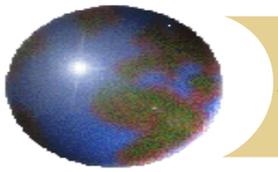


*Value of Online Group Reflection following
International Service Learning Experiences:
I Never Thought of That!*

Eileen M. Smit, RN, MSN, FNP-BC
Mary Jane Tremethick, PhD, RN, MCHES, FAAHE
Northern Michigan University
Marquette, MI U.S.A



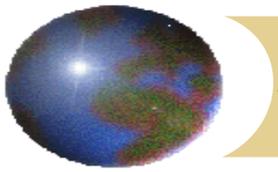
Faculty Disclosure

✿ Eileen M. Smit, RN, MSN, FNP-BC

- ✦ Conflict of interest: None
- ✦ Employer: Northern Michigan University
- ✦ Sponsorship or commercial support: Northern Michigan University

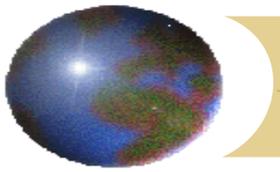
✿ Mary Jane Tremethick, PhD, RN, MCHES, FAAHE

- ✦ Conflict of interest: None
- ✦ Employer: Northern Michigan University
- ✦ Sponsorship or commercial support: Northern Michigan University



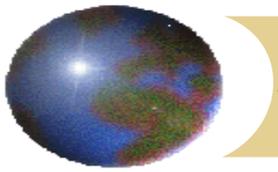
Learner Objectives

- ✦ At the completion of the presentation the learner will be able to:
 - ▣ Discuss the value of reflection as a teaching strategy
 - ▣ Describe the results of a qualitative study of individual and group student reflections following an international service learning program
 - ▣ Discuss implications for practice



Study

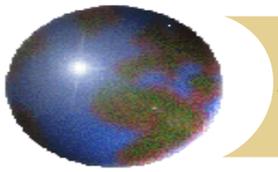
- ✦ Exploratory descriptive study design was used to describe and identify themes of student reflections and **to compare the level of reflection between two groups** of students' following a cultural immersion service learning program in Honduras



Reflection as Learning Tool

- ✦ Reflection: Method to access, make sense of and learn from experience (Johns, 1995)
- ✦ Widely accepted learning tool in professional education, particularly in nursing (Plack, 2005)

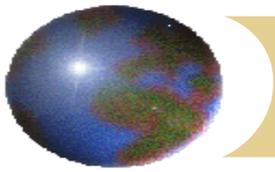




Reflection



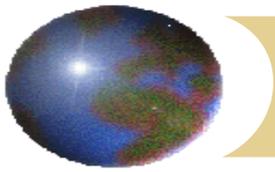
- ✦ Providing students with the opportunity to reflect on their clinical experiences promotes and increases experiential learning (Benner, Sutphen, Leonard, & Day, 2010)
- ✦ Particularly important when experiences challenge individual's previously held beliefs and practices



Background



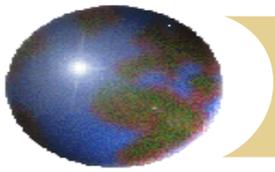
- ❖ Interdisciplinary course that focused on students developing an understanding of the world as a diverse and interrelated community



Background

- ✦ Students expected to explore the personal/professional impact of international service-learning experiences.

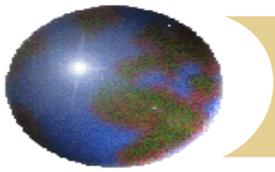




Background

- ✚ Student Activities
 - ✚ Teaching in schools and clinics
 - ✚ Conducting physical assessments
 - ✚ Visits to health care facilities

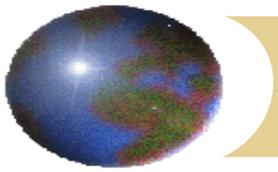




Back ground

- ✚ Student activities:
 - ▣ Advocacy with local government officials
 - ▣ Meetings with community members





Background

- ✚ Use of reflection as teaching strategy
 - ▣ Daily group discussions while in Honduras
 - Students together
 - ▣ Written reflections after return to United States
 - Students off campus
 - Completed during the two weeks after return
 - Individual vs. group discussion guidelines

Student Guidelines on Questions related to Reflection.

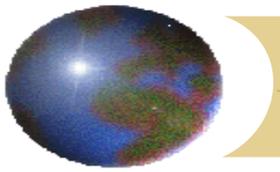
2009: Students will write an individual reflection paper after our return from Honduras

2012: Students will participate in an on-line group reflection discussion after our return from Honduras.

Both Groups: The reflection discussion encompasses all of the course objectives. It provides an overview of the student's experiences related to the course. This is a personal discussion and does not require reference citations and should be written in first person. Each day you will be journaling about experiences. Journal entries can include your activities, feelings, thoughts, judgments and what you learned about yourself. Your journal entries will likely be helpful in participating in this discussion.

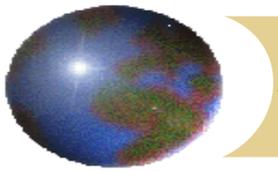
Areas that you might consider include the following but you are not expected to address each topic or to answer the questions as if they are a list. These are meant to help you focus your thoughts but you should focus your paper in a manner that is meaningful to you.

