

# Why Do Nursing Students Want to Participate in Education Abroad Programs?

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# Disclosures

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# Objectives

- Discuss previously published literature that has researched student motivations to study abroad.
- Discuss theories of motivation
- Discuss findings of graduate student explanations of their motivations to participate in an education abroad program in Nicaragua and Dominican Republic
- Discuss how the findings can help nurse educators to better plan and prepare students for their education abroad experiences.

# Background

- Education abroad research primarily focused on the effects or outcomes of study abroad participation on the students involved in these programs
- Very limited attention has been devoted to studying factors affecting students' intention and decision to study abroad.

# Background

- To organize the programs to optimize the students' experience, imperative to be aware of what these factors are and how they influence students' decisions
- Knowing, in advance, what students seek to gain from their education abroad experience may provide guidance on how to design education abroad programs to best facilitate a student's intercultural development.

# Why ask about motivations?

- Many motivation theories available
- Volunteer motivation provides better understanding of why individuals volunteer to participate in education abroad experiences
- If motivations are known, programs can better attract participants by developing experiences that match specific functional motives

# Motivations and Nursing

- Nursing and motivation: looked at learning motivation, motivation related to workplace, motivations for becoming a nurse.
- Altruism was a major theme
- Personal/self development was viewed as equally important as the desire to care.
- People motivated by desire to help others rather than personal interest or challenges were predisposed to choose a nursing career

# Nursing and Motivations to Study Abroad

- Students appeared to have a sincere desire to make a difference
- Majority approached their international clinical placement in ways that could be construed as paternalistic to some degree, rather than reflective of broader professional imperatives such as social justice.



# Two Dimensional Models

- Two-dimensional models distinguish between two different categories of volunteer motives.
  - **Egoistic and altruistic motives**
    - Egoistic motives related to the attainment of tangible rewards such as career-related benefits. Individuals motivated by egoistic motives engage in volunteer service for their own welfare.
    - Individuals motivated by altruistic motives engage in volunteerism with the purpose of augmenting the welfare of others.

# Two Dimensional Models

- Two other possible categories are extrinsic and intrinsic motives.
  - Intrinsically motivated behaviors are inherently satisfying and the individual engages in the activity because of the inherent satisfaction.
  - Activities that are extrinsically motivated are performed because of the external outcome that it yields.

# Methods

- Interpretive Description (Thorne et al., 1997)
- 30 applications read and re-read
- Significant statements extracted
- Themes generated
- Field notes/reflective journal

# Nursing Students and Study Abroad

- The motivating factors that were noted in the review were:
  - Participation in previous education abroad experiences,
  - Hoping to improve their clinical skills
  - Wanting to experience another culture first hand
  - Developing cultural sensitivity
  - Making a difference
  - Aspiring to improve their Spanish speaking abilities.

# Previous Education Abroad Experiences

- *I would like to participate in an international nursing experience because I completed a semester abroad as an undergraduate, and it was the hands-down the most memorable experience of my college career.*
- *During college, I was fortunate to spend two semesters abroad.*
- *In college I spent a summer doing medical volunteering in Oaxaca, Mexico and an academic semester abroad in Quito, Ecuador.*

# Improvement of Clinical Skills

- *I know I would benefit from a week of intensive pediatric practice with the support of experienced pediatric practitioners and faculty*
- *Participating in the international nursing project in Nicaragua is an opportunity to put my new pediatric assessment skills to wonderful use to help promote health in the children of Managua via health screenings*

# Experiencing Another Culture

- *The prospect of using my nursing license in a foreign country while discovering a new culture is thrilling.*
- *As someone who grew up in an incredibly homogenous, small town and never had the privilege of traveling to different areas of the country or world, I am well-aware of the limited experience I have with people of different cultural backgrounds.*

# Develop Cultural Sensitivity

- *It is my hope that my short time in Nicaragua will provide me with additional experience that will help me develop into a more culturally-sensitive nurse practitioner*
- *Having experience as a clinician in Nicaragua will add to my cultural understanding for the future patients I see in the U.S., as well as help me improve skills and knowledge that will be essential as a clinician in Latin America*



# Making a Difference

- *Whenever I travel to poor places or spend time with poor children I have a renewed sense of hope to make the world a better place*
- *I believe this is an opportunity where I can truly make a difference within a community*

# Improving My Spanish Skills

- *An immersive opportunity like this one would not only improve my Spanish skills, but it would also offer vocabulary specific to healthcare.*
- *I would welcome the opportunity to practice my Spanish in Nicaragua so that I may improve the quality of care I provide*
- *The daily exposure to Spanish will help me develop the language skills that I feel will make me a better health care provider*

# Enhance Job Prospects

- *This experience will help me to focus my passion and begin to develop my individual role in terms of what I will ultimately contribute as an international nurse.*
- *I hope to continue pursuing my interest in international nursing long after I graduate*
- *I feel that my experience in Nicaragua would help me develop into a stronger FNP. It is my intention to work in a community health center (CHC) as a FNP after graduation*

# Discussion

- Findings consistent with previous literature:
  - functional motives (improve Spanish, improve clinical skills)
  - role identity (to become a better nurse practitioner)
- Personal/self development was viewed as equally important as the desire to care (role development to become a better NP).

# Discussion

- Students motivated by desire to help others rather than solely personal interest were predisposed to choose a nursing career (want to make a difference)
- Motives to participate in an international clinical placement could be construed as paternalistic to some degree (making a difference)

# Conclusions

- Reasons for coming into nursing were similar to reasons for wanting to participate in education abroad experiences
- These findings can help educators plan for experiences that incorporate student motivations into sound education abroad programs.
- Next steps—Study Undergraduate Applications

# Preguntas? Questions?

