

## **45th Biennial Convention (16-20 November 2019)**

### **Undergraduate Nursing Students' Perspectives of Intercultural Communication: A Qualitative Descriptive Study**

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**Background:** The constant episodes of migration across countries globally make nations multicultural in nature while enhancing diversity within their systems. Canada, as a country, is not an exception. Statistics show that 20.6% of Canada's population is foreign-born, 4.3% are Aboriginal people, while 19.1% are a visible minority and this includes immigrants and refugees. It is also estimated that between 40.1 and 47.7 million culturally diverse people will live in Canada by 2036.

The concept of intercultural communication which is defined as the sending and receiving of messages across languages and cultures acts like a bridge that connects people to meet their individual objectives. It cuts across different cultures, gender, and disciplines. Understanding the concept of intercultural communication leads to providing equal opportunities to people who access health care within the health care system.

Nurses are usually the front-line healthcare providers within every health institutions. However, problematic communication in nurse-client relationships has become a contributory factor in health care disparities, health inequity, systemic racism, patient safety issues, healthcare inaccessibility, dissatisfaction with care, lack of trust, doctor hopping, and negative health outcomes. To intervene, some academic and health institutions, according to literature, have been reported to apply linguistic frameworks to nursing practice, use cultural validation, employ interpreters, engage students in international health care experiences, cultural simulations, and video conferencing technology with culturally diverse populations or communities. Despite approaches used by academics to ensure that nursing students build skills in interacting with culturally diverse clients, gaps exist in the literature regarding exploring undergraduate nursing students' perspectives on intercultural communication in their nursing program. This information is crucial in determining the effectiveness and appropriateness of incorporating ICC in nursing curricula.

**Purpose:** This study aimed to explore the perceptions of undergraduate nursing students regarding intercultural communication by answering the question, "What are undergraduate nursing students' perceptions of intercultural communication in their nursing program?"

**Method:** This study used a qualitative descriptive design. The Integrated Model of Intercultural Communication Competence guided the study. A purposive sample of ten participants was recruited from a target population of 100 fourth-year nursing students enrolled in a western Canadian university between the period of March and July 2018. Eligibility criteria included fourth-year nursing students who had completed a cultural diversity/communication course and were willing to participate in a 45-60-minutes interview. Following institutional ethics and access approval, an invitation letter was emailed on behalf of the researcher by an administrative assistant. Semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted, digitally-recorded, transcribed verbatim, coded with NVivo 12 Pro qualitative data management software, and analyzed using

content analysis. Multiple data sources including demographic questionnaires, reflexive journals, interview transcripts, and member-checking were used to ensure the rigor of the study.

**Findings:** The study's findings provide important evidence on the value of including intercultural communication information in nursing education. The demographic data indicated that all participants were females with 80% of them between the ages of 20-24 years. 80% had English as their primary language but half of the sample could speak two languages. Five (5) main themes and twenty-four (24) sub-themes emerged from this study. The five themes include a. Intercultural communication encounters in undergraduate nursing education, b. Openness to better healthcare delivery, c. Culturally safe patient care planning, d. Re-modeling teaching pedagogies and strategies and health system reforms, and e. Personal connections with intercultural communication and take home messages. Findings show that the inclusion of intercultural communication content in the nursing curriculum made participants more empathetic, and more open to elicit information needed to plan culturally safe care for culturally diverse clients. It further increased their curiosity to know more about different culture, and developed their level of patience, motivation, and confidence in their approach to culturally safe nursing practices. Some of them admitted developing a global attitude to interacting with culturally diverse clients. However, some participants expressed that the education received on intercultural communication in their nursing program was not enough. They prefer the inclusion of a cultural component in the health assessment, while more engaging and problem-solving strategies are adopted to equip students with the requisite skills and knowledge for effective intercultural communication.

**Conclusion:** This study is significant in informing healthcare workforce literature, curricula and pedagogy, clinical placements of undergraduate students in health care professions, diversity inclusion, intercultural communication policy, and further research. It has become necessary to equip and prepare the health workforce to engage effectively in intercultural communication to provide culturally safe care. Cultural safe practice abilities and intercultural communication skills acquired through education and experience stimulate the desire for health care workers to interact with people from culturally diverse groups and provide safe and better care for them. Educating students in the healthcare profession about intercultural communication will improve their approach to and interaction with the multicultural populace, including Indigenous populations, to promote accessibility and quality health care.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

Intercultural communication, Qualitative study and Undergraduate nursing students

**References:**

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### **Abstract Summary:**

Introduction of intercultural communication in nursing education is vital to equip the future health workforce in caring for clients within multicultural communities. This session describes the perspectives of nursing students on the need for education and strategies to boost their desire and approach of interacting with people from different cultures.

### **Content Outline:**

- I. Introduction:

### **Background**

1. Migration and its effect
  - a. Migration and multiculturalism
  - b. Canada population statistics
2. Intercultural communication
  - a. Definition
  - b. Benefit of understanding intercultural communication
3. Problematic communication between nurses and culturally diverse clients
  - a. Effects of problematic cultural communications
  - b. Interventions by academic and health institutions
  - c. Gap identified

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the study and main research question

### **II. Body:**

#### **Method**

1. Study design
2. Conceptual model used
3. Sampling technique and sample size
4. Setting
5. Eligibility criteria
6. Ethical considerations
7. Data collection
8. Data analysis
9. Maintaining rigor of study

#### **Findings**

1. Demographic findings
2. Themes and sub-themes identified
3. Key summary of findings
4. Participant recommendations

### **III. Conclusion:**

1. Significance of study
2. The need for education on intercultural communication within the health workforce

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**Author Summary:** I have been a registered nurse for the past six years and currently pursuing doctoral studies in nursing at the University of Manitoba. I have worked part-time as a teaching and research assistant at the College of Nursing within the same university.