Life Changing Effects of an International Experience in a Developing Country: A Student’s Perspective

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Abstract
Participating in an international experience in a developing country has the potential to dramatically affect the lives of those that take part. This is especially true in the case of undergraduate students. However, it is often difficult for undergraduate students to locate an opportunity, obtain funding, and secure support from family to take part in such experiences. This poster presentation will share one example of how the lead author secured an opportunity to volunteer in Honduras. Specifically, the poster will depict 1.) the process of securing the opportunity, 2.) the obstacles overcome, and 3.) the impact of the experience. International experiences, especially those in developing countries, provide an opportunity for one to develop humility, gain an appreciation for education, develop new perspectives, foster a desire to serve, employ leadership skills, and increase cultural awareness. The purpose of this poster is to illustrate, from a personal perspective, how an abroad experience accomplished all of those effects in the life of an undergraduate student. The ultimate hope being that increasing numbers of students, especially undergraduates, will see that there is a way to gain experience in international settings. The educational importance of this poster focuses on providing one example of how international experiences can be obtained at the individual level and encourage experiential learning.

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