Service Learning: Symbiosis of Community as Classroom and Achievement of Disease Prevention

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INTRODUCTION

Health is a state of well-being of individuals. It must reflect the ability of individuals or groups to perform their daily activities in culturally expressed, beneficial, and patterned lifeways. Good health is reciprocal to individuals’ productivity. Illness and disability, on the other hand, can impose an indirect economic burden on a country where many individuals of working age are unable to work.

METHODS

The Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) program at UDC is the setting for community as classroom. The nursing students followed the pathway to better health that includes primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention initiatives (Schmidt & Brown, 2016). They collaborate with nutrition students to individualize community members’ teaching on topics related to nutrition for weight management and with health education students to individually tailor exercise regimens to help community members with disease control (Jean-Baptiste & Asongwed, 2018).

RESULTS

The RN to BSN program at UDC integrates intentional reflective activities undergirded by service-learning pedagogy in the curriculum to balance service and learning objectives through a process of dialogue and relationship building. The program partners with other health stakeholders in the community and joins other programs in the college and departments across the university to promote and improve the health of the residents. The students apply open system theory promoting interaction and interdependence. They also collaborate with other disciplines and programs to provide wholistic care to individuals in their societal context or community.

CONCLUSIONS

Service learning justifies: a) mutuality of service that is equally beneficial to the service givers as well as the service recipients, b) reciprocity or encounter of givers and receivers who are reciprocally connected, supporting the principle of “to be doer or the done-to is to respond to the other in oneself”, and c) solidarity to perceiving others as fellow sufferers. Finally, moving service learning to the center of nursing students’ practice can lead to increase trust and participation in research studies for the discovery of effective management or a cure for health issues that specifically affect the region’s residents in significant percentage.

REFERENCES
