Fostering International Research Collaboration

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Introduction

Technological advances are making possible international collaborations designed to promote the health of the world’s people.

The vision of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) is to create a community of nurses worldwide who improve the health of people through dedication to nursing knowledge, scholarship, and service.

An objective of the 24th STTI Nursing Research Congress held in Prague, Czech Republic, in July 2013 was to explore opportunities for international collaboration in nursing.

In this forum, two nursing scholars: one from Lebanese American University (LAU), Beirut, Lebanon, and one from Lubbock Christian University (LCU), Lubbock, TX, and U.S.A met and established a joint research program.

Background & Significance

Opportunities for nurses engaged in international research collaboration are growing and may foster cross-cultural understanding (Anderson, et al., 2012; Doumit, et al., 2015; Long, et al, 2016).

International collaborations and partnerships require substantive planning and pose unique challenges; however, benefits of collaboration include building research and education capacity (George & Meadows, 2013).

Collaborations may mutually enhance faculty learning and capacity furthering nursing research (Nardi & Gyrurke, 2013).

Strategies that enhance international collaboration are thought to foster the advancement of nursing knowledge and scholarship (Ketefian, Davidson, Daly, Chang, & Sriruphan, 2005).

Methods

A descriptive design is used for this project. The research questions for this study are:

1) What is needed to establish a successful international joint research program? 
2) What are the challenges, issues, and benefits of an international research collaborative, and 3) what are the outcomes of the collaborative?

Results

Two joint research projects were initiated. The first study aimed at testing the LCU Evidence-Based Research Tool © which is designed to increase student research skills. This tool was tested at LAU across several disciplines (Nutrition, Nursing, and Pharmacy) during the academic year 2013-2014 in two randomized control trials and a quasi-experimental study.

The second study at LAU aimed at replicating an original project that was conducted at LCU. This study tested the effectiveness of using cell phones with digital pictures as a memory prompt and journal diary to estimate self-reported fruit and vegetable intake in 161 LAU students.

Both projects, now complete, have been published in Worldviews on Evidence-Based Practice.

A willingness to collaborate, communicate, and work together using flexible methods (e.g. Skype, email, and Qualtrics) were key in the successful planning and implementation of the collaborative research endeavor.

Initial challenges included balancing the desire to compare people from various cultures, Lebanese and American College students, according to a standard measurements.

Discussion and Conclusion

The international collaboration made possible through STTI facilitated testing and replication of two research projects culminating in publication of the research.

Despite cultural disparities, distance, time differences and limited resources, the nursing scholars, connected through STTI, established a functional research partnership.

Findings suggest that the results of this collaboration will enhance the value, quality and productivity of scientific research in obesity prevention and educational research, and will increase research capacity and improve the coordination of collaborative research.

References Available Upon Request

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Disclosure: The purpose of this poster is solely to report the outcomes of the research collaboration made possible through these projects. There is $10 annual fee for use of the EBR Tool © which also allows for sharing of aggregated, de–identified student/user data measuring EBR self-efficacy using the Stevens ERI questionnaire and assessment measures embedded in the tool. This information is academic institutions and clinical agencies upon request joann.long@lcu.edu.