Transcultural nursing has started from the mid 1950s [1]. Since Leininger started her conceptualization of culture and development of her transcultural nursing theory in 1960s [1], transcultural nursing has become a major field of nursing. When the literature during the past 10 years was roughly searched using the PubMed database, more than 950 articles related to transcultural nursing were retrieved. As the large number of articles indicates, transcultural nursing is now considered as an important area of nursing in research and practice.

Through many years of experiences in transcultural nursing, a dozen of concepts and theories for transcultural nursing have been suggested and used by many nursing scholars [2]. Many concepts including cultural competence, cultural knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and cultural brokerage have been developed and used [3]. Cultural competence has been suggested by many scholars as a major component of nursing [4–6]. A number of articles have been published on theoretical issues and scientific rigor in transcultural nursing; specifically, many articles related to the equivalence of concepts that do not exist in other cultures have been discussed [7–9]. Also, several theorists proposed their own grand or middle-range theories related to transcultural nursing [10–14].

With drastic changes in nursing environments and subsequent advances in nursing science, theoretical thoughts in transcultural nursing have historically evolved in nursing history [15,16]. In general, at every evolutionary step, there have been prominent trends in the area of nursing theories [15,16]. Nursing once emphasized conceptual frameworks and grand theories [15,16]. Then, nursing had hot discussions on metatheoretical issues related to nursing [15,16]. With these trends and changes, theoretical works related to transcultural nursing have also evolved. Transcultural nursing started with grand theories and has moved with concept development and analysis. Now, it is up to development of the middle-range theories and situation-specific theories [13,17]. However, no specific article on the current trends of theoretical works in transcultural nursing during the past 10 years was identified in literature searches through multiple databases, including the PubMed, CINAHL, and PsycINFO.

The purpose of this article is to explore the current trends in theoretical works related to transcultural nursing through an integrated literature review. First, a brief review of the theoretical works that are being used in the field of transcultural nursing is provided. Here, trends refer to “prevailing tendencies or inclinations” [18] and transcultural nursing meant “a nursing specialty created to answer the need for developing a global perspective in the practice of nursing in a world of interdependent nations and people” [19]. Then, the methods used to retrieve and analyze the literature are concisely presented, and the themes reflecting the current trends in theoretical works related to
transcultural nursing are discussed. Finally, suggestions for future
development of transcultural nursing theories are proposed based
on the literature review.

An Overview of Theoretical Works in Transcultural Nursing

From the early stage of transcultural nursing, theories have been
an essential part of transcultural nursing. Under heavy influences of
anthropology and psychology, theorists began to determine the
theoretical basis of transcultural nursing and to define culture and
nursing care, nursing environments, nursing intervention, and
nurses’ roles [10–14]. As mentioned previously, the central concepts
in transcultural nursing were culture, nursing, and environment.

During the time, several theories related to culture have been
adopted from other disciplines and used in nursing with some
modifications and refinements of the major and subconcepts of
existing theories from other disciplines. During the 1950s, 1960s,
and early 1970s, several theorists have developed theories that
could uniquely explain the concepts related to transcultural
nursing to provide an independent conceptual framework for
nursing education, practice, and research in transcultural nursing
[16,12,20].

During the late 1960s and 1970s, when metatheoretical dis-
cussions were made by nursing theorists [11,16], grand theories
including transcultural nursing theories were criticized for their
lack of explicated propositions and empirical testing [21]. Then, in
the mid 1970 to the 1980s, theorists began to discuss the necessity
of substantive theories in nursing and began to discuss the central
concepts in nursing [16]. From the 1980s and 2000s, all concept
analysis and concept development methods were suggested and
used [22]. During these periods, nursing scholars in transcultural
nursing also focused on their theoretical works on concept analyses
and concept development of central concepts related to trans-
cultural nursing [23–29].

