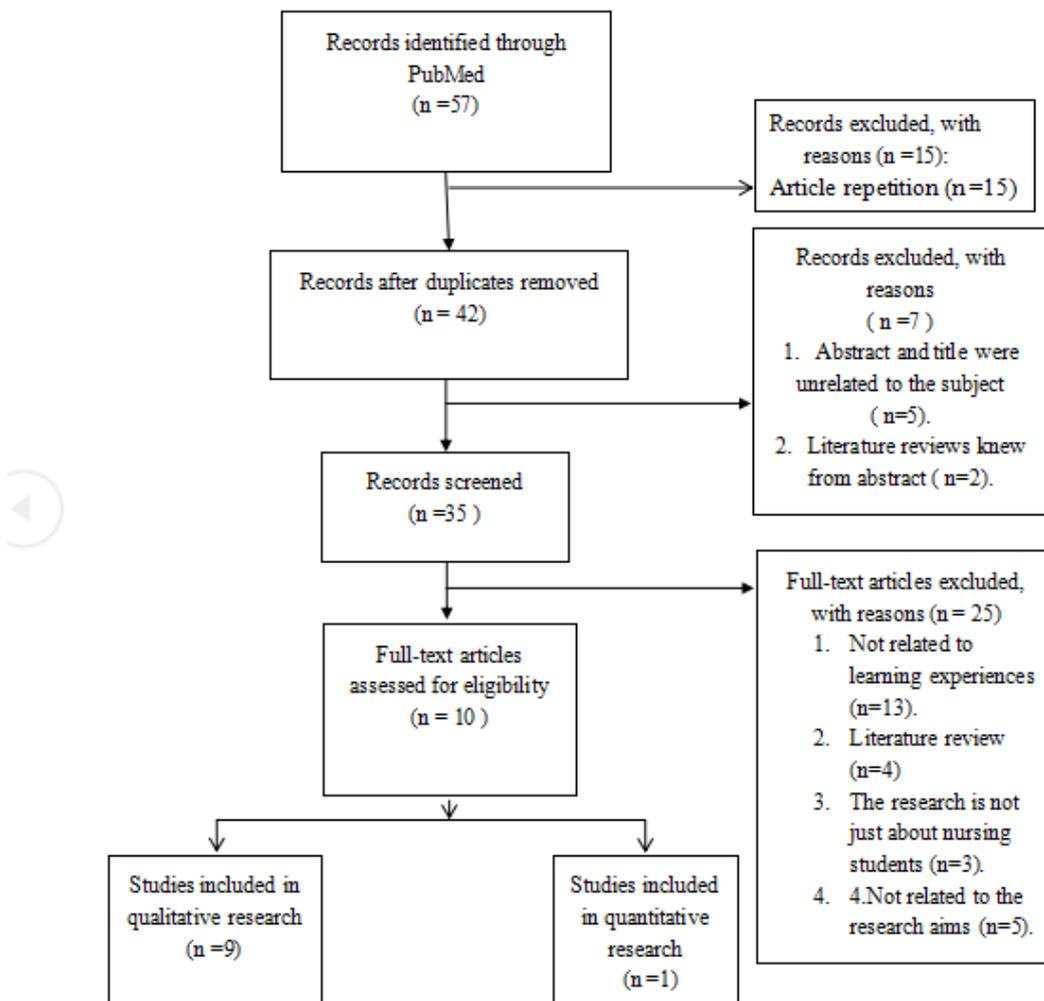


Figure 2: Exclusion process of articles (PRISMA 2009)

## **2.5 Data analysis**

According to Polit and Beck (2012), it was a good strategy for finding research themes, which helped researchers collect materials and classify the data easily. The articles selected from PubMed were distributed to two researchers, and then these articles related to the aims would be read by the two researchers respectively, and then they took them together. Making a plan about guiding data analysis would be done after collecting data, and then the researchers made supplementary analysis (Polit & Beck, 2012). The results of the selected studies were partially addressed in terms of research objectives and problems. Firstly, the two authors read the selected articles in order to think independently about them, and the two researchers would extract the useful part of literature. All articles would be used to answer questions in the aim. Most articles were mainly based on qualitative researches, and one of them was based on quantitative research. Secondly, the researchers and supervisor had several discussions and evaluated the selected articles. The purpose, design, data collection methods and common themes of the article were discussed. During reading, the authors emphasized the materials related to the aims and research questions, and marked them in black line to find them. Table 3 and 4 include the author, title, design and methodology, participants, data collection methods, purposes, data analysis and results summary. The results were analyzed to find out the advantages and disadvantages of cross-cultural nursing students in cross-cultural learning. According to Polit and Beck (2012), it was an effective way to find themes and collect materials in qualitative researches (Polit & Beck, 2012). Then the data collection, methods, contents analysis, results and ethical questions of the literature were summarized and listed (see Table 2, Table 3, Table 4, Table 5, Table 6).

## **2.6 Ethical considerations**

Cross-culture is a sensitive topic in the world. All the articles were searched in the database of PubMed from Högskolan i Gävle (HIG). Therefore, the researchers looked for published articles for the degree project paper, and described the article's point of view objectively and accurately, rather than tampered with the research results based on author's own attitude and subjective judgement, the results did not change the views of the article's author (Polit & Beck, 2012). The paper selected the Harvard literature

references. In the course of research, according to Polit and Beck (2012), all things would ensure the objectivity, authenticity and integrity of information. Plagiarism was not allowed (Polit & Beck, 2012).

### 3 Results

The results were based on 10 articles which used qualitative and quantitative researches (original research). The article was to study how nursing students' described their learning experiences under cross-cultural environment/background, the advantages and disadvantages of nursing students' cross-cultural learning were obvious, and both factors of advantages (*got studying opportunities and contents; had good international relationships; positive emotions*), and disadvantages (had language or communication problems; had difficulties in relationships; negative emotions) were mentioned in 10 articles. Based on the methodological issues, the authors continued to read and explore articles, and then introduced the data collection process of the selected articles. The characteristics and results of the studies were summarized in Table 3 and Table 4. The themes, sub-themes and the finding of the results were shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The themes, categories and study finding of the results.

Themes	Categories	Study finding
Acquired a wealth of advantages through cross-cultural learning experiences	Got studying opportunities and contents	<p><b>A8:</b> Learn how the others think about the same events. <b>C1:</b> Learn more about another culture.</p> <p><b>D7:</b> Learn about a new education system. <b>H8:</b> learning about health in a global perspective.</p>
		<p><b>B11:</b> Centred style. <b>B12:</b> A difference in educational approaches between Australia. <b>D5:</b> Work on their English language skills. <b>D10:</b> Focus on English language development. <b>D11:</b> Group work and clinical placement opportunities. <b>F3:</b> Communicating with patients during clinical placement. <b>F12:</b> Lessened by a more structured and supportive approach especially from someone who had experienced the same challenges. <b>G11:</b> Learned to approach patients carefully and to interpret their non-verbal cues. <b>H5:</b>Improving their non-verbal communication. <b>H6:</b> Body language. <b>H7:</b> The importance of self-directed learning and gaining knowledge . <b>H9:</b> Become more skilled in nonverbal communication. <b>J18:</b> Listening to the radio and watching Australian television programs; Forced themselves to speak English all the time <b>J19:</b> Regarded language and learning skills support. <b>J20:</b> Attended academic and</p>

