

Review of: "Public Health Student Internship: An Opportunity to Explore System, Self, and Society"

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This article explores the utility of community-based, immersive internships within India. Specifically, it discusses the benefits of such internships with respect to enhancing the skills (including accountability) of future public health clinicians.

Pleasingly, it also highlights the importance of considering public health at a societal level as opposed to only an individual level. Specifically, it explores the need for those working in this area to consider the role of the community and society in managing public health, and more significantly to explore these roles with empathy and understanding (rather than blaming and patronizing community members). This deeper understanding of communities within which public health initiatives are being implemented typically results in greater change, and allows for such initiatives to be more specifically targeted to the community in question (rather than attempting a one-size fits all approach).

With this in mind, the authors call on academia to consider this aspect of public health and incorporate such philosophies and concepts within the teaching components of such training programs. They also offer that internships can be used to enhance on-the-ground training in implementing interventions (and engaging with communities) in a more targeted manner, identifying how best to work with members of that community, and thereby ensuring better outcomes. The authors end with a quote, encouraging students to consider "Are we complying to strengthen the existing unequal structures or shatter them?", food for thought in this important area of health regardless of location in the world.