From the 1990s, two new types of nursing theories were
introduced: middle-range theories and situation-specific theories
[17]. With the emerging middle-range theories in nursing in gen-
eral, several middle-range theories related to transcultural nursing
were proposed [16,30]. Also, a number of situation-specific theories
related to transcultural nursing were proposed during the same
period [31–38].

In recent years, with drastic advances in nursing research,
transcultural nursing scholars began to search for the theoretical
bases that could be easily operationalized into research in trans-
cultural nursing as in nursing in general [17]. At the same time, with
globalization and advances in nursing practice, transcultural
nursing also needs to find the theoretical bases that could be easily
translated into transcultural nursing practice. In the current stage
of nursing theories that is characterized as “diversity in thought”
[39], an increasing number of theories are suggested in many
different areas in nursing, including acute care, oncology, women’s
health, pediatric, occupation health, community health, and so
forth. [40,41]. However, there has been no exploration on the cur-
tent trends in theoretical works related to transcultural nursing in
recent years.

Methods

To explore the current trends in theoretical works related to
transcultural nursing, an integrated literature review was con-
ducted using multiple databases including, the PubMed, CINAHL,
and Scopus databases. The databases were searched only for the
articles published during the past 10 years (2007–2018) because this
review aimed to explore the current trends. Initial searches
using the relevant keywords were conducted. Four articles were
retrieved from the databases using the keywords of “transcultural
nursing” and “grand theory.” Next, 10 articles were retrieved using
the keywords of “transcultural nursing,” “mid-range theory,” and
“middle-range theory.” When the keywords of “transcultural
nursing” and “situation specific theory” were used, seven articles
were retrieved. A total of 46 articles were retrieved using the
keywords of “transcultural nursing” and “grounded theory.” Finally,
with the keywords “transcultural nursing” and “concept analysis,”
an additional 56 articles were retrieved.

The resulting 123 articles retrieved from this initial search were
screened for duplicates, and six articles were excluded via this
process. Title and abstract reviews were conducted on the
remaining 117 articles, which resulted in the exclusion of eight
articles for which either the abstract or full text was inaccessible.
The remaining 109 articles were selected for full-text reviews.
However, six articles were excluded from the full-text reviews
because they were written in a language other than English. Two
articles were excluded because they consisted of the guidelines and
standards of culturally competent care rather than theoretical
works. Finally, additional 33 articles were excluded because they
did not address the topics of theory, concepts, or models at all. Thus,
a total of 68 articles were identified as eligible for full-text reviews.
The literature search and retrieval procedures are summarized in
Figure 1.

First, the eligible articles were classified by study design, country
where the study was conducted, and type of theory (e.g., grand
theories, middle-range theories, situation-specific theories, ground-
ded theories, and concept development/analysis). Next, individual
articles were reviewed to verify that they actually presented a
theory or a theoretical discourse. Those articles which actually
presented a theory/model/concept were reviewed in the aspects of
purpose of theorizing, types of theorizing, sources of theorizing,
checking and linkages to practice or research. The review categories
were selected based on the major components of the integrative
approach to theory development to explore the current trends in
theoretical works related to transcultural nursing [38,39].

The characteristics of the 68 reviewed studies are shown in
Table 1. Depending on the purposes of the theoretical works,
various methods were used [42]. The most frequently used
methods were the following: literature reviews (41.2%) and qualita-
tive studies with interviews (33.8%). The majority were con-
ducted in the U.S. (47.1%), followed by Canada (7.4%), Australia
(5.9%), and the U.K. (4.4%). Two articles involved authors from
multinations [43,44]. The majority of the articles (58.8%) did not
specify the type of the theory or the level of the theory. Thirteen
(19.1%) articles specified their theorizing methods as concept anal-
yses (19.1%), and eight (11.8%) identified their methods as ground-
ded theory methods. Although the terms of “thematic analysis” and
“content analysis” were not included in the keywords for the
literature searches, five (7.4%) articles specified their methods as
thematic analyses and one (1.5%) article used both thematic and
content analyses. Among 68 reviewed articles, 47 (69.1%) imple-
mented theoretical discourses using theories and models as theo-
retical frameworks [45,46], conceptual frameworks [47,48], and
concepts underpinning the development of a study tool [49]. Only
the remaining 21 (30.9%) articles presented theories, models, or
concepts that they actually developed. Only these articles were
analyzed by purpose of theorizing, types of theorizing, sources of
theorizing, checking assumptions, and linkages to practice or
research (Table 2).

