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Building Nursing Research Capacity in Ethiopia Through a Collaborative Doctoral Education Program

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Purpose: In 2015, Emory University School of Nursing joined with the College of Health Sciences at Addis Ababa University (AAU) to launch the first PhD in Nursing program in Ethiopia. An ongoing objective of the partnership has been to establish a strong cadre of Ethiopian nurse scientists that will eventually sustain the PhD in Nursing program at AAU and mentor the next generation of nurse researchers. Students are trained as health system leaders, learning strategies for the design, evaluation, and implementation of clinical practice innovations for Ethiopia's unique population health needs. The purpose of this presentation is to review the PhD program's design, its progress to date, and ways in which this global partnership might serve as an academic model in other resource-limited settings.

Methods: Several factors have contributed to the success of the Emory-AAU PhD in Nursing program. First, a rigorous admissions process ensures that only the most qualified students from a large application pool matriculate into the program. Second, distance learning technologies maximally engage AAU students in active, real-time learning by enabling their participation in Emory-held classes. Next, students are required to have a faculty mentor with research interests similar to their own. Mentors interact with students on a regular basis to ensure their successful progression. Two to three AAU students visit Emory campus annually to attend an intensive writing seminar, work with their Emory faculty mentor, professionally socialize with other PhD students, and observe nursing practice in their respective areas of clinical interest. Last, an advisory board with faculty members from AAU and NHWSN provide ongoing leadership and address challenges as they arise.

Results: The first PhD in Nursing cohort entered the program in 2015, with two to three students admitted annually thereafter. Eleven AAU students have been enrolled in the program since its inception. Of this number, five have successfully defended their dissertation proposal, three have obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, and one student graduated in August 2019. All students are successfully meeting the required program milestones. An unexpected benefit to the program has been the decision of AAU student leaders to address regulatory issues and scope of practice at the national level; their advocacy is helping to elevate the status of nursing and make the workplace safer for nurses in Ethiopia.

Conclusion: The Emory-AAU PhD in Nursing program is an innovative model for a global academic partnership, which is enhancing public health and educational outcomes in Ethiopia. This model may have points of relevance to other low-resource settings, though potential applications outside of Ethiopia have yet to be evaluated.

Title:

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Keywords:

Doctoral Education, Global partnerships and Resource-limited settings

Abstract Summary:

Emory University School of Nursing joined with the College of Health Sciences at Addis Ababa University (AAU) to launch the first PhD in Nursing program in Ethiopia. This presentation highlights the PhD program's design, progress, and ways this global partnership might serve as an academic model in other resource-limited settings.

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Author Summary: My work has received recognition in highly visible and competitive conferences both nationally and internationally. To date, I have presented at over 75 conferences, 7 international, 41 national and 27 regional conferences.