		<p>language bridging programs. <b>J21:</b> Provide more language assistance. <b>J9:</b> Some study methods and skills. <b>J23:</b> Easy to use databases here. <b>J24:</b> Various English classes are provided.</p>
		<p><b>D1:</b> Find opportunities to practice speaking in English. <b>D4:</b> Sought English-speaking opportunities. <b>J17:</b> Maximize the learning opportunities in Australia.</p>
	<p>Had good international relationships</p>	<p><b>A2:</b> The supervision relationship. <b>A3:</b> The demonstration of a personalised student-centred approach. <b>A4:</b> Lead a project by telling students what to do.</p> <p><b>E4:</b>The influence of the teacher. <b>H3:</b> The Bangladeshi facilitators’ role important to help them.</p> <p><b>I4:</b> The Canadian nurse educators supervised the North American students and helped them.</p> <p><b>I5:</b> I don’t think I would learn as much without the instructors.</p> <p><b>J15:</b> Teacher–student relationships. <b>J16:</b> The closer teacher – student relationship in Australia</p> <p><b>B16:</b> Make friends and they perceived this to be crucial to their educational experience.</p>

		<p><b>I1:</b> Fostered relational learning. <b>I2:</b> Learning in pair. <b>I3:</b> More confident with the other person. <b>I6:</b> Formed relationships. <b>I7:</b> Learnt more about each other's cultures and nursing educational experiences.</p>
		<p><b>E2:</b> The importance of the group to the success. <b>E3:</b> The influence of the group.</p> <p><b>H1:</b> The importance of group fellowship as a key. <b>H2:</b> Establishing a fellowship.</p>
	Positive emotions	<p><b>A7:</b> Tremendous satisfaction. <b>B15:</b> Highly motivated and adaptable.</p> <p><b>G1:</b> Felt they were accepted and welcomed. <b>G2:</b> Felt comfortable.</p> <p><b>H11:</b> Be more independent, be brave, seek out learning situations, be flexible and feel confident academically and personally. <b>I8:</b> Become advocates. <b>I9:</b> Personally and spiritually.</p> <p><b>J13:</b> Feel the joy of learning.</p>
Acquired a wealth of disadvantages through cross-cultural learning experiences	Had language or communication problems	<p><b>A1:</b>The enormous challenge of studying in English. <b>B1:</b> Misunderstandings. <b>B2:</b> Can't talk as good as others. <b>B3:</b> Language;The most hindrance to (my) learning in Australia. <b>B4:</b> Language barrier. <b>C2:</b> The language barrier and using translators. <b>C3:</b> Not being able to speak directly.</p> <p><b>D2:</b> Can't find the one word. <b>D3:</b> Make translation more difficult. <b>D6:</b> Overcoming hurdles including isolation. <b>E1:</b> The language barrier. <b>F1:</b> English is difficult. <b>F2:</b> A lack of verbal and written English. <b>G3:</b> Language-related problems. <b>G4:</b> Lack of common language.</p>

		<p><b>H4:</b> The language barrier was a big obstacle. <b>H10:</b> The lack of means of communication.</p> <p><b>J1:</b> Language difficulties. <b>J2:</b> Complicating the students' attempts to understand oral communication. <b>J3:</b> Reading presented another language difficulty. <b>J4:</b> Reading was slow; they lacked skimming and rapid reading for content skills. <b>J5:</b> Writing in English.</p> <p><b>J6:</b> Writing as grammar and vocabulary. <b>J7:</b> Related to vocabulary limitations.</p> <p><b>J8:</b> Social and cultural differences were also serious barriers to learning.</p>
	Had difficulties in relationships	<p><b>A5:</b> A strong sense that students wanted their supervisors to understand them. <b>A6:</b> Didn't have any interest from my supervisors. <b>D9:</b> Cultural language differences. <b>D8:</b> This caused some problems with the lecturers - they thought I was ordering them around.</p> <p><b>J14:</b> Cultural difference. The teachers here usually ask for responses from students. In Taiwan, usually the teachers tell students what to do and students just follow.</p> <p><b>B5:</b> The challenge experienced by participants was the development of relationships with their Australian peers. <b>B6:</b> Forming friendships; challenging and rare. <b>B7:</b> Difficult to make local friends. <b>B8:</b> Don't want to be a group with us. <b>F4:</b> Isolation. <b>F5:</b> Felt that this isolation was detrimental to their learning experiences.</p> <p><b>F6:</b> Social isolation. <b>F7:</b> Discrimination. <b>F8:</b> The rejection and discrimination.</p>

		<p><b>F9:</b> Felt that social isolation was a major issue. <b>G7:</b> Ignoring them. <b>G8:</b> Having felt sad, bad, or low. <b>G9:</b> A wrong career for them and reported having considered abandoning it. <b>G10:</b> Decreased self-esteem. <b>J11:</b> Unfriendly university staff and other students. <b>J12:</b> Isolation was also experienced in group work.</p>
	<p>Negative emotions</p>	<p><b>B9:</b> Different hospital environment; Their fear and anxiety. <b>B13:</b> Unfamiliarity. <b>B10:</b> Lost confidence with my English. <b>B13:</b> Painful. <b>F10:</b> Felt that the university support for CALD students was inadequate. <b>F4:</b> Isolation. <b>G6:</b> Never feel so confident. <b>G5:</b> Prevented from participating in meaningful learning experiences. <b>G8:</b> Having felt sad, bad, or low. <b>G10:</b> Decreased self-esteem. <b>F11:</b> Limited learning opportunities [Felt sad].</p> <p><b>J10 :</b> Never have been able to get a higher mark [Felt unhappy]. <b>J22:</b> Limited resources [Felt sad].</p>

### **3.1 Acquired a wealth of advantages through cross-cultural learning experiences**

Nowadays, international nursing learning experiences would become more and more common, encouraging nursing students enlarge educational and technical perspectives during cross-cultural learning (Wang *et al.*, 2008). And a total of 10 articles support this theme (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

#### **3.1.1 Got studying opportunities and contents**

There were 9 of the studies (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008) which were related to the theme “*got studying opportunities and contents*”. The learning of nursing students' participation under cross-cultural background was a kind of utilization of learning opportunities, and many students found this form of learning was very helpful for them and expanding their learning opportunities (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, in this study, nursing students said that cross-cultural learning was actually an opportunity of language learning for some nursing students who lacked language skills (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). Three studies showed that through cross-cultural learning, nursing students had more resources to learn new knowledge (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

The core value of cross-cultural learning was that it enabled nursing students to fully understand, experience and learn about other cultures, it ensured that students could be more tolerant and receptive to others in cross-cultural learning (Tuckett& Crompton, 2014). Therefore, one study pointed out that all participants agreed that there were big differences in education between different countries, and they had new educational style in different country (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). For example, one

research showed that the educational model of Australia were more student-centered, while China's style were teacher-centered, and all participants said that they needed to know more about the local culture to adapt to the differences in education (Wang *et al.*, 2017). In Wang and her group's study, more than half of the students thought that the supports of language and learning skills were very important to their learning (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Improving their non-verbal communication had become an important learning goal for nursing students (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015). In Jørgensen and Hadders's study, some students had suggested that body language could be used instead of communication to improve the level of understanding with each other, they also said that these cross-cultural learning experiences could enrich their personal and health care experience and enhance their learning competitiveness (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Mattila *et al.*, 2010). In this study, more nursing students thought they seized each possible opportunity to learn English, for example, they put forward that the way of teamwork could improve their English ability together (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). In Wang's research, "I tried to talk to people, tried to read more and listen more English" showed that many nursing students improved their language proficiency by practicing their language repeatedly, reading, speaking and writing much times (Wang *et al.*, 2008). From two studies, it found that nursing students got language help by listening to or watching local programs, taking language-related courses, and communicating with patients in clinical practice (Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

Nursing students also mastered learning methods (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Nursing students knew the importance of autonomous learning and acquisition of knowledge in cross-cultural learning in this study (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015). And one study said that team cooperation was considered as one of the most important learning methods (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). The study pointed out that some participants sought help from experienced teammates in the team to solve learning difficulties (Jeong *et al.*, 2011).