Results

Through the review and analysis process, four themes reflecting
the current trends in theoretical works related to transcultural
nursing were found: (a) purposes of exploring, defining and clarifying, and reflecting; (b) various theorizing methods; (c) multiple sources of theorizing; and (d) close linkages to nursing practice and research. These themes are presented as follows.

**Figure 1. Flow diagram for selection of the studies.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of studies (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study design</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>6 (8.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>3 (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>23 (33.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>5 (7.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnographic method</td>
<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-methods</td>
<td>28 (41.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>32 (47.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single country</td>
<td>5 (7.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>4 (5.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3 (4.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Brazil, China, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>England, Ethiopia, Germany, Honduras, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Jordan, Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicountry involvement</td>
<td>2 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounded theory</td>
<td>8 (11.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modified grounded theory</td>
<td>1 (1.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept analysis</td>
<td>13 (19.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic &amp; content analysis</td>
<td>6 (8.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>40 (58.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical discourse</td>
<td>46 (67.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual presentation</td>
<td>22 (32.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1 Characteristics of 68 Selected Studies.**

**Purposes of Exploring, Defining and Clarifying, and Reflecting**

The purposes of theorizing were classified in three categories based on the purpose statements of the articles: (a) "exploratory,"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors (published year)</th>
<th>Theory/model/concept</th>
<th>Purpose of theorizing</th>
<th>Types of theorizing</th>
<th>Sources of theorizing</th>
<th>Checking assumption</th>
<th>Presentation of theory/model/concept</th>
<th>Linkages to practice or research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saffner, Martyn, Momper, Loveland-Cherry, &amp; Low (2015) [54]</td>
<td>Framing sexual risk behavior</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Grounded theory (Glaser’s methodology)</td>
<td>Primary data (20 urban American Indian girls): Extending existing theory (Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: supports culturally responsive practice with urban American Indian girls. Research: guides the future study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pergert, Ekblad, Enskär, &amp; Björk (2008) [53]</td>
<td>Protecting professional composure: strategies used by nurses when their professional preparedness is overridden by family members’ emotional expressions</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Grounded theory (Glaser’s methodology)</td>
<td>Primary data (12 nurses in Swedish pediatric care)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: prepare nurses when encountering situations of overwhelming emotional expressions when caring for families with foreign background. Research: expands through future studies on understanding the underlying reasons for phenomenon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang, Yates, &amp; Prior (2009) [51]</td>
<td>Concept of accommodating cultural needs</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Grounded theory</td>
<td>Primary data (seven Australian oncology nurses)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: helps understand the process of how nurses accommodate cultural needs. Hospital policy: emphasized the needs for developing policy, guidelines on cultural care. Research: provided a list of nursing actions provided for culturally competent care. Research: emphasized further studies of emerged themes were suggested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sobel &amp; Metzler Sawin (2016) [50]</td>
<td>Theoretical model of culturally competent care with Hispanic patients</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Grounded theory</td>
<td>Primary data (26 Hispanic men and women)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: helped nurses for caring Chinese elderly with diabetes by understanding of key elements of the model. Research: serves as a theoretical basis for intervention or scale development studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerville (2007) [55]</td>
<td>The theory of cross-cultural endeavor in palliative care nursing</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Modified grounded theory</td>
<td>Primary data (10 palliative care nurses in U.K.)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: emphasized the needs of further education and supports on cross-cultural care. Research: two research questions suggested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liu (2012) [64]</td>
<td>Self-efficacy among Chinese elderly with DM</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Walker and Avant’s)</td>
<td>Secondary data (31 articles and dictionaries)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: helps nurses for caring Chinese elderly with diabetes by understanding of key elements of the model. Research: serves as a theoretical basis for intervention or scale development studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al-Omari &amp; Pallikkathayil (2008) [56]</td>
<td>Concept of psychological acculturation</td>
<td>Define &amp; clarification</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Walker and Avant’s)</td>
<td>Secondary data (scholarly literature and dictionaries)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No figure presented</td>
<td>Antecedents, defining attributes, and consequences of psychological acculturation presented. Practice/research: benefits from clarifying the dimensions of acculturation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors (published year)</td>
<td>Theory/model/concept</td>
<td>Purpose of theorizing</td>
<td>Types of theorizing</td>
<td>Sources of theorizing</td>
<td>Checking assumption</td>
<td>Presentation of theory/model/concept</td>
<td>Linkages to practice or research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baker (2011) [60]</td>
<td>Concept of acculturation</td>
<td>Current knowledge</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Morse's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (113 literature review)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No figure presented A new theoretical definition of acculturation including multidimensional concepts presented</td>
<td>Practice/research: provided a list of suggestions for current limitation and assumptions on acculturation that needs to be addressed before applying to practice settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dudas (2012) [63]</td>
<td>Cultural competence</td>
<td>Current knowledge</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Rodgers and Knafl's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (30 articles)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No figure presented Three dimensions of cultural competence (awareness, attitudes, behaviors) and related concepts were identified</td>
