

Nursing, study abroad, and globalization

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Nursing and Study Abroad In a changing, globalized world, it is becoming increasingly important for nurses to develop a global nursing ethic and take into consideration a plethora of cultural factors. This global ethic is based on an in-depth knowledge of what it means to be human, regardless of ethnic, cultural, religious, political, economic, gender and age differences (Santa Clara University 2010). According to a book written by Tschudin and Davis called *The Globalisation of Nursing*, The trend towards globalisation is creating challenges for nurses to provide holistic patient care, including having to deal with unfamiliar infectious diseases and the taboos of patients and their families often related to their religions and traditional values. " Because of globalization, it is becoming ever more important for nurses to offer a new level of scientific and humanistic care that takes a wide variety of differences into consideration and proposes the most effective and ethical form of care for people of different backgrounds. For nurses to fully understand other cultures and support an increasingly flat world, study abroad is a crucial step in a college education.

Studying abroad is the act of a student pursuing educational opportunities in a foreign country (Brown University, 2010). This method of education offers many benefits that are very important for students in the 21st century. By engaging oneself in another culture, one can get to know that culture first hand and understand the perceptions, beliefs and values that make that culture unique, as well as providing the opportunity to learn or enhance language skills through immersion. Study abroad also provides an awareness of one's place in that country as well as that country's place in the world, which is of the utmost importance with the prevalence of globalization. The

United States is currently undergoing a rapid demographic transformation. According to the US Census Bureau, while 81% of the U.

S population was white in 2000, this figure is projected to drop to 74% by 2050 with other cultures, especially Hispanic, moving up and composing a larger percentage of the U. S population (Shrestha and Heisler 2011). For both current nurses and aspiring nurses such as myself, the increasing racial and ethnic diversity will result in the need for consideration of cultural factors in patient assessment, treatment and interaction. Benjamin Barber described the importance of transnational, trans-ideological and transcultural aspects (Barber 2003). These same aspects should be applied to nursing.

Nurses must be able to adapt to a variety of conditions and situations in the workplace and should respect common sets of goals for both healthcare in the United States and also in developing countries. The WHO (World Health Organization) established the Millennium Development Goals that are setting the agenda for global development targets for world health. These four goals include monitoring poverty by recording the prevalence of underweight children, as well as child and maternal mortality; promoting gender equality by educating women about various health issues; reducing child and maternal mortality rates by offering health services to both; and combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases through activities directed towards prevention and treatment to lower their prevalence; and reducing guilt, dishonor and discrimination (UN Millennium Project 2006). By studying abroad in college, I believe that nurses can gain valuable skills that will prepare them for reaching these goals and educate them on how to care for and interact with patients of all races and backgrounds. A good life is one in <https://assignbuster.com/nursing-study-abroad-and-globalization/>

which I can make an impact in the world and assist in supporting my family. In this ideal life, I can have the satisfaction of helping people who may be less fortunate than me, make enough money that my family can live comfortably, spend quality time with my family, while also dedicating time to traveling and serving people in other cultures.

As an aspiring nurse, I believe that it will not just be my role to promote health within the nation but to promote health in developing countries as well in order to serve and assist in a globalized world. Friedman says, “ The bad news in Africa today, as well as rural India, China, Latin America, and plenty of dark corners of the developed world, is that there are hundreds of millions of people who have no hope and therefore no chance of making it into the middle class. ” (Friedman, 538)By studying abroad, especially through service or health related projects to less fortunate areas of the world, students can help make a difference in the lives of underprivileged people and become aware of the limitations and health issues through direct exposure and complete immersion in that culture. John Dewey identifies experience as the means and goal of education (Dewey 434). In reference to the direction that the educational system must take, he identifies the best movement as, “..

. orward to ever greater utilization of scientific method in the development of the possibilities of growing, expanding experience” (Dewey 434). Dewey viewed active learning as a key component of proper and effective education. By studying abroad, students can enhance their education through cultural immersion as compared to learning passively through a lecture or textbook. Reading about other cultures is not the same as <https://assignbuster.com/nursing-study-abroad-and-globalization/>

experiencing with all of your senses the daily needs and practices of a group of people.

This past February, I went with a group of students to a small, relatively primitive village called Cabo Pantoja in the Amazon jungle in Peru. During the two weeks we were there, we built a medical clinic and a small team, including myself, went to several of the surrounding villages to do medical work. I was shocked by the number of people who were dehydrated, malnourished and stricken by a variety of diseases. All of these health issues could have been prevented through better access to clean water, multivitamins, disinfectants and clean facilities.

Through this experience, I learned more about Latino culture than I ever could have from a traditional college class. I became acquainted with many of the health conditions, both chronic and acute, that affect the people who live in the secluded villages of the jungle. This experience opened my eyes to the stark contrast between the primitive living conditions in the Amazon jungle and the lavish lifestyle of highly developed countries such as America. The world cannot truly become flat unless all people have access to health care as a basic human right. After I graduate from Lynchburg College and become a registered nurse, I plan to work with the World Health Organization, American Red Cross, or Doctors Without Borders. My experiences in Peru were wonderful and completely life changing.

I left Peru completely inspired, and I decided that I wanted to minor in Spanish and eventually return to do medical work in Latin America. I am planning to study abroad in Costa Rica in the summer of 2012. In this

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program I will be taking intensive classes at the Universidad Nacional Autonoma in Heredia. This experience will undoubtedly enhance my language skills and knowledge of Latino culture. I also plan on studying abroad in St. Lucia where I will be able to do medical work with the people in this developing country.

I strongly believe that this will provide me with invaluable experiences that I will be able to use after college, both in my work serving overseas and within the United States. Works Cited Barber, Benjamin R. Jihad vs. McWorld. London: Corgi, 2003.

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