The purpose of this presentation is to present an evolving strategy, and framework, to make nursing scholarship globally relevant in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The presentation emphasizes the need for professional nursing organizations to engage in the development of clinical practice and professional development standards in LMICs. Although nursing educational standards are slowly diffusing throughout the world through the efforts of the World Health Organization and other international entities, there continues to be a notable absence of evidence-based practice and professional standards in most LMICs. Furthermore, there is a noticeable absence of frameworks to support collaborations, incorporating mentoring, to develop capacity and leadership in LMICs. These frameworks and standards are not only critical to appropriately regulate the nursing profession, but they are also essential to improve the overall quality of nursing services provided to patients and communities and to advance nursing as a truly global profession.

Background

More than two decades ago, scholars determined nursing science was at a critical juncture with an urgent need to develop nursing knowledge relevant to the health of the global community. Considering the rapid knowledge expansion in North American professional nursing and the economic and political environments, the concept of “nursing science now faces the challenge of moving to its next phase of development, which we call ‘becoming globally relevant.’ This movement entails a variety of activities and changes in the way we do science, a movement that should be shared by scientists in the U.S. and internationally” (p. 15). Again, early in the new millennium scholars called for the development of a “universal holistic model of scholarship” for the larger nursing identity as required to respond to the impact of globalization (Riley, Beal, Levit, & McCausland, 2002). Yet, in this new millennium, there is little evidence to demonstrate this challenge has been addressed. Today, as in the past, scholars such as Meleis (1993, 2014) call on American nurses to confront the need to develop nursing knowledge relevant to the health of the global community.

Discussion

Considering the previous work by scholars (e.g., Boyer, 1990; Fawcett, Watson, Neuman, Walker, & Fitzpatrick, 2001; Glaisick, 2000; Schon, 1985, 1995) and the new calls to reconsider the globalization of knowledge based on fieldwork (e.g., Farmer, Kleiman, Kim, & Basilio, 2013; McKinley, & Fitzpatrick, 2012), this presentation defines a pragmatic agenda for the globalization of nursing scholarship in LMICs. In addition, the presentation describes how professional nursing organizations can act as agents for change by providing guidance and knowledge. In a contemporary approach to stimulate significant progress through the scholarship, international professional nursing organizations can actively diffuse modern nursing innovation to strengthen LMIC nursing practice.

Describing the lack of reach and relevance of American nursing scholarship that results from missing dissemination channels, Zwaner (1987) describes nursing scholars as “... the oracles of the international academic nursing community. As a consequence, in many instances, their ambiguous tendencies, unclarified ideas, and conceptions are accepted as bona fide facts” (p. 33). Through the Global Nursing Scholarship into Action (GNSIA) Framework, American nursing scholars are more than oracles; they become mentors through formal collaborations in LMICs. Contemporary American nursing scholarship can have an important global impact.