<td>Practice: supports nurses to achieve cultural competence Research: suggested future studies on tools to measure cultural competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foronda, Baptiste, Reinholdt, &amp; Ousman (2016) [61]</td>
<td>Cultural humility</td>
<td>Current knowledge</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Rodgers and Knafl's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (62 articles)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No figure presented Attributes, antecedents, consequences of cultural humility presented</td>
<td>Practice/research: firm understanding of the concept will benefit achieving better care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foronda (2008) [62]</td>
<td>Cultural sensitivity</td>
<td>Current knowledge</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Rodgers and Knafl's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (63 documents)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No figure presented Attributes, antecedents, consequences of cultural sensitivity presented</td>
<td>Practice/research: serves as a basis for theory generation and nursing practice in multicultural settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plummer &amp; Molzahn (2009) [57]</td>
<td>Attributes of quality of life</td>
<td>Define &amp; clarification</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Morse's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (26 articles)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: helps nurses to better understand the concept of quality of life Research: suggested more studies on exploring the quality of life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savage, van der Wal, &amp; Tjallinks (2013) [65]</td>
<td>Child vulnerability based on views of rural Tanzanian villagers Acculturation in Filipino Immigrants Within Health Context</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Walker and Avant's)</td>
<td>Primary data (interview of 32 participants, survey of 80 participants)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: the most vulnerable children can be identified from the model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serafica (2011) [59]</td>
<td>Acculturation in the Hispanic population</td>
<td>Define &amp; clarification</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Walker and Avant's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (20 articles)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: helps understand Filipino immigrants and provides adequate interventions Research: serves as the first step of developing comprehensive acculturation instruments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siatkowski (2007) [66]</td>
<td>Acculturation in the Hispanic population</td>
<td>Define &amp; clarification</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Walker and Avant's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (28 articles)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No figure presented Attributes, antecedents, consequences, case studies, and empirical referents of acculturation</td>
<td>Practice: contributes in achieving the goal of eliminating health disparities of Healthy People 2010 Research: future study suggested for (continued on next page)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authors (published year)</td>
<td>Theory/model/concept</td>
<td>Purpose of theorizing</td>
<td>Types of theorizing</td>
<td>Sources of theorizing</td>
<td>Checking assumption</td>
<td>Presentation of theory/model/concept</td>
<td>Linkages to practice or research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tjale &amp; Bruce (2007) [52]</td>
<td>Concept of holistic nursing care</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Concept analysis (Rodgers and Knafl's)</td>
<td>Secondary data (77 references)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>in the Hispanic population presented No figure presented Attributes, antecedents, consequences, and related concepts to holistic nursing care presented</td>
<td>the development of acculturation scale Practice: applying knowledge from the model helps holistic nursing care practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rukwong, Chirawatkul, &amp; Markovic (2007) [67]</td>
<td>Suk-Sam-Bai (quality of life perceptions)</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Thematic and content analysis</td>
<td>Primary data (interview of 16 disabled Thailand women and notes of observations)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: provides comprehensive perspectives for middle-aged women with disability Practice: provided understanding of internationally shared concept of nursing compassion Research: future studies on exploring cultural differences in compassion, country-specific research Organization: organizational culture necessary for nursing compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papadopoulos et al. (2017) [43]</td>
<td>Compassion in nursing practice</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke's)</td>
<td>Primary data (survey of 1,323 respondents from 15 countries)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: provided understanding of internationally shared concept of nursing compassion Research: future studies on exploring cultural differences in compassion, country-specific research Organization: organizational culture necessary for nursing compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho &amp; Chiang (2015) [69]</td>
<td>Motivated psychosocial and behavioral adaptation</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Secondary data (25 studies)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: suggested strategies for timely resilience Research: future studies necessary on migrant nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Im, Lee, &amp; Chee (2011) [68]</td>
<td>Factors Influencing the Use of Internet Cancer Support Groups model</td>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Primary data (preliminary quantitative study presented in other article) Secondary (systematic review presented in other article)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td>Practice: provides better care by incorporating cultural factors from the model when caring Asian Americans Research: suggested for future studies with larger sample size and instruments measuring the use of Internet Cancer Support Groups Practice: helps guide care for Arab Muslim patients Education: helps guide nursing education and improves images of the Arab world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lovering (2012) [38]</td>
<td>Crescent of Care nursing model</td>
<td>Define &amp; clarification</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>Secondary data (based on the study presented in other article, literature review)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Figure presented</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. DM = diabetes mellitus.
"defining and clarifying", and (c) "reflecting." Among 21 selected studies, 12 (57.1%) described exploratory purposes of theorizing by using phrases of "to explore" [50], "to investigate" [51], "to examine" [52], or "to gain knowledge" [53]. For example, the framing sexual risk behavior model was presented with the purpose of exploring the lesser known phenomenon of an urban, adolescent American Indian young female's sexual risk behaviors [54]. Also, the theory of Cross-Cultural Endeavor in Palliative Care Nursing was developed with the purpose of investigating how palliative care nurses care for people from diverse cultural backgrounds [55].

