Enhancing transcultural awareness in nursing education: Pedagogical strategies used in the Rainbow IP.

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Abstract

Introduction: Transcultural nursing is described as the humanistic and scientific study of all people from different cultures in the world with thought to the ways the nurse can assist people with their daily health and living needs. Culture is defined as the integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior and also the customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group. Todays world makes the introduction of transcultural nursing in the nursing education a priority. Objectives: to enhance nursing students abilities to demonstrate both theoretical and practical competence in approaching transcultural nursing community health care for people with chronic conditions. Students analyze transcultural differences and similarities to synthesize a new European approach in nursing issues in a transcultural group. Developing personal skills as e-learning skills and language skills (verbal and non-verbal), use of internet and database search for subject relevant material and pre course contact. Methods: The pedagogical methods used in the network, is divided in several stages. First the students research their own national policies and reflect on their knowledge about transcultural nursing before the IP. Then the IP starts with a group discussion on the researched national policies, on similarities and differences, leading to a group paper. The group paper states the “Golden standard” of transcultural nursing for this group. The paper is peer reviewed in an opponent/respondent situation and a large discussion known as the House of Commons ends the course. Results: The preparation assignment leads to a greater understanding about their own countries policies. On site they discuss and compare policies to find similarities or differences. The discussion and the activity in the group leads to the groups own consensus for a transcultural nursing care strategy that can be implemented in all participating countries or a European Golden standard of nursing for a specific chronic condition. The group paper is peer reviewed by the other students in the IP using respondent/opponent discussions to go in depth on content and clarify the Golden standard set by the group. The House of Commons ends the IP with presenting a case and dividing the students into two groups of pro and con arguing the statement made in the case. The case consists of a multilayered situation with cultural, ethical, social and
economic implications from which a statement is made “The multidisciplinary team is the only responsible for choosing where Achmed should be dismissed to”.

Conclusions: The Rainbow intensive program does enhance students’ transcultural awareness and the pedagogical strategies do work to that effect. The Rainbow IP is a vehicle to give the students greater understanding and an international perspective to facilitate professional success and global competence. It also gives them the opportunity to explore cultural differences in health care by sharing experiences with other nursing students from other cultures.

Keywords: nursing education, pedagogy, transcultural nursing