



**LIVED EXPERIENCES OF CHINESE NURSING STUDENTS WITH
FOREIGN TEACHERS IN AN INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE
PROGRAM**

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ABSTRACT

Internationalization in the education sector is the trend at present. However, for an Exchange student who has grown up using a native tongue as a primary language, studying in an international school with English as a medium of instruction can be both a fulfilling and challenging learning experience. The study aimed to explore on the lived experiences of students in the Exchange Study Program on having a foreigner as a teacher with a Grand Tour question: "What are the lived experiences of exchange students on having a foreign teacher?" Descriptive Phenomenology is the Research Design of this study where 15 nursing students consented to participate in a recorded interview via Focus Group Discussion. An Interview Guide Questionnaire with Open-ended questions was used as research instrument. Colaizzi's method of data analysis was employed. After transcribing, coding, categorization the following major emergent themes were identified: 1) Competent Teacher; 2) Communication Skills; 3) Cultural exchange; and 4) Social Interaction. From these themes the Socio-Cultural Framework for Exchange Study Program was developed. Host of activities must be promoted by the school administration to address the student's challenges. A cultural exchange can be an ideal strategy where both teachers and students can get oriented with their respective country of origin to gain more understanding of the culture and tradition of one another. A constant social interaction between exchange students and foreign teachers facilitate communication where there is dynamic exchange of ideas.

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Keywords: Foreign Teachers, Nursing Students, International Exchange Program

Background

Internationalization in the education sector is the trend at present. Cooperation and collaboration among Higher Education Institution among neighboring countries is encouraged. In line with this, International Exchange Programs were introduced as an avenue to promote partnership between schools and universities worldwide.

For an Exchange student who has grown up using a native tongue as a primary language, studying in an international school with English as a medium of instruction can be both a fulfilling and challenging learning experience. Besides studying, meeting up with a foreign teacher and listening to the lessons can be exciting as well. Hence, this study aims to explore on the lived experiences of students in the Exchange Study Program on having a foreigner as a teacher with a Grand Tour question: *"What are the lived experiences of exchange students on having a foreign teacher?"*. Furthermore, the results of this inquiry will serve as a basis for formulation of an innovative teaching approach and strategy that can be helpful for both the students and foreign teachers.

Student exchange programs in nursing provide opportunities to develop skills in meeting global health care demands (Alden-Joyce et al, 2023). It is imperative that nursing education keep up with trends in health care. Nursing schools around the world promotes cultural diversity by welcoming exchange students. As the demand for nurses are increasing, and so is the call for standardization in health care through international accreditation. Nursing education sector is now under pressure to produce more internationally competent nurses to cope up with the current shortage of nurses worldwide.

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Furthermore, exchange study programs provided vast opportunities for aspiring students who would want to delve into international careers in the future. In a qualitative study by Piipponen (2023) students claimed that exchange study program enabled personal growth, communal growth and socialization.

Methodology

Descriptive Phenomenology is the Research Design of this study. Inductive approach was applied to arrive at the emergent themes. Colaizzi's method of data analysis was employed. An Interview Guide Questionnaire with Open-ended questions was used as research instrument. The research instrument underwent validation by a research expert.

The interview was administered among nursing students in a medical college in Henan, China during an academic visit by the researcher and other foreign teachers last springtime April to May of 2023. Prior to the interview, the researcher submitted the research proposal to the administrators of the international education department of the medical college. After a peer evaluation by the board of reviewers, permission to conduct the interview was granted with a condition to keep the identity of the institution and the participants as confidential as possible.

The participants were chosen through purposive sampling technique. Selection was based on the following criteria: 1) nursing student; 2) on an exchange study program; 3) have a foreign teacher; 4) willing to participate. The purpose of the interview was to get the insight of students about having a foreigner as their teacher. The needed number of interviewee was 15. It was conducted via Focus Group Discussion where students joined in a conference room with the assistance of a professional Chinese interpreter. Informed consent was secured from the students who agreed to participate. The interview entailed the use of voice recorders, field notes and observation as needed. Identity of the students and the institution was kept confidential based on the China's Data Privacy Laws.

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Interview went on until point of data saturation where interviewee responses were repetitive or no new emergent themes arise anymore. After the interview, responses was transcribed then referred back to the interviewee for validation. Transcriptions were coded, categorized, emergent themes and sub themes were identified based on meaningful statements of the interviewees.