### 3.1.2 Had good international relationships

The total of the studies (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008) were 6 and they were based on “had good international relationships”. Two studies mentioned that on the process of cross-cultural learning, participants realized that teamwork was the key to the success of nursing students in cross-cultural learning, and respecting the diversity of team members was very important to achieve common and individual learning goals, because group affinity was considered as the main point of learning (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011). First of all, Wang found that all nursing students agreed that building good relationship was very important to their cross-cultural learning experience, because they said a good team relationship had the positive significance to their learning (Wang *et al.*, 2017). According to recent survey (Asenso *et al.*, 2013), it had been found that a strong support system was nurtured by pair learning, some students said that they would feel more confident when they work or study with person and they added that they learned a lot of new knowledge in this process (Asenso *et al.*, 2013). Reid-Searl and her group found that the importance of teamwork was not only reflected in nursing students' learning in school, but also in clinical learning, some nursing students pointed out that having a good team in clinical practice could improve their enthusiasm for teamwork (Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011). One study showed that some nursing students thought that the main reason for team learning was to help others (Tuckett & Crompton, 2014). In one study, students felt comfortable and relaxed that if they were accepted and welcomed as equal members of the team, it was a sense of belonging, and these experiences enabled students to realize themselves and produced profound satisfaction (Mattila *et al.*, 2010).

One study found there were obvious differences in teacher-student relations between different countries, for example, in Taiwan, it was described as a hierarchy, while in Australia it was more informal and personal (Wang *et al.*, 2008). In the same study, the researches also found one student said that when he studied in Taiwan, he didn't

have much opportunity to think, but in Australia, students were given more freedom to think and create (Wang *et al.*, 2008). One study mentioned that having different cultural education experience was a good improvement for nursing students: “*In my country, if I was doing a Masters or PhD your supervisor would tell you what to do, but here it’s different, so I’m kind of like waiting for my supervisor to tell me what to do, but my supervisor is waiting for me to tell them what I’m going to do*” (Evan & Stevenson, 2011). Four study pointed out the one same result was that supervisory relationship was the important factor in students' learning experience and participants' past educational experience had a great impact on the expectations of supervisory relationships, because supervisor provided students with guidance and help (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013). In Asenso and her group’s study, one student noted: “*I don’t think I would learn as much without the instructors*” (Asenso *et al.*, 2013).

### **3.1.3 Positive emotions**

There were 6 of the studies (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008) about “Positive emotions”. Two studies found that cross-cultural learning was a new learning experience for nursing students, many nursing students felt that they liked cross-cultural learning very much (Wang *et al.*, 2008; Evan & Stevenson, 2011). First of all, one study mentioned that some nursing students thought that a new environment would make them relax during the cross-cultural learning, especially the social environment (Mattila *et al.*, 2010). Despite the challenges they faced, there were two studies pointed out that most participants said that they were highly motivated and adaptable, because most of the participants considered that was a learning opportunity for nursing students to find differences and similar about cross-cultural learning perspective (Wang *et al.*, 2017; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017).

The study found that they had clear expectations of their students' roles, and they were responsible for their own nursing learning process (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015). Not

only that, they also showed their independence and courage in cross-cultural learning, striven to find the learning environment and learning methods which belonged themselves, used the knowledge flexibly they have learned, and were full of self-confidence in academic and personal (Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015). For example, in Marrila and Her group's study, they found that when students thought they were popular in a group, they would be very active to do every things (Mattila *et al.*, 2010). Besides, one study found that nursing students learned different things in personal and spiritual aspects during their clinical practice, and one nursing student pointed out that she learned a lot of good knowledge of humanistic care from nurses and the idea of being an advocate sprouted from other nursing students (Asenso *et al.*, 2013).

### **3.2 Acquired a wealth of disadvantages through cross-cultural learning experiences**

Nursing students had learned new knowledge, acquired new skills and improved their abilities in various aspects under the cross-cultural background, but they had also encountered many difficulties, language problems were the most common thing (Tuckett & Crompton, 2014). And a total of 10 articles support this view (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

#### **3.2.1 Had language or communication problems**

The number of studies (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008) were 9 and they were related to the theme “*had language or communication problems*”. Wherever we went, communication was very important and language defect was the most important concern for all nursing students (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jeong *et al.*, 2011;

Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008). Three studies showed that in academic and clinical environments, international students lacked oral and written English, they also had great difficulties in using abbreviated language and reading, limited vocabulary and grammar and less language skills were the biggest obstacles to language problems (Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2008). These two studies found that international nursing students' cultural and linguistic differences could lead to many misunderstandings, sometimes they couldn't understand what the other person said, which led to misunderstandings with each other (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2017). Two studies point out that students used translators to solve language problems, but translators could not solve language barriers very well (Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). In these studies, international nursing students pointed out that it was difficult for nursing students in other countries to understand their English because of different cultures (Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2008). Mitchell and her group found that when international nursing students talked with professors, they didn't say "*please*", it brought some problems to the professors - they thought the nursing students were ordering them. In Mitchell and her group's research, many nursing students said that sometimes they couldn't find a word to express what they wanted to say (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). Two studies found because of the lack of a common language, they did not know how to participate in nursing activities and they thought the lack of means of communication, which affected their learning situation (Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015). In one study reported that nursing students highlighted the enormous challenge of learning English, moreover, these nursing students also mentioned that language needs and English classes were not very helpful in meeting their language needs (Evan & Stevenson, 2011). Two studies reported that due to some barriers, nursing students escaped from some language education, thus isolated themselves from the local people and hindered mutual communication, nursing students' learning ability had also been hindered (Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

### 3.2.2 Had difficulties in relationships

There were 7 of the studies (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008) based on “*Had difficulties in relationships*”. Three surveys had found that unfriendly interpersonal relationships had a negative impact on learning, isolation or discrimination in schools and society was a problem that many students would encounter in the process of studying abroad, therefore, many students felt sad and uncomfortable about it, and sometimes reduce their self-esteem (Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Wang *et al.*, 2008). One study said that they found it was difficult to make friends with local students, some nursing students said that the local students looked like easy to get along with, but it was difficult to become real friends, because they didn’t want to make a group with cross-cultural nursing students (Wang *et al.*, 2017). Two studies found that social and cultural differences were also serious obstacles to learning, nursing students found it extremely difficult for them to learn, and the differences in teacher-student relationships, which were often described as hierarchies, for example, in Australia, teachers usually asked students to answer questions, but in Taiwan, teachers usually told students what to do, and students just follow to to what teacher said (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2008). A study found that some students lacked interest in their supervisor, and they strongly hoped that their supervisor could understand them rather than focused on the topic of their project (Evan & Stevenson, 2011). In one study found that the differences from cultural language also affected the relationship between teachers and students, one international nursing student said that he would not say “*please*” when talking with professors, which brought some problems to professors - they thought the nursing student was ordering them to do something (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017).

