

Kalala Pines

“Global Health Crisis of Childhood Malnutrition in Developing Countries”

“What did you pack in your suitcase?” This was the first question that each student answered when they walked into Dr. Maring’s classroom. Even after traveling to incredible destinations, my suitcase is barren. There is nothing in my suitcase that could truly prepare me for what I am going to embark on in these countries. That’s why I always remember to bring the most essential item—an open mind. I want to retain important information that will help resolve the global health issues that these developing countries face every day. This assignment truly led me to discover the issues I am truly passionate about. It irks me that specific health issues, such as malnutrition, can be easily prevented with certain initiatives. Just learning about the preventative measures that will provide people with the proper resources to combat malnutrition makes me feel empowered. From this knowledge, I wanted to share my thoughts in the upcoming research paper.

To help jumpstart our research paper, my Families and Global Health professor, Dr. Elisabeth Maring, prepared a presentation by a librarian who was an expert in the library resources on campus. Ms. Nedelina Tchangalova presented information that simplified the research process. During her lecture, she provided the class with literature that included instructions on how to find research articles from the library’s databases and useful websites. To avoid overwhelming myself by the amount of research, I needed to focus on one, specific aspect of this broad topic. Luckily, researching online with the given resources from Ms. Tchangalova refined my topic. Ultimately, my decision was to write about the issue of childhood malnutrition in developing countries.

Before I began the research portion of the project, I organized the layout of the research paper. The guidance that this outline provided made researching articles considerably easier. I immediately started looking for sources and articles that fit the outline and slowly started formulating my paper from those sources. After completing my first draft, I consulted with Dr. Maring to review my writing to ensure that it was completed correctly. However, she realized that the majority of my paper was factual, informative information, instead of the research portion. Luckily, she said that incorporating a few more research articles into the paper would be simple. She provided me with a few databases, such as *PubMed* and the *World Health Organization*, which helped me find research articles that would fit perfectly into my research paper. While researching, there was careful consideration over the key terms that I entered into the search engine. Eventually, I found certain terms yielded results that would flow seamlessly into the research paper. Also, I remembered Dr. Maring and Ms. Tchangalova telling the class to focus on using the full-text articles. Fortunately, some of the articles even came with the APA citation format. These websites assisted me in obtaining the majority of the articles used in my research paper.

The research articles forced me to think critically about why child malnutrition is such a pervasive problem across the globe. Intrigued by the research articles, I wanted to include my own opinion in the paper. Judging by the research studies, I believe that global malnutrition can be improved in the future. However, it is extremely difficult to eradicate this issue. Using this new information, I am immensely appreciative that my

professor exposed me to these beneficial, research databases. Extending past the basic facts to connect to real-world studies and investigations gave true meaning to my paper.

If I could change this research experience, I would have used the diverse variety of research resources to their optimal potential. I regret that I did not consult different databases, rather than just the few sources that my professor provided to my class. Even though those databases yielded excellent articles, I could have discovered new information about childhood malnutrition. Also, by consulting other librarians they could have given me an idea to use in my paper. Listening to different perspectives, I could expose my mind to new information that could be advantageous to my paper. However, even though I took advantage of some of the library's resources at the nearby locations, not every person is going to visit the library. For this reason, I believe there should be more online services, such as live Q & A, webinars, and social media. With this useful tool, students can ask a librarian a question in real-time. University of Maryland libraries adapting to the new technology trends will result in a significant benefit to students struggling with research. Overall, this research paper pushed me to find my passion. I am truly grateful for the assistance from Ms. Tchangalova and Dr. Maring has given me during this research endeavor. This research experience has propelled me into the field of public health, specifically in child health. Since being interested in Global Public Health, I have consulted Dr. Maring multiple times about topics, such as the future of public health, public health careers, and controversial issues. As a result, working on this research paper has opened up numerous opportunities in my academic and can potentially propel my professional career.