- Reflections on the relationship of your experience to expectations for the trip.
- Reflections on how the trip relates to your career goals.
- Reflections on the challenges you experienced. Did you expect to experience these challenges?
- Do you believe this experience will affect your ways of thinking, plans or goals for the future?
- Are there questions you have as a result of the experience?
- What could have been done to better prepare you for this experience?
- What could have been done better to support you during the experience?
- What were positive aspects of the experience for you?
- What were negative aspects of the experience for you?
- If you were to describe the experience to other students, what would you say is the value of the experience? Who should participate in this experience and who should consider other options?
- Reflections related to the group and group processes are also very relevant to the experience.



Study Participants

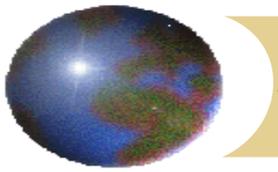
- ✦ First group consisted of 14 students who traveled to Honduras in 2009 and wrote individual papers reflecting upon their experiences and learning after they had returned to the United States.
- ✦ Second group consisted of 19 students who traveled to Honduras in 2012 and participated in an online group reflection discussion of their experiences and learning after they returned to the United States.



Assessment of Level of Reflection

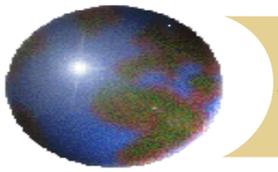
- ✦ Four category scheme developed by Kember, McKay, Sinclair and Wong (2008)
- ✦ Can be used for research purposes to determine effectiveness of approaches that promote reflection
(Teaching & Educational Development Institute, 2013)

- ✦ Four categories
 1. Non-reflection
 2. Understanding
 3. Reflection
 4. Critical reflection



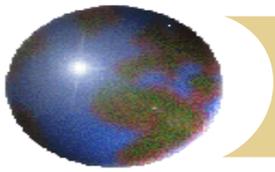
Findings

- ✦ The students who participated in the online group reflection discussion were more likely to **critically reflect** upon their experiences and the impact of these experiences on future practice than the students who wrote individual reflection papers.



Findings

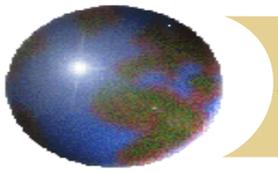
- ❖ Two of the 14 students (14%) who wrote individual papers reflecting upon their experiences and learning after they had returned to the United States demonstrated critical reflection of their experiences.
- ❖ Thirteen of 19 students (68%) who participated in an online group reflection discussion of their experiences and learning after they returned to the United States demonstrated critical reflection of their experiences.



Findings

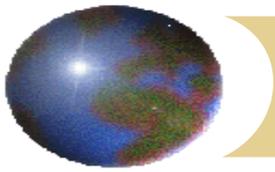
- ✚ Students who participated in the online group discussion reflected upon more topics than the students who wrote individual reflection papers.





Findings

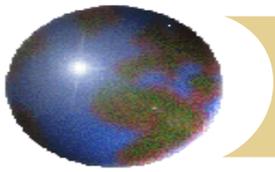
- ✦ The students participating in online group reflection became aware that other students shared similar responses to their experiences
- ✦ Responses from other students prompted their further reflection.
- ✦ Written reflection allowed them to take time to read/consider other's comments.



Findings

- ✚ After further analysis, the 15 topics of student reflections were consolidated and collapsed into six (6) themes



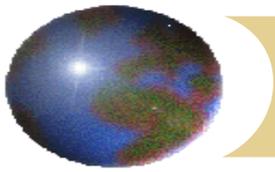


Findings

Themes

- ❑ Appreciation of the Honduran culture and people (29 students)
- ❑ 2: Impact of Poverty and American Influence on Honduran Community. (24 students)
- ❑ 3: Increased awareness and valuing of the own resources (22 students)



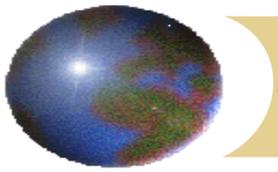


Findings (continued)

⊕ Themes

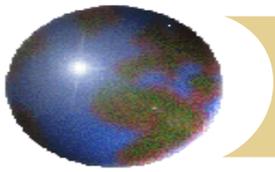
- ❏ 4: Impact of experience on career (19 students)
- ❏ 5: Wanting to do more to help (17 students)
- ❏ 6: Challenges of service learning experience (14 students)





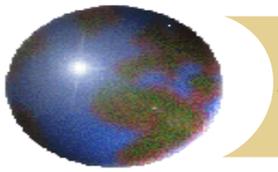
Implications for Practice

- ✚ Reflection as teaching strategy promotes critical thinking
- ✚ Group discussion of reflections may promote critical thinking to greater extent than individual reflections
- ✚ Online group discussion of experiences among students encourages meaningful dialogue and promotes broader/wider review of experiences



References

- ✦ Benner, P., Sutphen, M., Leonard, V. & Day, L. (2010) Educating nurses: A call for radical transformation. Josey-Bass: San Francisco, CA.
- ✦ Johns, C. (1995). The value of reflective practice for nursing. *Journal of Clinic Nursing* , 4, (1), 23-30.
- ✦ Kember, D., McKay, J., Sinclair, K. & Wong, F. (2008). A four-category scheme for coding and assessing the level of reflection in written work. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33, (4), 369–379.
- ✦ Plack, M, Driscoll, M. Blissett, S, McKenna, R. & Plack, T. (2005). A method for assessing reflective journal writing. *Journal of Allied Health* 34, 4, 199-208.
- ✦ Teaching and Educational Development Institute. (2013) A U(niversity) of Q(ueensland) assessment brief on “A four-category scheme for coding and assessing the level of reflection in written work”. <http://www.tedi.uq.edu.au/>



Questions? Contact Information



Eileen M. Smit: esmit@nmu.edu

Mary Jane Tremethick: mtremeth@nmu.edu