### **3.2.3 Negative emotions.**

There were 4 of the studies (Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Wang *et al.*, 2008) about “*negative emotions*”. In these two studies, different hospital

environments, more interactive education methods and unknown competency assessment were important factors which to international nursing students’ fear and anxiety about learning in other countries, especially an unfamiliar environment brought pain and diffident to nursing students when they face obstacles and challenges in learning (Wang *et al.*, 2017; Mattila *et al.*, 2010). When nursing students lacked learning opportunities or support, failed to pass exams, and did not have enough knowledge or skills, they felt very sad and frustrated (Wang *et al.*, 2008; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017). One survey found that nursing students said that being ignored by nurses during their clinical practice led them to feel isolated (Mattila *et al.*, 2010). Another study also pointed out that international nursing students lacked the knowledge support of universities, which also made them feel isolated (Jeong *et al.*, 2011).

### **3.3 The keys words, synthesized finding, categories and findings from the selected articles.**

Synthesized finding, categories and findings from the selected articles were summarized, synthesized finding “Acquired a wealth advantages and disadvantages of learning knowledge through cross-culture experience”, three kinds of categories and detail qualitative and quantitative information were described in Table 2. In Table 2, it showed that nursing students enjoyed this learning experience, they said that they could have many opportunities and contents (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008). Some of them felt good because of new international relationship and students had positive

feelings during cross-cultural learning, while in Table 2 also showed that language, communication and relationship problems made nursing students feel sad during learning (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008).

In Table 6, the key words from 10 articles(Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008) were mainly described by “cross-culture/intercultural learning or study abroad”, “nursing students or student nurses”, “interprofessional education or global health”, “learning experience” and “nursing education”, and the authors from UK (1), Australia (5), Finland (1), Norway (1), Canada (1) and Taiwan in China (1), please read table 6 about the detail information.

## **4. Discussion**

### **4.1 Main results**

The results showed that there were two themes, one was the knowledge and skills acquired through learning, the other was the difficulties and challenges encountered in cross-cultural learning.

The learning experience of nursing students in cross-cultural background reflected these two themes. The results showed that nursing students had both advantages and disadvantages during the learning nursing under cross-cultural background. Many nursing students enjoyed the pleasure of cross-cultural learning, but also experienced great challenges. Cross-cultural learning could help nursing students understand more global nursing knowledge and experience cross-cultural interpersonal relationships. The results also showed that, nursing students were prone to different degrees of psychological problems due to different environments under cross-cultural background, and many students should the negative emotion during cross-cultural

learning. Therefore, self psychological encouragement could relieve their fears. In addition, many studies had shown that the biggest difficulty nursing students encounter in cross-cultural learning was language problems, and they would need a lot of help, such as sign language to help them communicate with people who had different cultural.

## **4.2 Results discussion**

### **4.2.1 Acquired a wealth of advantages through cross-cultural**

#### **4.2.1.1 Got studying opportunities and contents**

Cross-cultural learning was a learning opportunity which was different from ordinary learning. In these studies had been found that many nursing students thought that learning in different cultures was a good learning opportunity (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders , 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008), were similar to Ambrose *et al.* (2017), as it mentioned that students had the opportunity to learn English, and learn more about international health skills, and they said that they felt happy in learning. It was worth to know that in research results, most students enjoyed their cross-cultural learning and believed that the cross-cultural learning method improved their learning skills, and some even thought that they have acquired communicative skills (Ambrose *et al.*, 2017). The key was to improve the core competitiveness of students through cross-cultural learning, including medical knowledge and cultural knowledge. This research had been found that there were different educational modes in different countries, and students felt strongly that the different benefits would be present by different educational modes in the process of learning (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Moreover, students compared the experience and feelings of two different countries when they studied in other country (Wang *et al.*, 2017; Wang *et al.*, 2008 & Mattila *et al.*, 2010). According to theory which was mentioned by Leininger (1978), it would help these nursing students to

have more abundant nursing knowledge when they become nurses in the future (Leininger, 1997). Nursing students continued to think and explore good ways to solve obstacles in the learning process, which made nursing students more independent and creative during learning (Wang *et al.*, 2008). One study had explored that a common advantage: cross-cultural learning improved the core competitiveness of nursing students, because nursing students not only needed to learn more knowledge and skills, but also knew how to face difficulties and challenges independently in the learning process (Greatrex-White, 2008). Although it was a new thing for them, many students had a positive attitude to grasp every learning opportunity.

#### **4.2.1.2 Had good international relationships**

Interpersonal relationship was established and developed in the process of interpersonal communication, and played a very important role in the process of cross-cultural learning (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Wang *et al.*, 2008). Team membership could increase the nursing students' cross-cultural adjustment (Koskien & Tossavainen, 2004). In the process of interpersonal relationship, nursing students had a sense of belongingness: it referred to an internal relationship between nursing students and their groups. A good team relationship could improve the learning enthusiasm of nursing students. Nursing student could learn a lot of knowledge in his group, and her team was very helpful, they would help when he was in difficult times, these behaviors were very motivating for the nursing students (Levett-Jones *et al.*, 2016). It was imagined that a good team relationship provided a strong spiritual support for nursing students in the process of cross-cultural learning. In addition, a good cooperative relationship in the team made nursing students feel recognized and accepted, and they felt confident in group or pairing activities (Ruddock & Turner, 2007). At the same time, mutual learning improves the knowledge level and

communication level of nursing students, which enabled them to better adapt to the cross-cultural learning atmosphere.

What's more, a good teacher-student relationship could promote the progress of nursing students in learning and enhance their sense of achievement effectively (Evan & Stevenson, 2011 & Wang *et al.*, 2008). And different teachers had different teaching methods. In this study, it was found that many nursing students put forward the differences of teachers' teaching methods between different countries (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Students also thought that they felt the advantages of different teaching modes while accepting different teaching modes (Wang *et al.*, 2008). The tutor's teaching mode in some countries enabled students to give full play to their advantages in answering questions, which improved students' learning enthusiasm. Acceptance of the new teaching mode was both an opportunity and a challenge for nursing students, because they would reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of different teaching modes, so as to further improve their learning methods and broaden their own views.

#### **4.2.1.3 Positive emotion**

Cross-cultural learning was a brand-new experience for many students. At the beginning of their contact, they had a strong sense of novelty, so they would be curious about cross-cultural learning. When they really started cross-cultural learning, different environments and different learning modes made nursing students look forward to the process of cross-cultural learning more (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2017). Challenges were the problems that nursing students would encounter in cross-cultural learning, students were full of confidence in meeting difficulties and regarded challenges as a way of self-training, and when students overcame difficulties, they felt very proud and accomplished, and enhanced their enthusiasm for cross-cultural learning (Wang *et al.*, 2008). Positive emotions came not only from learning but also from teamwork. When a nursing student was respected and valued in a team, he was enthusiastic about doing things and willing to help others, and in clinical practice, the positive image of nurses set a good example

for nursing students, which made nursing students full of personal and spiritual identification with their profession (Asenso *et al.*, 2013; Maas & Ezeobebe, 2014).

