

# Identifying Transformative Experiences: A Phenomenological Analysis of Nursing Students in a Study Abroad Course

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## Introduction

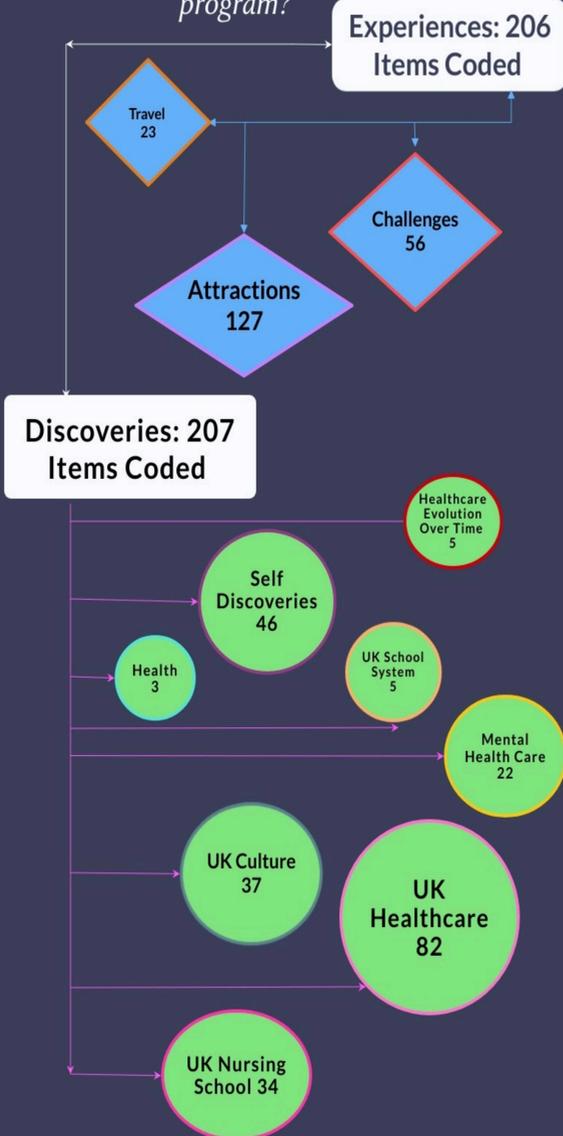
- Study abroad (SA) courses can help students experience a new environment/culture, develop personally, broaden their global perspective, or to gain professional skills.
- SA aligns with the core values outlined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Baccalaureate Essentials and the IOM Future of Nursing Report's call for preparing nurses to address health care needs globally.
- Existing literature provides evidence of the transformative nature of studying abroad, yet capturing the specific elements and personal impact of nursing SA courses remains fairly elusive.



## Purpose

- This qualitative phenomenological study explored the transformative outcomes of students enrolled in the Healthcare in Great Britain course at Texas Woman's University (TWU) through the use of strategic journaling.
- The research question for this study is: "What are the common discoveries and experiences of undergraduate nursing students who attended a study abroad program?"
- Findings address a gap in the literature and were applied to future SA course to maximize the transformative impact on students.

*What are the common discoveries and experiences of undergraduate nursing students who attended a study abroad program?*

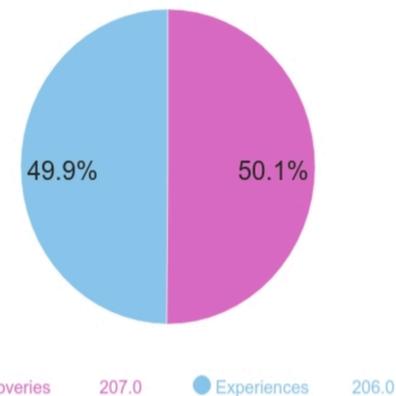


## Methodology

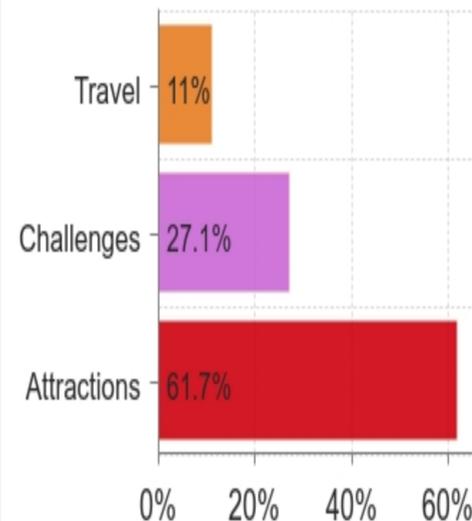
- TWU IRB approval was obtained.
- During the SA course, students completed daily journals by answering specific reflective questions.
- Daily journals were compiled and de-identified prior to content analysis. Inductive coding was performed using NVivo software. To explore this question from diverse perspectives, the data were analyzed by an undergraduate student, a clinical professor, and a data analyst.
- Interrater reliability was assessed when 25%, 50%, 75% and 100% of the data was coded. The range for Cohen's kappa coefficient throughout analysis was 0.92 - 0.99, nearly perfect agreement.
- The image to the right illustrates the primary categories (nodes) to identify the common experiences and discoveries of the participants.

## Results

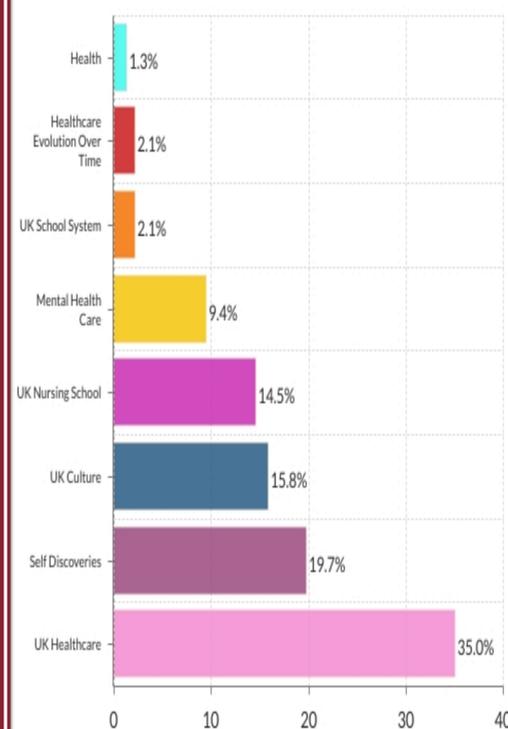
Percentage of Total Coded Items



Percentage of Experiences



Percentage of Discoveries



## Discussion

- The analysis revealed students placed a higher emphasis on the following experiential factors than was expected prior to the data analysis: **Walking, Time, Healthcare Evolution Over Time, Mental Health Care, Architecture, Attire, Smoking; UK School System: Structure, Clinical Hours.**
- The analysis revealed unexpected findings regarding students' experience, providing new insight to guide SA faculty when developing SA courses to maximize impact on students, with professional and personal relevance.
- **Study Limitations:** Caution should be used when generalizing these findings to other populations due to the small sample size at one university.
  - Study results may have been impacted by:
    - Time of year and length of stay in England
    - Inaugural course offering
    - Students' baseline opinions and understanding of variations in culture or definitions in the UK vs/ US

## Future Research

- Replication with a larger, more diverse sample from multiple universities and majors.
- Additional summative insight can be gained by analysis of final course reports to supplement daily journal
- Longitudinal research exploring the long-term impact of SA experience within the context of students' professional careers.

