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Educating Canadian Undergraduate Nursing Students Abroad

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Global migration and the globalization of health care since the late 20th century have generated a growing need for nurses to develop an ability to provide care for multicultural populations at home and abroad (Afriyie Asenso, Reimer-Kirkham, & Astle, 2013; Dalmida et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2016). Canadian academic institutions are seeking ways to prepare their students, meet employer demands, and contribute to an increasingly global society (Colleges and Institutes Canada, 2018). Universities Canada (2018) strongly promotes student mobility across borders to develop students’ cross-cultural competencies and problem-solving skills.

Study abroad is most often viewed from a student-centered approach (Afriyie Asenso et al., 2013; Hartman, 2015). The benefits for students studying abroad are well documented in past literature reviews (Browne, Featherstone, & Medigovich, 2015). There remains a significant need for research regarding the perspectives of other stakeholders, including that of faculty members (Browne et al., 2015). There is an urgent call for research related to the evaluation of teaching and learning for diverse populations both at home and abroad, such as how to successfully integrate cultural and global competencies into nursing education (Wilson et al., 2016).

This qualitative, descriptive thesis aimed to address a gap in the literature by describing Canadian nursing faculty members’ perspectives related to successful teaching methods used in study abroad programs. Five nursing faculty members from different institutions in Western Canada participated in semi-structured, recorded, and transcribed telephone interviews during January or February, 2018. Faculty member participants had experiences teaching nursing students in seven different international countries between 2015 and 2017.

The research question guiding the study was, “How do nursing faculty members (who teach students abroad) describe their teaching methods?” Interview questions focused on how faculty members describe the pedagogical approaches they implemented. Participating faculty members were encouraged to speak freely about the topic. The goal was to generate rich, descriptive data that was a collection of nursing faculty members’ perspectives on teaching methods that they utilized while participating in international teaching experiences. The particular focus was teaching methods that they found to be effective.

International nursing placements were found to be associated with required community health nursing, acute care, or final preceptorship nursing courses. Students were in their second, third, or fourth and final year of their nursing programs. One faculty member shared teaching methods used in an interdisciplinary study abroad program that nursing students take as an elective. One of the international placements involved a two-way, reciprocal exchange of students, whereas the remaining six international placements involved one-way movement of students from Canada to the host country. Two primary themes related to teaching abroad emerged from analysis: (1) pedagogical and theoretical underpinnings, and (2) teaching strategies and activities to facilitate students’ learning.

This completed thesis provides a description of Canadian faculty members’ perspectives on teaching methods in study abroad programs for undergraduate nursing students. It focused upon how international placements for nursing students are being successfully designed and carried out. While this research focused on describing teaching methods for undergraduate nursing placements, it also included teaching methods for interdisciplinary, community health promotion and service learning. Teaching abroad is multi-
faceted and occurs in a vast variety of contexts. Findings are to be assessed by interested faculty members for transferability to specific programs. Administrators and leaders of nursing faculties may find the study helpful in reviewing some of the potential benefits of study abroad programs and for increased awareness regarding areas for caution. The research may also be of interest to students who are considering being involved as participants in study abroad programs.

Title:
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Keywords:
Study Abroad, Teaching Methods and Undergraduate Nursing Education

References:


Abstract Summary:
Many Canadian undergraduate nursing programs are offering student opportunities to study abroad. This Master of Nursing thesis research is focused upon describing Canadian nursing faculty members’ perspectives on successful teaching methods used in recent study abroad programs.

Content Outline:
Educating Canadian Undergraduate Nursing Students Abroad

Introduction

1. Significance of the research

Background
1. Canadian nursing ethics and curricula in relation to study abroad

Research Design

1. Qualitative description methodology
2. Sampling and recruitment
3. Data collection and analysis

Findings

1. Demographics
2. Themes
   1. Pedagogical and theoretical underpinnings
   2. Teaching strategies and activities to facilitate students' learning

Discussion

1. Implications of the research
2. Limitations of the research
3. Areas for future research

Conclusion

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**Author Summary:** Stephanie has a clinical background in pediatrics. She transitioned into nursing education in 2014. Since then, she has taught nursing students in a variety of placement settings, including urban pediatric acute care, rural adult medical/surgical acute care, residential care, and internationally.

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Author Summary: Beth’s research interests include exemplary online teaching and using arts-based teaching strategies to enhance learner engagement, social presence, sense of community and interaction. Beth has co-authored 2 textbooks related to effective teaching including Teaching Health Professionals Online (2013) and Creative Clinical Teaching in the Health Professions (2015) with Park and Melrose.