Final Report

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Project Title: *Beyond the Tourist's Gaze*

1.1 Project Summary

We were able to collect data related to understanding the experiences of students in the India field school.

1.2 Project Outcomes and Impacts

Universities from the Global North engaged in service learning (SL) with host communities from the Global South, need to gain a 'from the field' understanding of the ethical implications and true impact of short-term North - South global education initiatives (Heron & Tiessen, 2011). This scholarly workshop proposal rises out of global education experiences of Canadian university students, including social work, child and youth studies and journalism students, and the resulting reciprocal partnership with a uniquely managed ashram in India. The Sri Ram Ashram (SRA) model provides a home for orphaned and abandoned children for their entire childhood and adolescence, with the relationship stretching into their adulthood. Ashram staff strives to create a family atmosphere while providing for the children's basic needs and education. Visiting Canadian students (2012, 2014, 2016) live with this community during their stay in India providing an international connection to the residents, while learning in return how this unique community provides for its children in a safe, loving and respectful manner, which reflects the conference's interest in the promotion of human dignity and inclusion. Through self-study (LaBoskey, 2004), using an auto-ethnographic approach (Harrison, Clayton; Tilley-Lubbs, 2014), the perspective of the SRA ashram regarding challenges and successes of the SL relationship will be explored. This community-based research presentation includes participation of the SRA director and two of the Ashram's now adult 'children' telling their own story, with participation as well from Canadian university students and visiting academics. Purpose: 1. To gain a 'from the field' understanding of the ethical implications and true impact of short-term North - South global education initiatives on both the host community (Heron and Tiessen, 2011) and on visiting students 2. To increase understanding of what constitutes useful meaning from the perspective of the host community. As part of our field school experience, students were surveyed pre and post departure. Student-researchers, host partners and faculty reviewed survey data together, and identified common themes from the study. These themes were then developed into a workshop focused on ways to help move toward establishment of culturally dynamic partnerships. Our 90-minute workshop: Beyond the Tourist's Gaze: Moving toward Culturally Dynamic Community - University Partnerships was formally presented at the International Association of Schools of Social Work Conference held in Seoul South Korea. Authorship of the workshop was shared with students, host partner and faculty. The workshop is now being re-worked for further dissemination in the international journal, Students as Partners.