Results and Discussion

After transcribing, coding, categorization the following major emergent themes were identified: 1) *Competent Teacher*; 2) *Communication Skills*; 3) *Cultural exchange*; and 4) *Social Interaction*. In the first emergent theme on *Competent Teacher*, sub themes were a) Knowledge; b) Skills; and c) Attitude. In the 2nd emergent theme on *Communication Skills* the sub themes were a) English Comprehension; b) Listening and c) Speaking. Under the 3rd emergent theme on *Cultural Exchange*, the sub themes were a) Cultural Orientation b) Immersion. Under emergent them on *Social Interaction* the sub themes were a) Formal Gatherings and b) Socialization.

Meaningful Statements of Respondents

Competent Teacher

SN 4 "I think the teachers are very serious, every time teaching is very good..."

SN 12 "Teachers know details of knowledge..."

SN 5 "I feel that my foreign teacher is professional and skillful..."

SN 1 "Very nice..."

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SN 9 "The teacher must be warmhearted..."

SN 10 " The teacher must friendly.."

Communication Skills

SN 6 " I think the teacher must improve the students interest in the English Language..."

SN 9 "I hope the teacher teach some skills of English..."

Cultural Exchange

SN 1 "I want to know culture of foreign teachers..."

SN 5 "The foreign teacher must learn about the Chinese culture...talk about culture and funny things..."

SN 7 "I wanna know if teacher loves China...the teacher must stay in China..."

Social Interaction

SN 3 "The teacher must talk more often with students..."

SN 8 "Should talk about self to know more about teacher..."

SN 10 "More activities together..."

The Socio-Cultural Framework

Based on the identified emergent themes and sub-themes, a framework for education was developed entitled *The Socio-Cultural Framework for an Exchange Study Program*". The initial step is the creation of a tailor-fit Exchange Study Program Curriculum with the following essential elements 1) Teacher's Competency; 2) Communication; 3) Cultural Exchange; and 4) Social Interaction.

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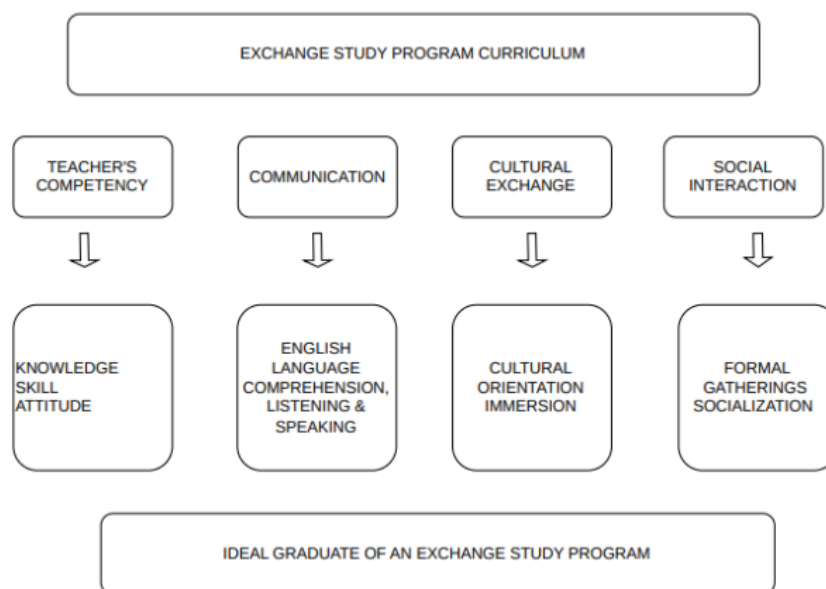
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The teacher serves as an agent of change in the learning process of students. *Teacher Competency* would necessitate possession of the *Knowledge* about the course, the necessary *Skills* whom the teacher can impart to students and the expected *Attitude* towards job as an academician, imbibe the good values and fostering a collegial work relationship with co-teachers, school staff, school administrators, the natives, and especially the students.

Communication is an exchange of ideas between two communicators. Nevertheless, the English Language as medium of instruction poses a challenge to most exchange students for the reason of having a primary native language. Teaching the English Language on the side by including Medical English in the curriculum can assist the foreign teacher in delivery of lessons related to health care. This can be implemented with the help of a Professional Interpreter. Furthermore, Listening and Speaking skills of students can be enhanced by giving simulated clinical scenarios, use of audio recordings and hold a discussion or feedback afterwards while encouraging students to strictly speak in the English Language.



