



CARLOW UNIVERSITY



Graduate Nurses' Perceptions of
the Refugee Crisis: A High
Impact Practice

Kathleen F. Tennant, PhD, APN, RN
Associate Professor, DNP Program
School of Nursing
Carlow University
Pittsburgh, PA

Jennifer B. Stewart, MSN, CRNP, RN
Instructor, FNP Program
School of Nursing
Carlow University
Pittsburgh, PA

Purpose & Design

- ▶ The purpose of this mixed methods pilot study was to increase graduate nurses' understanding about the human experience and complex ethical issues of migration surrounding the refugee crisis.

Methods

- ▶ “Forced From Home: The Global Refugee Crisis: Flight & Resettlement”, an interactive global immersion experience that presents the ethics, social and structural factors faced by migration and immigration. Graduate students were asked to participate in a panel discussion (led by local and international leaders in the Doctors Without Borders humanitarian organization) and/or the interactive exhibit for 90 minutes.

- ▶ Students completed a short demographic survey and responded (pre/post) to basic knowledge questions about the refugee crisis. After the experience, students were asked to participate in small focus group (debriefing) discussions about their thoughts and feelings (self-reflection) about refugees.

Results

- ▶ Focus groups were audiotaped and themes were derived from the discussion. During the debriefing in small focus groups, several qualitative themes emerged: ‘Extremely Emotional Response’ (feelings of sadness; helplessness; guilt); ‘Call to Service’ (..this experience made me want to volunteer; do more; crazy how much work is needed; I should do more); and ‘Personal Experience’ (very eye opening; passionate; I was shocked how unaware I was about this global crisis

Implications

- ▶ The preliminary research findings support the inclusion international immersion high impact practices/experiences with debriefing and reflective learning (qualitative themes) as effective teaching strategies. However, more studies are needed to provide best evidence for the effect and value of high impact immersion service-learning on cultural competency and global engagement.

Conclusions

- ▶
- ▶ High Impact Practices (HIPs) such as service-learning immersion experiences contribute to a student's development of cultural sensitivity, social justice, collaboration, and self-reflection (Bosworth, et al., 2006; Reising, et al., 2008).