Five (23.8%) studies aimed at defining and clarifying the concepts by using phrases of "to define" [56], "to enhance clarity" [57], or "to present a detailed explanation" [58]. For example, the Acculturation in Filipino Immigrants within Health Context model was presented to clarify the definition of and the concepts related to acculturation in this population [59]. The concept of psychological acculturation was presented to define the concept and further discuss its implications in nursing practice [56].

Four (19.0%) articles showed theorizing to reflect the current knowledge in the specific areas. The terms used in the purpose statements included the following: "to provide a current understanding" [60], "to provide a current definition" [61], and "to uncover the current meaning" [62]. The current concepts of Cultural Competence [63], Cultural Humility [61], and Cultural Sensitivity [62] were presented in these studies.

Various Theorizing Methods

Among 21 selected articles, four [50,51,53,54] used the grounded theory approach; one [55] used the modified grounded approach; 11 [52,56,57,59–66] used concept analyses; two [43,67] used both thematic and content analyses; and three [58,68,69] did not specify the types of methods used for theorizing. Among four articles that used the grounded theory methodology, two specified their use of Glaser's methodology [53,54]. The article used the modified grounded theory did not provide its reference for the method nor did it mention in which part of the grounded theory method the modification was made [55]. About a half of the studies that used concept analyses followed the Walker and Avant's concept analysis method [56,59,64–66], the Rodgers and Knafl's method [52,61–63], and the Morse's method [57,60]. One of the two articles that used thematic analyses [43] specified the use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework for inductive thematic analyses.

