Exploring the Impact of International Field School Experiences on Nursing Students and their International Hosts

GOAL: To analyze the impact of ILEs on students and host institutions in the Philippines and New Zealand

STUDY OBJECTIVES
1. To describe host country’s perceptions of benefits and detriments of ILEs
2. To understand student’s motivating factors for pursuing ILEs
3. To explore student’s learning in relation to: A) Personal and professional growth
   B) Global health knowledge- using adapted Riner’s framework (2011)
4. To measure student’s success rates in subsequent clinical placements

RESPONDENTS
Filipino Host Nurses (n=42)  New Zealand Host Nurses (n=20)
Camosun 1st & 2nd Year Nursing Students on 5 week overseas clinical practicum in the Philippines (n=16)  New Zealand (n=6)

METHODS
Structured Questionnaires (n=62)
4 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) ~2 pre & 2 post ILEs
32 Critical Reflections (CRs) Fluid Survey (FS) (n=8)

ANALYSIS
Triangulation methodology  Excel & Fluid survey
Qualitative data analysis was guided by Thorne’s (2016) Interpretive Description (ID) methodology: ID is an approach that addresses the complexity arising out of nursing practice research and supports the excavation of subsequent consolidated and diverse data.

STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS

MOTIVATING FACTORS
- Exposure to poverty
- Exposure to death
- “Finding my passion!”
- Cultural awareness
- Divergent health systems
- Creative with resources
- Tropical disease knowledge
- “What does unstable look like?”
- Understanding indigenous beliefs
- Choice of teachers
- “Pushed out of my comfort zone”
- More SDOH
- Learning to teach
- Different global perspectives
- Guidance from teachers

GLOBAL HEALTH KNOWLEDGE
- Pre-departure- few students could identify one Social Determinant of Health (SDOH)
- Post trip: most described 8/12 SDOH (CRs) including poverty, lack of hygiene, social supports, literacy, income, political/social climates, resource allocation, culture, overcrowding and equal access to care
- They witnessed SDOH in action every day: “The biggest enemy is poverty” (FS)
- Students described dengue fever, TB, community-acquired pneumonia and pediatric diarrheal disease as important infectious diseases
- Challenges associated with influencing the chain of disease transmission (lack of running water, soap, supplies)

TEACHING AND LEARNING
- Students perceived health promotion to impoverished populations as more critical due to the urgency of preventing imminent mortality versus distant morbidity (teaching school kids in Canada smart drink choices to prevent diabetes in later life)
- There was an undercurrent of profound student learning through their teaching process
- Teaching at risk populations was a highlight in student’s critical reflections
- Students taught oral rehydration therapy, vector control, hand hygiene, wound care, diet, diabetes, accident prevention, newborn care and obstetric complications
- Cultural beliefs were uncovered around witchcraft associated with contracting Dengue fever
- Students described communication, language and cultural barriers to mutual understanding

CULTURAL COMPORMENT
- Ongoing struggles acknowledging paternalistic Western arrogance were identified and require further exploration
- There was a difference in the degree of cultural shock experienced by students from the Philippines versus New Zealand
- Very complex journey revealing considerable professional and personal growth
- “We are getting comfortable with the uncomfortable!” FGD
- Stepping beyond commonly held assumptions students gained greater awareness “as an outsider to the culture”
- Ethical challenges were raised and questioned in all data sources
  - “The trip did an amazing job of not only solidifying our knowledge but also pushing us out of our boundaries and challenging our beliefs” FS

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS
1. Support for student assumptions regarding ethical challenges, cultural competency and public health
2. Develop a comprehensive tool-kit for instructors and students
3. Ensure a formative debriefing (and/or counselling) across the entire ILE
4. A comprehensive skills-workshop upon return is warranted
5. Future data analysis will apply a post-colonial lens

References