



Virtual Midwifery Student Collaboration: Kenya and United States



Cochran, M.,¹ Rotich, E.,² Ramirez Henry, K.,¹ Kyololo, O.,² Evers, C.,¹ Milimo, B.,² Polivka, B.,¹ Connelly, K.,¹ Modareess, N.¹
¹ University of Kansas Medical Center, United States; ² Moi University, Kenya

Funded by a Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) grant awarded by the University of Kansas African Studies Center (KASC) with support from the KUEA Kovac International Education Support Fund

Background

The University of Kansas School of Nursing (KUSON) and Moi University School of Nursing and Midwifery (MUSONM) in Kenya aim to integrate a global health perspective into midwifery education. The integration allows students to gain insights into international practices: legal, political, cultural, and ethical; policy and advocacy on all levels; leadership to impact change in health systems and population health; and the various roles of midwifery in a global setting. Nursing schools are preparing the next generation of midwives to attend to mothers from diverse backgrounds: culturally, geographically, and economically. Meaningful, intentional engagement is critical to developing cultural humility and supporting competent care of those with diverse life experiences, beliefs, and perspectives. A course collaboration would provide a bi-directional educational benefit, facilitate future professional partnerships, and create collective intelligence on midwifery practice.

Method

The courses, titled "Nurse-Midwifery Professionalism Seminar" (KUSON) and "Advanced Midwifery 1: Pre-Conception and Antenatal Care" (MUSONM), included activities that facilitated engagement at an individual and group level. Students engaged virtually via Zoom, in small groups, to discuss and plan presentations on an assigned topic. Presentations were given in a live, virtual conference-type format. Discussion followed the presentations. The intent was to create a virtual global classroom environment that minimizes hierarchal or geographical segmentation. With a focus on intellectual and cultural exchange, the educational insights equipped the students with competences to address issues critical to maternal health and well-being, which impacts the entire population.

Evaluation

The collaboration was evaluated with a 10-question pre- and post-survey using a 5-point Likert scale and open-ended questions. The scores were summed for total pre- and post-score. Paired t-tests were performed for the 12 students completing the survey. Significance was set a priori at an alpha of 0.05. Six additional questions evaluating the collaboration experience were included in the post-survey. Simple content analysis was used to identify responses to open-ended questions, aligning them with the ICM framework.

Findings

Assessment item	Pre M (SD)	Post M (SD)	p
1. I understand the history of midwifery.	3.50 (1.0)	4.75 (.45)	<0.001
2. I understand the current vision of midwifery as promoted by global leaders	3.58 (.90)	4.83 (.39)	.002
3. I can identify primary midwifery organizations engaged in maternal, newborn, and reproductive health.	3.33 (.78)	4.50 (.52)	< 0.001
4. I understand how midwifery can impact the morbidity and mortality affecting women and newborns.	4.58 (.52)	4.83 (.39)	.275
5. I have a good understanding of health policy in midwifery.	3.67 (.65)	4.17 (.72)	.111
6. I can identify the components I need for leadership development in midwifery.	3.67 (.65)	4.42 (.52)	.012
7. I am knowledgeable about midwives' professional regulation (scope of practice, licensure, accreditation, professional association capacity development).	3.58 (.90)	4.50 (.52)	.009
8. I can discuss different health care systems' midwifery delivery of care.	3.42 (1.0)	4.83 (.39)	< 0.001
9. I can demonstrate intercultural sensitivity and humility when interacting with others from another country.	4.25 (.97)	4.83 (.39)	.089
10. I can describe ethical and professional issues that may arise in global work in midwifery.	4.08 (.79)	4.92 (.29)	.005
Total scores can range from 10 to 100			

Response options 1=Strongly disagree ,2=Disagree,3-Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly agree

Exemplary Quotes

“The collaborative experience was beyond what I have ever imagined, learning so much about the midwifery profession in Kenya. “

“The global perspective of midwifery has given me an understanding that will impact my practice and lead me to advocate for our profession at many levels.”

“Midwifery is a profession of integrity, compassion, and inclusiveness. As future providers, speaking for our profession and demonstrating quality patient-centered care will allow us to thrive beyond the borders of our globe.”



Conclusion

- The midwifery student virtual collaboration provides evidence that intentional, meaningful exchange with international peers provides a learning experience applicable to midwifery practice.
- Virtual collaborations have the potential to provide a non-hierarchical, inclusive environment for the exchange of diverse international perspectives on important professional issues.
- Further collaborations should focus on an increased number of diverse students and discussion of interventions applicable to practice.

References

WHO. (February 22, 2023). Maternal Mortality. Retrieved April 16, 2023, from <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>