Multiple Sources of Theorizing

Twelve (57.1%) studies used only the secondary data as the sources of theorizing. While some of the articles used dictionaries and articles [56,64], the majority of the works relied on the literature. Although some did not mention the details of literature being included in theorizing [56,58], the number of articles included in the theorizing process ranged between 20 [59] and 113 [60]. Seven (33.3%) articles used only the primary data for theorizing process. One article [43] used the data from a survey, and four articles used the data from interviews [50,51,54,55]. Others combined the data from a survey [65] and notes from observation [67] with their interview data for theorizing. Both the primary and secondary data were the sources of theorizing in two articles [54,68]. For example, for presenting the Factors Influencing the Use of Internet Cancer Support Groups model, quantitative data from a preliminary study and results from a systematic review were used for theorizing [68]. Only one article [54] claimed that the presented theory stemmed from a pre-existing model.

Among 21 articles, only five (23.8%) checked and described their assumptions of the theory/model/concepts presented [54,56,57,60,68]. For example, Saftner et al. (2015) described the assumptions made to develop their grounded theory; Baker (2011) described the assumptions in the definitions and the theory related to acculturation, and Im, Lee, and Chee (2011) described the assumptions of the presented model itself.

Clear Linkages to Nursing Practice or Research

Fourteen (66.7%) articles provided actual figures/illustrations of the theory/model/concept that they were presenting. The remaining seven articles described the findings from theorizing through presenting a new theoretical definition of a concept [60], dimensions of a concept [63], or the antecedents, attributes, consequences, and related concepts of the studied concepts [52,56,61,62,66]. All 21 articles described the linkages to nursing practice. The implication for nursing practice was mainly focused on a firm understanding of the presented theory/model/concept to help prepare nurses for better nursing care [54,61,64]. Some studies provided detailed strategies for nursing practice. For example, they provided a list of nursing actions for culturally competent care [50] and a list of suggestions for current limitations and assumptions on acculturation that need to be addressed before applying the concept to nursing practice [60].

Sixteen (76.2%) articles described the linkages to nursing research. The implication for nursing research included suggesting the theory/model/concept presented in the study as a theoretical basis for future research [54,62], as well as a guide for future interventions or scale development studies [59,63,64,66]. Also, the studies emphasized the need for expansion of the theory/model/concept through future research [50,53] and the need to explore the same concept in larger studies [68] or in other populations and settings [43,69]. Somerville (2007) provided specific research questions for future studies.

Linkages to the hospital policy were also made for a study on concepts of accommodating cultural needs [51]. The need for developing policies and guidelines for cultural care was suggested as well [51]. In addition, the linkages to health organizations were made in an article on compassion in nursing practices, emphasizing the needs for organizational culture that would promote nursing compassion [43]. The linkages to education were made in an article that presented the Crescent of Care nursing model, which was intended to help guide nursing education and improve images of the Arab world [58].

Discussion

This integrated literature review provided an overview of the current trends in theoretical works related to transcultural nursing. The theoretical works related to transcultural nursing obviously had purposes of exploring, defining and clarifying, and reflecting nursing phenomenon related to transcultural nursing. The theorizing process of the theoretical works related to transcultural nursing also involved various theorizing methods and multiple sources for theorizing. The theoretical works clearly provided implications for future research and practice.