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Figure 1. The Socio-Cultural Framework for an Exchange Study Program

Differences in culture between a foreign teacher and the students are another issue that needed to be addressed. Some nursing intervention may entail observance of culture, tradition and beliefs. The student also must have an understanding that in the future, there is possibility of taking care of a foreign patient who has unique beliefs, culture and tradition. Likewise, both the student and foreign teacher have to gain knowledge of the culture of one another. A *Cultural Exchange* between host country and students or vice versa, can open doors to more cooperation and unity. An academic visit to the respective countries of origin can be a promising learning experience for both the students and the foreign teachers. An *Immersion* program renders opportunity for both the students and the foreign teacher to stay and live in a host country, and gain more understanding on the way of life among the natives. This includes the native language, daily routine, food, drinks, arts, music, dance, sports, tradition, beliefs culture and among others.

Social Interaction is the last among the elements of the Socio-Cultural Framework. A constant social interaction between the host school administrators and staff, the foreign teacher and students strengthen connections. Formal gatherings for example is one venue for meeting more people and gain more friends in the process. Socialization between and amongst campus community will promote a more harmonious environment for both parties.

The ultimate goal of the Socio-Cultural Framework is to produce the Ideal Graduates of the Exchange Study Program. By adopting the framework, with continued support from stakeholders, monitoring and management, undeniably, success can be achieved.

Conclusion

In an international exchange program, a host of activities must be promoted by the school administration to address the student's challenges. A cultural exchange can be an ideal strategy where both teachers and students can get oriented with their respective country of origin to gain more understanding of the culture and tradition of one another. Arquillano

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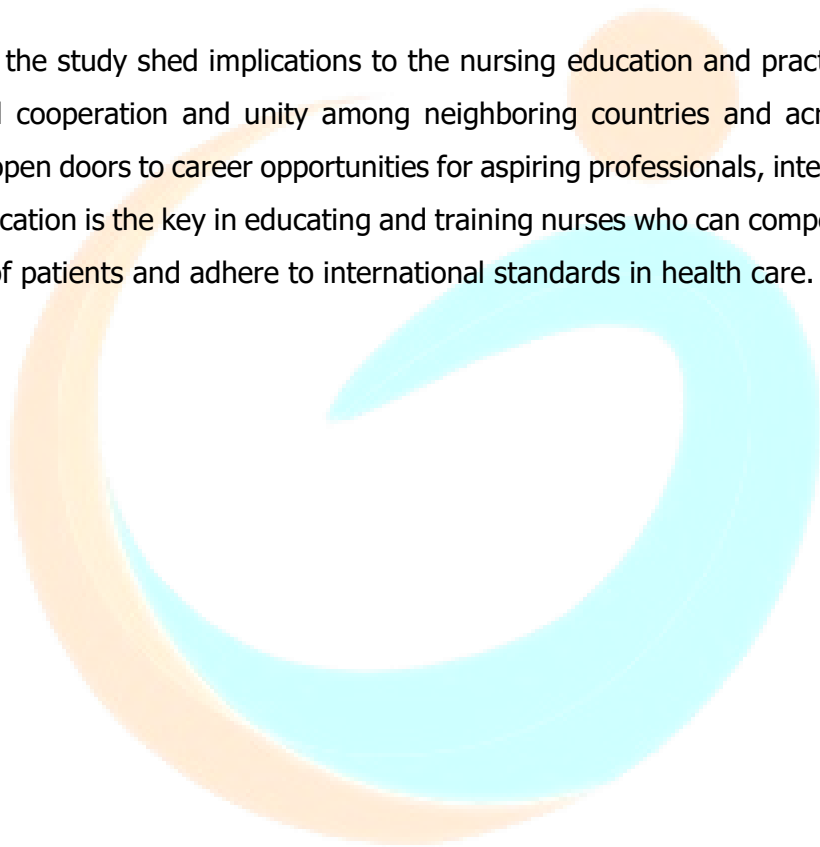
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(2023) explained that a tailor-fit curriculum, academic and cultural activities can be provided for exchange students. Furthermore, constant social interaction between exchange students and foreign teachers facilitate communication where there is dynamic exchange of ideas. Professionalism, kindness and friendliness were the qualities of foreign teachers as cited by the students.

Implications

The results of the study shed implications to the nursing education and practice. In the aim of educational cooperation and unity among neighboring countries and across the globe; moreover, to open doors to career opportunities for aspiring professionals, internationalization of nursing education is the key in educating and training nurses who can competently respond to the needs of patients and adhere to international standards in health care.



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