## **4.2.2 Acquired a wealth of disadvantages through cross-cultural learning experience**

### **4.2.2.1 Had language or communication problems**

Language or communication problems were bound to exist in the cross-cultural learning of nursing students and every nursing student had to face them (Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2017; Tuckett & Crompton, 2014; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017; Reil-Searl *et al.*, 2011; Jeong *et al.*, 2011; Mattila *et al.*, 2010; Jørgensen & Hadders, 2015; Wang *et al.*, 2008). A study noted that language problems existed at any time in the learning process, such as language barriers with classmates or communication barriers with patients during clinical practice (Grudt & Hadders, 2017). A large number of literature had pointed out that Leininger (2002) said that an effective communication provided the basic nursing care for patient in the cross-cultural nursing career (Leininger & McFarland, 2002; Culley, 2001). “Since she couldn’t speak any Swedish” in an early study showed the difficulties about language in clinical practice (Jirwe & Gerrish, 2010). In reports from one study mentioned that sometimes, the main reason for language barrier was the lack of vocabulary and grammar, which lead nursing students to find the right words to express what they think (Johnson & Howell, 2017). In school, nursing students felt that it was very difficult to communicate with local students because of the lack of common language. Misunderstanding is the most serious problem during cross-cultural learning, and sometimes the occurrence of language misunderstanding could be regarded as a kind of impolite behavior, which makes nursing students very sad (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017). Nursing students would do everything possible to avoid problems, such as practicing language skills, sometimes with the help of translators, but these were not helpful (Tuckett & Crompton, 2014). In other aspects, nursing students should not only learn

the ability of language expression, but also learn different ways of communication, because different cultures also had different ways of language communication, if they could not understand the way of communication between each other, they might have personal behavior problems (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017).

#### **4.2.2.2 Had difficulties in relationships and negative emotion**

Because of the different environment, many nursing students in the team had different cultural backgrounds, so it was easy to cause differences (Bohman & Borglin, 2014; Ratanasiripong, 2012). Fear, uneasiness, fear has been accompanied by nursing students (Wang *et al.*, 2008). In the team, many students could not find the sense of belonging of the team, sometimes felt isolated and abandoned, because students didn't want to participate in team activities, and lose the enthusiasm for learning. Moreover, the sense of belonging was very important for an overseas nursing student. Some students very much hoped that they can make good friends in the learning process and be helped in their study and life. But these were difficult because discrimination exists in schools and in society as a whole ( Jeong *et al.*, 2011 & Wang *et al.*, 2008).

Many studies pointed out that nursing students thought that the help from supervisor was greatly useful for nursing students during cross-cultural learning, however, due to many reasons, such as cultural differences, language barriers and behavioral patterns, there were also many misunderstandings between nursing students and teachers (Park *et al.*, 2003; Evan & Stevenson, 2011; Wang *et al.*, 2008; Mitchell *et al.*, 2017).

Among them, the difference of teaching mode is the biggest obstacle to the teacher-student relationship. In clinical practice, the teaching nurses often neglected to take care of the nursing students and do not let the nursing students perform skills operation, which made the nursing students feel ignored (Mattila *et al.*, 2010). Similar benefits were found in one study from South Korean, and it found that nursing students would be scolded by teachers during clinical practice, which further aggravated the deterioration of teacher-student relationship when nursing students rushed to grief (Park *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, the students hoped that the supervisor

could give them more relationship and understanding, so as to improve their enthusiasm for learning, and further master more cross-cultural nursing skills.

### **4.3 Methods discussion**

Literary reviews could be used as a form of independent publications or in research reports. The authors searched in database PubMed to improve the reliability of the results. According to Polit and Beck (2012), it was helpful to make the results more consistent with the key words by using search terms of Boolean search operators AND and OR. The selected articles should be published between 2008/1/1 to 2018/7/23. Researches which were beyond the time limit would be excluded. Another alternative exclusion criterion was that all review studies would be excluded. The authors chosen a descriptive design because the purpose of the study was to understand the learning experience of nursing students under a cross-cultural background. The two authors red all the articles respectively. This methods ensured that authors did not interact and reduce the risk of losing important information (Polit and Beck, 2012). After that, the authors exchanged their views on the results through discussion about the articles which they chosen, then classified and summarized the key words, research purposes, ethical problems and research methods of the literature which would be used by authors. In document retrieval, the author had red a lot of research topics and abstracts. However, the authors might lose some useful articles. At present, the selected articles in the literature review had been approved by the ethics committee.

According to Polit and Beck (2012), in order to improve the accuracy of the article, the authors adopted inclusion and exclusion criteria because the present study used clear inclusion and exclusion criteria and strengthened the repeat ability of the study. Inclusion criteria was related to “nursing students” OR “students nurse”, “learning experience” and “cross-cultural environment/background” and exclusion

criteria were related to “nurse”, “life experience” and “nursing experience” of nursing students under cross-cultural background/environment and related review studies.

English was one of the inclusive criteria. Because English was not the authors’ first language, it meant that it might be difficult for the authors to read the article, and they might misunderstand about the content of the article. To avoid mistakes, authors used dictionaries and looked for help from supervisor if it necessary. If English articles were used, the authors might miss relevant studies in other languages, which might also be a limitation.

#### **4.4 Clinical implications**

With the development of economy and globalization, nursing students would encounter different cultures of patients and family members in the future clinical work after they become nurses. In modern hospitals, cultural diversity among patients was a problem faced by nurses, which requires nurses not only to learn basic nursing knowledge, but also to understand different cultural knowledge (Amiri & Heydari, 2018). It demanded that nursing students fully expanded their knowledge and skills through learning and communicating with different cultures. For example, the researches held the view that the challenges faced by nursing students in cross-cultural learning, such as difficulties in language communication, would also be manifested in future clinical practice (Grudt & Hadders, 2017). The good way to solve language problems was to require nursing students to learn different language skills, so as to meet the needs of patients of different cultures, and improve the quality of nursing care. What nursing students needed to do was to improve their level of cross-cultural nursing on the basis of learning nursing. Leininger (1980) mentioned that nurses' lack of cultural awareness would have a negative impact on the quality of patients' humanistic care, and the most serious cases was that it would lead to patients giving up treatment (Pulido-Fuentes *et al.*, 2016). It was seen that cross-cultural learning of nursing students helped nursing students to provide good care for patients when they become nurses in the future, especially humanistic care.

## **4.5 Suggestions for future research**

The author found that among the selected articles, some articles did not have enough interviews related to cross-cultural learning experience. With this opinion, the author suggested that more interviews should be conducted on cross-cultural learning experiences, so that more contents of cross-cultural learning experiences could be found in researches. From this point of view, it might be interesting to study about cross-cultural learning experience, because it enabled future nursing students to fully understand it before they accept cross-cultural learning. Through reading the materials reviewed in this paper, it was found that few articles study the learning experience of nursing students in cross-cultural context. Future research would focus on how nursing students learn more knowledge in different cultural backgrounds. Besides, future researches should focus on how nursing students challenge the difficulties in cross-cultural learning. In addition, the authors suggested that some qualitative researches should be done in the future to enhance the concept of cross-cultural learning among nursing students.