These trends in the theoretical works in transcultural nursing are consistent with those observed in nursing theories in general [70]. Im and Chang (2012) indicated that the current theoretical works in nursing tended to develop and refine specific concepts, develop middle-range theories that focused on specific concepts, and develop instruments to specifically target individual concepts of theories and connect theories to specific areas of nursing practice. They also indicated the coexistence of all types of theoretical
works, the close linkages to nursing research, and international collaborative efforts made for the development of the theoretical works. In general, the findings of this review agree with the previously reported trends in nursing theories in general. However, the interpretation of these findings needs to be carefully made because only the articles published in refereed journals during the last 10 years were reviewed. Subsequently, theoretical works that have been published in the forms other than refereed journal articles were missing in this review/analysis. Also, as noted, the criteria for the review were limited to the components of theorizing suggested by Im (2005).

This article suggests the following implications for future theoretical development in transcultural nursing based on the findings of the review/analysis. First of all, the theoretical works in transcultural nursing need to continuously aim at multiple purposes as noted in this review. Nursing phenomena in transcultural nursing are evolving with advances in technologies, transportation, and communication. Subsequently, many nursing phenomena that were taken for granted have changed by time and place as well as by culture. Thus, the theoretical works in transcultural nursing need to reflect these changes by exploring, defining and clarifying, and adequately reflecting the changing phenomena.

Second, as noted previously, only few articles clearly described the level of theory/model/concept that was presented in the articles. Only the articles that presented theories from grounded theory approaches or the findings from concept analyses clearly described the methods used for theorizing in their works. Among 68 articles that were reviewed, more than a half of the articles did not provide information on the methods used for their theorizing process. Most of the 21 articles actually presented a theory/model/concept that was developed using a concept analysis or grounded theory approach. For future theoretical works related to transcultural nursing, the methods used for theorizing need to be specified and described in detail to provide a concrete ground for the theoretical works.

Third, most of the theories/models/concepts presented in the reviewed articles were developed from a single source of secondary data, such as a literature review. For a comprehensive and balanced understanding of nursing phenomena, the use of multiple sources for theorizing has been highly recommended [71]. Only two articles in this review indicated the use of two sources for theorizing [54,68]. Moreover, the theoretical works that were developed based on literature reviews tend to use a wide range of numbers of articles in their analysis and synthesis; some even did not report the number of articles that they reviewed. Also, the inclusion and exclusion criteria for selection of articles were rarely reported. For future theoretical works in transcultural nursing, multiple sources of theorizing need to be used while providing further details on the sources of theorizing.

Finally, the trials to link the theoretical works in transcultural nursing to nursing practice and research need to be continued. As mentioned, with changes in nursing phenomena involved in transcultural nursing, the theoretical works need to provide directions for nursing practice and research that appropriately and adequately reflect the changes in nursing phenomena. Subsequently, the efforts to link the theoretical works to nursing practice and research as well as to link the changes in nursing phenomenon to the theoretical works need to be continued.

Conclusion

This integrated literature review explored the current trends in theoretical works related to transcultural nursing published in the past 10 years. The findings suggest that the trends were generally consistent with the previously reported trends in nursing theories in general. The theoretical works related to transcultural nursing clearly defined the purposes of theorizing; used various theorizing methods; used different theorizing sources, mostly secondary data; and clearly explained the linkages to nursing practice, research, hospital policy, health organizations, and education. Based on the findings, four implications for future theoretical development in transcultural nursing were suggested: (a) the need to continuously aim at multiple purposes of theorizing, (b) the need to clearly describe the level of theory/model/concept in the study, (c) the need to use multiple sources for theorizing, and (d) the need to continuously describe the linkage of theoretical works to nursing practice and research.

Considering its definition and history, transcultural nursing has always been on the front line of dealing with global changes in nursing phenomena. Transcultural nursing is “a specialty created to answer the need for developing a global perspective in the practice of nursing in a world of interdependent nations and people.” [72] Efforts must be continuously made to further develop the theoretical works related to transcultural nursing to reflect the changes in this ever-evolving nursing world and to provide culturally sensitive and competent nursing care.

Conflicts of interest and source of funding

No conflict of interests has been declared by the authors.

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