



Escapade to the Motherland

Bri Belcher
University of Michigan School of Social Work



Location: Ho, Ghana

Ho is the capital city of the Ho Municipal District and the Volta Region of Ghana.

The people of the Volta Region are very diverse and every ethnic/language group are represented in the region. The main ethnic groups are Ewe, Guan, Akan, and Gurma. Ho population is around 96,213.

English is the country's official language; it is used for educational instruction, within businesses, and government. In addition, many people speak the Ewe language in the Volta Region.



Executive Summary

Adventuring across the world and emerging into an unknown culture was quite the experience. My placement was at the Social Welfare Office, which provided many services to those who were in need. I had the opportunity to shadow a couple of therapy sessions and visit the Ho Municipal Hospital with the medical social worker. I learned that they too are having difficulty with funding for government assistance programs and that the social workers are barely compensated. Often social workers found themselves going above and beyond what was expected just to make sure their clients' needs were met. There is a lack of mental health system in Ghana due to there simply not being enough of money for families, individuals, and couples to receive consistent treatment. Many social workers do not own vehicles and they are not issued one but they are still expected to visit villages if needed.

The people only seemed to seek services when they were in dire need and the situation had already escalated out of control. A variety of people were serviced from children and women to men. The Social Welfare Department conducted individual, family, and couple therapy sessions often for those who were experiencing financial difficulties, violence, custody issues, and family feuds. Once the social workers gave advice or suggestions, the individuals would make an impromptu decision and that would conclude services until unbearable feelings develop once again. Believing in your clients is always a good characteristic to have but also knowing that it is easier to say you'll commit to something than to actually put action to what was said must be recognized. One area of their strengths that I idealize is the community's sense of togetherness. The entire community cares about one another in a selfless way, they will give you the shirt off of their back. An orphan is just not an orphan; a panhandler is not just a panhandler. The social workers make it their priority to investigate the history of the person, to find out their name, and where they are from. They believe the mentally ill and individuals who cannot care for themselves should be taken care of by their family, whether immediate or extended.

I am interested in working internationally because of my experience within my global independent study. I am contemplating on conducting research or finding an agency that provides services within one of the countries in Africa.

Awakened (Lessons Learned)

Oh motherland, do you hear my cries
Yearning for the history of the continent second largest in size
Welcomed by the unknown and speeding taxi cabs
Learning the correlation between Kente Weaving and Spider Webs
I was embraced into the culture
Mesmerized by hand carved sculptures
Enclosed in a dungeon, where my ancestors once laid
Mentally crying because this is where we were made
Exploring Elmina Castle and Cape Coast
The governor chose who he liked the most
Dehumanizing women, selecting those with the nice thighs
The fiery was building in my eyes
My sisters would be forced into his bedroom as his "guest"
Objectified for her lovely breast
Stripped from their rights, this was all done in the Christian name
Where was their sense of shame?
Who gave them the power to condemn?
How would they feel if it were their children and them?
Concrete floors substituted as beds
My sisters and brothers wore chains and were barely fed
My skin may be darker, but aren't I a mirror of you
We still see signs of imprisonment in today's society too
As I am processing and trying to understand
I have "cultural appreciation" standing next to me, it's the white man
Being traded as if they were natural resources
They were whipped on their backs as if they were horses
Pushed out of the door of no return
Uneducated man please take the time to learn
They embraced the winds as they were traded at sea
An unfamiliar place, is where they'd be
Their voices and lives were a steal
I cannot begin to imagine how'd they feel
No more visible chains...
Yet your president is racist, growing pains
I am looking at generations upon generations of oppressors' face to face
In the end, I pray we'll conquer and win for our race
May all of our wounds heal
And God grant the white man the ability to feel

All the souls lost, rest in Heaven



Emersion of Culture

My experience was through Cross Cultural Solutions, one of their principles is to emerge cultural experiences within your stay. I had the opportunity to participate in Kente Weaving, Batik, and Bead Lessons. Kente cloth is a woven cloth of interwoven cloth strips, originating from Ashanti Kingdom and then adopted by many West African countries and in the Ivory Coast. Batik is a technique of wax-resist dyeing application to cloth.

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