

# Perceived Impact of Short-Term International Experiences on Personal & Professional Beliefs of Health Care Practitioners: A Longitudinal Study

Valerie Strange, OTD, OTR/L, Brittany Balch, Marynell Disman, Bobbi Dynice, Cecil Huang

Quinnipiac University, Hamden, CT, USA

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Primary Author and Speaker: Valerie Strange, [VALERIE.STRANGE@QUINNIPIAC.EDU](mailto:VALERIE.STRANGE@QUINNIPIAC.EDU)

The Community-Based Global Learning (CBGL) Collaborative is an organization that supports individuals and organizations in ensuring that international partnerships and trips abroad are conducted ethically and with reciprocity at the forefront (Community-Based Global Learning [CBGL] Collaborative, 2023). Over the past 5 years, the framework for Quinnipiac University (QU) graduate trips to Guatemala for international engagement have shifted from service learning to CBGL with emphasis on cultivating an appreciation and commitment to engagement, in turn, making students better suited to work with a more diverse client populations (Chun et al., 2020). Moreover, Immersive study abroad experiences can develop students' understanding of the role culture plays in providing client-centered care (Meaux et al., 2021). Yet, little is known about the longitudinal impact of short term travel. This qualitative, phenomenological study used purposive sampling and asked the following research question: What is the perceived long-term impact on professional beliefs and practices of occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) practitioners following international trips completed as graduate students at QU? Participants included 13 former QU OT and PT students who participated in pre and post trip education and short-term international travel to Guatemala during their graduate years from 2018 through 2022. Using semi-structured interviews, participants described the perceived impact of their travel experience on current practices. Four themes emerged which included: the evolution from service learning to CBGL, the importance of active listening, culture as integral to client-centered care, and ways to reduce assumptions. Implications from this study support advocating for the value of short term travel, understanding the benefit of shifting to the CBGL Framework beyond service learning, and increasing pre- and post-trip education about ethical community global engagement.

## References

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