## **5. Conclusions**

Nursing students had different advantages and disadvantages during learning nursing knowledge under cross-cultural background. Nursing students had both opportunities and challenges in their learning process. Besides, the self encouragement of nursing students played a very important role in encountering these problems. While facing challenges, nursing students were also trying to overcome difficulties with different solutions.

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Table 3 Overview of the selected articles.

Author(s) and year/country of publication	Title	Design (possibly approach)	Participants	Data collection method(s)	Data analysis method(s)	Study code
Evans C. & Stevenson K.  Year of publication: 2011  Country: UK	The experience of international nursing students studying for a PhD in the U.K: A qualitative study	A descriptive qualitative approach.	n=17  Age: <32 years (n=10) 33-49 year (n=7).  Gender: Male: n = 6, Female: n = 11  Nationality:	Semi-structured qualitative interviews design.17 students volunteered to be interviewed.The interviews were arranged and conducted by a research assistant at a location of the students' choice and lasted between 1-3 hours.	Thematic analysis	A

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			<p>Students were from 9 different countries (2 EU, 15 non-EU). The main regions were EU (n = 2), Middle East (n = 8), East Asia (n = 4), South Asia (n = 2) and sub-Saharan Africa (n = 1).</p>			
<p>Wang C.C. &amp; Whitehead L. &amp; Bayes S.</p>	<p>"They are friendly but they don't want to be friends with you": A narrative inquiry</p>	<p>a qualitative researches</p>	<p>n=6 male:n=1 females:n=5 aged 20 to 25 years from China</p>	<p>The data for this study were collected through individual in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and field notes derived from interim conversations on the topic.</p>	<p>thematic approach to data analysis</p>	<p>B</p>
<p>Year of publications: 2017</p>						

Country: Australia	into Chinese nursing  students' learning experience in Australia					
Tuckett A, & Crompton P.	Qualitative understanding of an international learning experience: What Australian	A quantitative researches.  Interpretative research design.	n = 39 In year 2010, n = 13, 2011 n = 15 2012 n = 11.	The EOI required the student to respond via email to two Questions. A second and final call for EOI was posted via an email blast seven days prior to the deadline for submission.  Questionnaire comprising open- ended questions.	The qualitative content analysis of quantitative content analysis.	C
Year of publication: 2014						
Country: Australia	undergraduate nurses and midwives said					

	about a Cambodia placement ?					
Mitchell C. & Fabbro L.D. & Shaw J.	The acculturation, language and learning experiences of international nursing students: Implications for nursing education	A qualitative approach.  Semi-structured qualitative interviews design.	n=17  namely international undergraduates enrolled in a Bachelor of Nursing program and international postgraduates enrolled in Coursework or Higher Degree by Research nursing programs at one Australian university Campus.	Semi-structured interviews. A purposive and theoretically saturated sample of 17 students was obtained. Interviews, ranged from 30 to 60 min in length, were audio-recorded and interviewers made field notes during and after the interviews. Interviews were transcribed and researchers performed manual thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews and field notes.	Analysis required systematically identifying and coding key elements and concepts, interpreting and re-categorizing data into subthemes then major themes and was guided by methodological understandings of thematic analysis.	D
Year of publication: 2017						
Country: Australia						
Reid-Searl K. & Dwyer T. & Moxham L. & Happell B. & Sander T.	Rediscovering the essence of nursing: Exploring the impact	Qualitative exploratory approach.	n=8  Undergraduate nursing students from a CQ University, Australia,	Depth semi-structure interviews. Through the series of three interviews students were asked to describe their expectations	Data analysis was based on the approach developed by Ritchie and Spencer. This method comprised five key stages:	E

Year of publication: 2011	of in clinical experience in Thailand for undergraduate nursing students from Australia		who would be undertaking clinical placement in Surin Thailand,	of, involvement in and the impact of this clinical experience. Participants were encouraged to raise any other issues they considered important.	familiarisation with content; identifying a thematic framework; indexing themes; charting themes; and the mapping and interpretation of themes. All interviews were audio-taped and then transcribed verbatim.
Country: Australia					
Jeong S-Y. S. & Hickey N. & Levett-Jones T. & Pitt V. & Hoffman K. & Norton C.A. & Ohr S.O.	Understanding and enhancing the learning experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse nursing students	Qualitative exploratory research	n=106 participants China (n=46), South Korea (n=38), and a range of other countries (n=22).	Focus group interviews. The audio taped focus group interviews took approximately one and a half hours and were conducted in private, at a date, time and place of mutual convenience to the participants.	The data from the focus groups was transcribed then analysed using thematic analysis. This method involves reading, browsing, reflection, coding, validation of codes and searching for emerging patterns in the data.
Year of publication: 2011					

Country: Australia	in an Australian bachelor of nursing program						
Mattila L.R. & Pitkäljärvi M. & Eriksson E.	Internatio nal student nurses' experienc es of clinical practice  in the Finnish health care system	A qualitative approach.	n=17  Their age varied  from 23 to 30 and they had been studying for 2.5–3.5 years.	Semi-structured interviews. Two students piloted the interview themes. Three graduating student nurses conducted the interviews. In addition, as fellow students, the interviewers could identify with the interviews and were able to understand the language in which the experiences were described. Interviewers were from different group than interviewees and they were coached by the authors for interviewing techniques during several meetings. Coaching included themes such as the progress of an interview, the role of the interviewer and the transcription process.	Inductive content analysis. The interviews were read through several times to gain a comprehensive view of the subject matter. The unit of analysis was a combination of words or a phrase. Students' descriptions were formed into simplified expressions based on the same terms they had used and they were transformed into plain lists. Those expressions		G
Year of publication: 2010							
Country: Finland							

Jørgensen W. & Hadders H.	The significance of communities of practice:	A qualitative research.	n=7 seven students in one single group were conducted prior to their departure to	Group interview. The interview lasted about 90 minutes. The author assisted in presiding over and recording. The interviews were facilitated by open-ended questions and participants were	that bore a similar meaning were combined into the same group and were given a name, which indicated their content. The subcategories were combined to create categories. The formation of categories was based on students' expressions and the qualitative content of their meaning. The tentative categories were discussed and revised. Hence, the main categories comprised positive and negative experiences.	H
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Year of publication: 2015	Norwegian nursing students' experience of clinical placement in Bangladesh		Bangladesh, during their stay in Bangladesh and after their return to Norway.	asked to describe their experiences of learning in their clinical placement.		
Country: Norway						
Asenso B.A. & Reimer-Kirkham S. & Astle B.	In Real Time: Exploring Nursing Students' Learning during an International Experience	A qualitative design.	n=8 female students, ranging in age from 19 to 24,	The ethnographic methods. Data were collected by observing participants during learning activities, such as health fairs and interactions with Zambians. Building on these observations, interviews were conducted three times with each participant over the three week period. The interviews were guided by openended questions such as Tell me about your experience here so far and How have your expectations been met? Interviews were audio recorded	Data analysis proceeded with an initial codebook based on the interview questions that was revised during the coding process. Main themes generated from the data were synthesized into a framework that represented the whole.	I
Year of publication: 2013						
Country: Canada						

				and transcribed by the investigator.		
Wang C.W. & Singh C. & Bird B. & Ives G.	The Learning Experiences of Taiwanese Nursing Students Studying in Australia	A qualitative approach, an exploratory survey design	n=21	Semi-structured Individual interviews. Interviews were transcribed verbatim into Chinese and then translated into English by one of the researchers. To maximize the validity and reliability of the translation, only one translator was responsible for both the Chinese transcription and English translation.	Thematic content analysis.	J
Year of publication: 2008			Student category Graduate n=12 Postregistration n=9			
			Age group 21 to 25 n=4 26 to 30 n=14 31 to 35 n=2			
Country: China Taiwanese			26 to 40 n=1 Length of stay in Australia <1 year n=3 1 to 2 years n=12 >2 years n=6			

