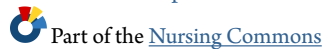

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**The Effect of Continuing Professional Development from
the Perspective of Nurses and Midwives Who Participated
in Continuing Education Programs Offered by Global
Health Alliance Western Australia: A Mixed-method Study**

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Philosophy

Yan Ing (Jenni) Ng

School of Nursing and Midwifery
University of Notre Dame, Australia

2017

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Operational Definition of Terms

ANMC	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council
CE	Continuing Education
CNMO	Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
COSTECH	Tanzanian Commission for Science and Technology
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
ERC	Ethical Review Committee
GHAWA	Global Health Alliance Western Australia
HKMU	Hubert Kairuki Memorial University
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MUHAS	Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences
NMs	Nurses and Midwives
NMBA	Nurses and Midwives Board of Australia
OHW	Other Health Worker
RM	Registered Midwife
RN	Registered Nurse
RNM	Registered Nurse Midwife
TNMs	Tanzanian Nurses and Midwives
TNMC	Tanzania Nursing and Midwifery Council
UNDA	University of Notre Dame Australia
WA	Western Australia
WAHNMAC	Western Australian Health Nursing and Midwifery Advisory Council
WANMs	Western Australian Nurses and Midwives
WHO	World Health Organization

Abstract

Continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for nurses and midwives are central to improving knowledge, broadening skills and maintaining competencies to provide best practice and clinical care. This is gained through participating in continuing education (CE). CPD is readily accessible and a mandatory requirement for nurses and midwives in developed nations, such as Australia. However, in developing countries, such as Tanzania, while CPD is promoted, it has limited availability. As such, the Global Health Alliance Western Australia (GHAWA), an international health development program, seeks to provide further sustainable CPD opportunities for nurses and midwives in Tanzania.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the CE programs provided by GHAWA. The review explores perceptions of the effectiveness of CPD from previous nursing and midwifery participants' of the GHAWA program, and describes the factors contributing to the sustainability of CPD in Tanzania by identifying whether the sharing of knowledge among the Tanzanian nurses and midwives occurred beyond attending GHAWA's programs. This evaluative study employed quantitative and qualitative designs through a mixed-method approach. Data were collected in two phases. Phase one involved a review of the number of education opportunities and programs provided in 2013 by GHAWA in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Phase two was undertaken in two stages, through focus group and one-on-one interviews with two cohorts: the Western Australian nurses and midwives who served as educators delivering GHAWA programs in Tanzania (stage one), and the Tanzanian nurses and midwives who were attendees (stage two).

This evaluative strategy clarified the experience and effect of CE, and identified common themes about CPD for Tanzanian nurses and midwives. Barriers such as environmental and educational concerns, revealed that reflective practice as a process of continuous learning, enabled nurses and midwives to create positive changes in the workplace. The significant outcome was a perceived reduced mortality across maternal and neonatal care. Findings from this study provided a deeper insight into the possibility of sustaining CPD for nurses and midwives in developing countries. Recommendations are offered which may assist to strengthen the opportunities for

CPD for nursing and midwifery workforce in developing countries that could ultimately influence quality care and patient outcomes.

Declaration of Authorship

This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other institution.

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, the thesis contains no materials previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Yan Ing (Jenni) Ng

September 2017

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Personal Reflection

Seven years ago, I visited Tanzania for the first time to work on a project with a small group of senior nursing and midwifery academics and clinicians. During my first day at a hospital visit, I remember walking into a labour ward. It had no dividing screens for the 12 to 15 mothers who were in labour that morning. Some were screaming in pain and clearly distressed, lying on the floor among small puddles of bodily fluids. It was obvious that there were not enough beds for everyone. Walking through the nursery, there were no cots just adult beds with two to four babies lying on each bed. Sitting and lying underneath on colourful Kitenge fabrics (traditional sarongs) were their mothers on the floor. My mind filled with questions about infection prevention and control, clinical practice, equipment, medical help and so forth. I remember thinking, 'where are the staff?'. There were no more than three people working between patients in the room. This is merely a snapshot through the vivid window of my memory. There were many other concerns that I witnessed at a number of healthcare facilities in both urban and rural areas, some of which were heart-wrenching encounters. Basic needs, such as sanitisation, power and access to clean water, were limited or unavailable to many, not just in homes, but also in some facilities. It became clear to me that the challenges to improve health for the vulnerable could not be underestimated. Little did I realise then that this was the start of a journey that would change me.

I was fortunate to later take on a position to lead and manage an International Health Development program that provided continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for nurses and midwives in Tanzania. Whilst it was both rewarding and challenging, I also found myself constantly having to justify the program and compete for the limited funding. Notwithstanding my passion for the program, my involvement presented a challenge with respect to maintaining impartiality in the investigatory process (I discuss this below), I recognised early on that research could provide evidence for the implementation, and importantly understand and give, the views of those who partook in this global health opportunity, a voice. This was what prompted me to undertake this study.

In my view, CPD is a gift that keeps giving. As the saying goes, ‘Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime’. While this rings true; what do we know about the challenges, enablers and outcomes in Tanzania?