The India Connection: Teaching Nursing With Limited Resources in a Rural Culturally Diverse Setting

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Purpose:
The purpose of this paper is to share information with nurse educators who are interested in initiating and building a global transcultural experience for students and faculty.

Methods:
In 2008 a collaborative program was established between a rural faith-based university in northern India and a large urban university in the United States. Initial steps in forming the collaboration included discussions between the two parties, an onsite assessment of the site and ultimately US faculty teaching at the site. In addition, several graduate students in nursing education from the US were able to complete their student teaching practicum at the site. The authors will discuss some of the challenges that arose as a Memorandum of Understanding was created, and they prepared to teach the students in this low resource situation. Examples will be described. The first relates to teaching physical assessment which was a completely new experience for these students. Respecting cultural norms including accessing body areas through traditional garments posed a problem while performing some of the exams. Actual physical assessment equipment could not be located although it turned out that one ancient ophthalmoscope was found. Another example involves using simulation. Early in the program, faculty from the US offered a full simulation workshop using models on loan from a known company with offices in India. Since the Indian school had no budget for high fidelity simulation models, low-tech simulation was introduced to faculty and students. This included activities and scenarios which could be performed without the use of expensive manikins and equipment. Instead of using models, School of Education students were trained to be standardized patients.

Results:
The overall progress of this project will be described. Planned teaching onsite by US faculty, ongoing online sessions between students in the United States and India and planning and participating in a yearly international conference in India. Barriers to an international endeavor such as this will also be discussed including obtaining resources, preparation of faculty and students and adjustments to living and working in a diverse culture.

Conclusion:
A global project involving two very diverse nursing programs involves careful planning and flexibility. Using lessons learned from the experiences of others will enhance the value of establishing future global alliances.
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Keywords:
Collaboration, Culturally diverse and Global

Abstract Summary:
Description of a trans cultural collaborative project involving a large urban university in the US with a small faith-based university in the Himalayas in India. Setting up the project, description of teaching activities with limited resources, challenges and successes will be described.

References:

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