Table 4 The aims and results of the selected articles.

Author(s)	Aims	Results	Code
<p>Evans C. &amp; Stevenson K.</p> <p>Year of publication: 2011</p> <p>Country: UK</p>	<p>To explore the international doctoral student journey; specifically, to investigate the learning experiences of international doctoral nursing students at different points in their PhD journey and to identify best practice in supporting effective learning in this student group.</p>	<p>Studying for a UK PhD would had some major changes, such as adapting to the new country / culture and learning a second language. Many students wanted a structured learning program that placed more emphasis on professional nursing issues and research -- similar to a professional doctorate. Students did not always feel that they were integrated into the broader research environment of the department. They wanted more opportunities to connect with their UK peers. The PhD was perceived as a difficult and stressful journey because they acquired professional and personal skills through this cross-cultural learning experience. Good supervisory relationships were considered to be the most critical supporting factor in doctoral programs for nursing students studying in another country, but sometimes it was difficult to establish good relationships because of differences in expectations and supervisory methods between students and supervisors.</p>	A
<p>Wang C.C. &amp; Whitehead L. &amp; Bayes S.</p> <p>Year of publications: 2017</p>	<p>To explores the six Chinese nursing students' learning experiences through a narrative inquiry in Western Australian universities.</p>	<p>Chinese nursing students in Australia were fearful and anxious because they were not familiar with hospital environment and educational methods. Participants identified clinical practice experience in Australian health services as learning experience. It was difficult to build friendships with Australian local students, and these students reflected a number of problems: no one made friends with local students, and no one joined the University community. Despite the challenges they had faced, the participants had been proactive in adapting to new cultures and learning methods, and achieved academic success.</p>	B

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Country:  
Australia

Tuckett A, &  
Crompton P.

Year of  
publication:  
2014

Country:  
Australia

To report the qualitative learning experiences of three groups of Australian undergraduate nursing and midwifery students on undertaking an ILE in Cambodia.

The evaluation by the undergraduate nursing/midwifery students of the ILE in Siem Reap, Cambodia, is understood through two core themes: global citizen/better citizen and personal/professional development. One of its core tools is that it enables nursing students to fully experience and understand another culture associated with it. This article described the students' learning experience in Cambodia, and "improve my nursing skills in remote environment and improve my resource utilization ability". For some people, being away from home is a daunting experience. Experience a brand new culture will bring a series of challenges. Helping others and life opportunities outside the classroom are the main themes.

C

<p>Mitchell C. &amp; Fabbro L.D. &amp; Shaw J.</p>	<p>To explore the learning and acculturating experiences of international nursing students to identify opportunities for teaching innovation to optimise the experiences and learning of international nursing students.</p>	<p>The two main themes identified from international student data were to express oneself and find one's place in international learning experience. International nursing students found that they spent more time studying than domestic students, and this pressure had a negative impact on communication, especially in clinical settings. In addition, international nursing students also found that they must practiced English hard to improve their proficiency in learning, which provided opportunities to speak English in clinical learning, and increased the risk of language deficiency. Initially, international nursing students felt isolated, and after a while they adapted to the new environment. During this period, they had experienced different learning experiences.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Year of publication: 2017</p>			
<p>Country: Australia</p>			
<p>Reid-Searl K. &amp; Dwyer T. &amp; Moxham L. &amp; Happell B. &amp; Sander T.</p>	<p>To present the findings of a research which examined the experiences of undergraduate nursing students when undertaking a clinical placement in Thailand.</p>	<p>Three interviews, six topics were anticipation, making a difference, different worlds, part of the group, reality check, group dynamics. These findings suggested that international clinical experience had potential benefits in addition to developing cultural competence. Students attached great importance to the importance of nursing and group dynamics. This study reported the learning experience of eight nursing undergraduates in clinical practice in Thailand. The findings and recommendations of this study were significant for universities and volunteer organizations that organized international clinical internships for students.</p>	<p>E</p>
<p>Year of publication: 2011</p>			
<p>Country:</p>			

Jeong S-Y.S. &  
Hickey N. &  
Levett-Jones T.  
& Pitt V. &  
Hoffman K. &  
Norton C.A. &  
Ohr S.O.

To:

- explore the factors that impede or enhance the learning experiences of CALD students at university and in clinical settings

Year of  
publication:  
2011

- explore the factors that impede or enhance the teaching experiences

This article examines the learning experience of nursing students in a cross-cultural context, mainly on four themes.: level of English language competence, feelings of isolation, limited opportunities for learning, and inadequate university support. Through interviews, get students' cross-cultural learning experience, there are both difficulties and opportunities during the study period.

F

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Country: Australia	of academic and clinical staff with CALD students at university and in clinical settings		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify support structures/systems for CALD students and staff.</li> </ul>		
Mattila L.R. & Pitkäljärvi M. & Eriksson E.	To describe international student nurses' experiences of their clinical practice in the Finnish health care system	The results showed that the positive experiences of nursing students in cross-cultural learning mainly included the sense of belonging, the improvement of independent working ability, the improvement of professional level and the improvement of team members' working ability. The description of negative experiences is related to the limitations of learning and the impairment of personal dignity, which can lead to negative feelings as outsiders, a decline in self-esteem, a sense of abandonment and expectations of difficulties.	G
Year of publication: 2010			
Country: Finland			

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Jørgensen W.& Hadders H.	To gain understanding of students' experience of learning in clinical placement in Bangladesh and to explore what resources and personnel they make use of during their learning process.	By understanding students' perception of cross-cultural learning before going abroad, expectations and worries, cooperation and encounters after going abroad. Students had a lot of learning outcomes and face many challenges. Through cross-cultural learning, nursing students' insights and reflections on practice were stimulated, which further improved their dominant position. Their previous experience in problem-based learning and group learning had made them more resilient and helped them cope with the problems from clinical placement.	H
Year of publication: 2015			
Country:			
Norway			
Asenso B.A. & Reimer- Kirkham S. & Astle B.	To explore how nursing students learn during the international experience	Three themes of nursing students' learning in cross-cultural context were described: expectation to shape students' learning, participation to promote learning and critical reflection to enhance learning. Expectation shapes students' learning, participation promotes learning, and critical reflection enhances learning. Nursing students get some opportunities through cross-cultural learning, which makes their abilities continuously improve.	I
Year of publication: 2013			
Country:			
Canada			

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Wang C.W. & Singh C. & Bird B. & Ives G.	To examines the educational experiences of 21 Taiwanese nursing students studying at Australian universities during 1999 and 2000.	Taiwan nursing students find "fun of learning" in Australia's cross-cultural learning, although there are obstacles, but there are still gains. They developed strategies to overcome learning disabilities and advocated greater institutional and teacher support, including guidance, for international students. The findings reinforce the unique difficulties of ESL nursing students and emphasize the responsibility of institutions and nursing colleges to develop curriculum frameworks to meet the linguistic, teaching, academic, clinical and sociocultural needs of this unique international student group.	J
Year of publication:  2008			
Country:  China Taiwanese			

Table 5 The ethics of selected articles.

