

Public Abstract

First Name:Laura

Middle Name:Michele

Last Name:Streeter

Adviser's First Name:Lynelle

Adviser's Last Name:Phillips

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

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Title:THE LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF A SHORT TERM STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE ON BACCALAUREATE PREPARED NURSING STUDENTS

Cultural competency is a crucial component of baccalaureate nursing education to support patient-centered practice (Calvillo, Clark, Ballantyne, Pacquiao, Purnell, & Villarruel 2009). Studying abroad is associated with short-term gains in students' cultural competency; however, little research has addressed whether cultural competence is affected long-term, particularly when the study abroad experience is relatively short (Phillips, Bloom, Gainey, & Chiocca, in press). Therefore, the question that drove this study was: what are the long-term effects of a short-term study abroad experience on baccalaureate nursing students?

The participants in this study were practicing nurses (N=21) who had traveled to Ghana for two-week study abroad experiences as senior nursing students between 2011 and 2015. Qualitative data (collected immediately post-travel) with these participants revealed four key themes of transformation consistent with cultural transformation: adaptability, cultural competency, understanding of social determinants of health, and mutual partnerships with patients. Social media was used to enroll participants in a study conducted over a one-month period in Fall 2016. Of the 45 contacted, 28 responded and consented to participate and 21 completed data collection. A series of Likert-style questions (5=Strongly Agree, 1=Strongly Disagree) were used to measure these nurses' perceived immediate post-travel change, versus their perceptions of the sustained changes over time. Results supported that the four key themes of cultural transformation persisted over time. Creating mutual partnerships and understanding social determinants of health had the highest mean score and lowest standard deviation (mean= 4.76, standard deviation= 0.44).