Cultural Engagement: Baccalaureate Nursing Students' Experience in Appalachia

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Cultural Engagement

Baccalaureate Nursing Students' Experience in Appalachia
Researchers

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Purpose: To provide educators with strategies to implement a transcultural experience into their curriculum

Outcomes:

• Appreciate the affective student learning gained through participation in a transcultural experience

• Consider implementing a similar experience at your institution based on the format and strategies discussed
Overview of Experience

- Offered as a nursing elective
- Six day trip to rural Appalachia
- Student preparation before leaving on excursion
Nursing Elective

• Increase cultural competence
• Identify personal attitudes, beliefs and values
• Discuss health promotion and illness management
• Develop, organize and provide health care activities for community residents
Preparing Ahead of Time

• Raising financial support
• Community networking
• Collecting clothes and household items and storing them
• Organizing menu and food selections
Student Preparation

• Attend orientation and planning meetings
  • Learn about the culture and healthcare needs
• Develop a teaching project
• Participate in immersion experiences
• Debriefing
• Power point presentation
BACKGROUND OF STUDY

- Service Learning
- Cultural Immersion
Aim and Purpose of Study

Provide students with an opportunity to share their affective learning experiences.

Share insights about the perceived value of the experience.

Offer curriculum strategies to those interested in implementing a service learning project.
Methodology

Descriptive

Phenomenological
Participants were recruited by a member of the research team.

Participants were asked to respond to six open-ended questions in narrative form.
Participants

Convenience Sample

Junior and Senior BSN Students

Age

Gender
Describe what your incentive was to enroll.

Recount what you imagined this experience would be like.

Describe what it was really like.

Give an account of what you learned.

Tell me what you learned about yourself.

Tell me what you learned about working with others.
Data Analysis

• Van Manen’s procedural steps were used for data analysis

• Thematic analysis for qualitative statements
Themes and Subthemes

Becoming a group

Forming bonds
Having a purpose
Empowering others to make change
“Groups are not easy to work with but this was a wonderful group. We all tried really hard to get along and work together.”

“By working with others, you can learn so much more than on your own. It took participation from the entire team to come up with creative ideas and really give our best effort.”

“I learned that different people with varying backgrounds and faiths, can unite in an empowering way to make a difference in a culture that is often forgotten. Together we can empower others and make change.”
Being Introspective

Reflecting upon self

Identifying biases

Being judgmental

Stepping outside of comfort zone
“I can handle uncomfortable situations and be involved in things outside my comfort zone.”

“I learned that I can have a small heart at times. I found myself judging and getting angry. A lady was taking a lot of clothes and I told myself, “Maybe she is taking all these clothes to help the tornado victims so she can feel good about her ability to give and help.”

“I am stubborn and not perfect but I can make a difference in someone’s life. They will love you for who you are.”
Making a difference

Connecting with community
Having a positive influence
Giving of self
“I never thought we would actually be able to bond and affect the community in such a limited amount of time. The connections that were made was the most rewarding part of the trip.”

“I learned that even the slightest gesture can make all the difference in the world to a person. A smile, a kind word, taking the time to listen, and holding a hand can be the changing point in the lives of people.”

“I discovered we could have an impact on others. We made many girls think they were beautiful. When in the community, I tried to promote the same positive image. It was great to see them smile.”
Embracing a culture

Appreciating hillbilly pride

Valuing faith, family, and community

Discovering commonalities
The river makes the mountains... 

The mountains make the people
“They take pride in being a hillbilly just like I take pride in being a southerner. The hearts of the people are absolutely amazing.”

“The people knew each other and looked out for one another. They gave what they could, even when they truly didn’t have enough for themselves.”

“People are really the same everywhere. They have the same needs—physically and spiritually. Everyone wants to know someone values them and cares for them.”
Pictures are Worth a Thousand Words
Discussion

- Service learning elective
- Cultural competency
- Group process
- Other disciplines/collaboration
- Pre-trip prep
- Best advice