Author(s) and year/country of publication	Title	Ethics	Code
<p>Evans C. &amp; Stevenson K.</p> <p>Year of publication: 2011</p> <p>Country: UK</p>	<p>The experience of international nursing students studying for a PhD in the U.K: A qualitative study</p>	<p>Ethical approval for the study was granted by the University of Nottingham Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Ethics Committee. All students who agreed to participate signed a consent form and were provided with a book voucher as a token of appreciation after completing the interview.</p>	A
<p>Wang C.C. &amp; Whitehead L. &amp; Bayes S.</p> <p>Year of publications: 2017</p>	<p>"They are friendly but they don't want to be friends with you": A narrative inquiry into Chinese nursing</p>	<p>Ethical approval to conduct the study was granted by a University Research Ethics Committee. Participants were aware that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time, and of confidentiality in relation to the storage, analysis and presentation of the data.</p>	B

Country: students'  
Australia learning  
experience in  
Australia

Tuckett A, & Crompton P. Qualitative understanding of an international  
The University of Queensland's Ethical Review Committee approved the research; and consent was part of the evaluation of teaching and learning in the school (number#2008001846). C

Year of publication: learning  
experience:  
2014 What  
Australian

Country: undergraduate  
Australia nurses and  
midwives said  
about a  
Cambodia  
placement?

Mitchell C. & Fabbro L.D. & Shaw J.	The acculturation, language and learning experiences of international nursing students: Implications for nursing education	The University Human Research Ethics Committee granted ethical approval for the project. As it was possible that the researchers had teacher-learner relationships with the international nursing students enrolled in the School of Nursing and Midwifery, invitations to volunteer in the research were disseminated by administrative staff, on behalf of the researchers, in order to alleviate any perceived coercion to participate. Furthermore researchers only collected data from students they did not teach. In line with national research guidelines (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007), participants were informed they were able to withdraw from the study at any time and a protocol was in place to refer any students for support if the interview process was to cause distress (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).	D
Year of publication: 2017			
Country: Australia			
Reid-Searl K. & Dwyer T. & Moxham L. & Happell B. & Sander T.	Rediscovering the essence of nursing: Exploring the impact of in clinical experience	Ethics approval was obtained from the relevant University Human Research Ethics Committee. All potential participants were assured that their participation was completely voluntary, that they had the right to withdraw without prejudice and that non participation would not affect their academic standing. Additionally, they were advised that their identity would not be revealed and measures would be taken to protect privacy and confidentiality. This was reinforced in writing on the consent form.	E
Year of publication: 2011	in Thailand for undergraduate nursing students from Australia		

Country:

Australia

Jeong S-Y. S. & Hickey N. & Levett-Jones T. & Pitt V. & Hoffman K. & Norton C.A. & Ohr S.O.	Understanding and enhancing the learning experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse nursing students in an Australian bachelor of nursing program	Prior to the commencement of the study ethics approval was obtained from the university Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). We ensured voluntary participation, informed consent, and protection of privacy and confidentiality for all participants	F
Year of publication: 2011			

Country:

Australia

Mattila L.R. & Pitkääjärvi M. & Eriksson E.	International student nurses' experiences of clinical practice	Ethical issues relating to conducting interviews were clarified and reflected on. Moreover, interviewers were encouraged to consult the authors in case of possible problems throughout the process.	G
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Year of publication:  
2010

in the Finnish health care system

Country:

Finland

Jørgensen W. & Hadders H.

The significance of communities of practice:  
Norwegian

Approval for the study was obtained from the institutional research comity at the Nursing Faculty. All students were provided with written information about the study and the conditions for their involvement. Participants were assured that no individual names would be used in any reports of the study. The transcripts were identified by code number. Student assignments and written individual learning objectives were rendered anonymous.

H

Year of publication:  
2015

nursing students' experience of clinical placement in

Country:

Norway

Bangladesh

Asenso B.A. & Reimer-Kirkham S. & Astle B.

In Real Time: Exploring Nursing Students'

Following approval from the Research Ethics Board, informed consent was obtained from each participant.

I

Year of publication:  
2013

Learning during an International Experience

Country:  
Canada

Wang C.W. &  
Singh C. &  
Bird B. &  
Ives G.

The Learning Experiences of Taiwanese Nursing Students Studying in Australia

Ethics approval was obtained from the university ethics committee.

J

Year of publication:  
2008

Country:  
China  
Taiwanese

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Table 6 The keys words of selected articles.

Author(s)	Keywords	Code
Evans C. & Stevenson K.	Experience, international nursing students, studying, intercultural learning.	A
Year of publication: 2011		
Country: UK		
Wang C.C. & Whitehead L. & Bayes S.	International mobility, International nursing student, Chinese student, Nursing shortage, Nursing mobility, Narrative inquiry, learning experience	B
Year of publications: 2017		
Country: Australia		
Tuckett A, & Crompton P.	Australian, Cambodia, midwife, undergraduate, international learning experience, nursing studentgs.	C
Year of publication: 2014		

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Country: Australia

Mitchell C. & Fabbro L.D. & Shaw J. Professional education, Clinical teaching, Language, nursing student support, International students, Equity Cultural competence, learning experiences, nursing education D

Year of publication: 2017

Country: Australia

Reid-Searl K. & Dwyer T. & Moxham L. & Happell B. & Sander T. Caring, crosscultural , Group dynamics, Nursing education, Nursing students, clinical leaning experience. E

Year of publication:2011

Country:Australia

Jeong S-Y. S. & Hickey N. & Levett-Jones T. & Pitt V. & Hoffman K. & Norton C.A. & Ohr S.O. English as a second language, International nursing students, Nursing baccalaureate education, learning experience. F

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Year of publication:2011

Country:Australia

Mattila L.R. & Pitkääjärvi M. & Eriksson E. International student nurse, Clinical practice, Positive and negative learning experiences G

Year of publication:2010

Country:Finland

Jørgensen W.& Hadders H. Clinical placement, nursing students , learning experience, study abroad, communities of practice, nurse education. H

Year of publication:2015

Country:Norway

Asenso B.A. & Reimer-Kirkham S. & Astle B. global health, nursing education,learning experience international education exchange, global citizenship, globalization, nursing students I

Year of publication:2013

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Country: Canada

Wang C.W. & Singh C. & Bird B. & Ives G. English as second language (ESL); nursing students; nursing education; Taiwanese students; Australia, Learning Experiences J

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