

THE IMPACT OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL ON COLLEGE STUDENTS'
DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

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Abstract

As the world becomes more interconnected, the need for graduates to have the skills and confidence to communicate with individuals from other cultures is important. This study explores the impact of international travel on Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) students' development of intercultural competence. The paper consists of a literature review in addition to primary research using data from a survey completed by fifty-one (51) SNHU students who participated in international experiences during their time at the university. The analysis of survey data reveals that international travel adds value to a student's ability to communicate with individuals from other cultures. The findings of this research also show that valuable intercultural competence is caused by the amount of interaction with the locals in the host countries; not the amount of time spent abroad.

Keywords: intercultural competence, student travel, global workforce

Introduction

Modern day technology has made it easier than ever for people from different cultural backgrounds to interact, thereby, connecting the global workforce. As the world becomes more interconnected, it's important for students entering the workforce to develop intercultural competencies in order to communicate appropriately with people from other cultural backgrounds. Intercultural competence is the ability to interact and communicate with another culture without violating valued social norms (Patching-Bunch, 2015).

Intercultural exposure is easily facilitated by travel; therefore, travel may have a positive influence on one's ability to communicate with those from other cultural backgrounds. This study is designed to explore the relationship between international travel of Southern New Hampshire University's (SNHU) students and their development of intercultural competencies. Information was obtained by conducting a literature review as well as surveying undergraduate SNHU students who studied abroad, participated in faculty led trips, completed international non-credit volunteer services or work abroad programs and traveled for leisure. Survey data was analyzed using the Pearson's R Correlation Coefficient in Excel's Data Analysis Tool pack to find correlations and relationships between variables.

Literature Review

Intercultural competence involves one's ability to shift his or her perspective on a culture and adapt behavior in order to comply with cultural differences (Jackson, 2015). The world becoming more connected, increases intercultural contact (Patching-Bunch, 2015). Called globalization, the process of the world becoming interconnected (Rowntree

et al, 2018) makes it critical for individuals entering the 21st century workforce to have cultural understanding of a pluralistic world (Braskamp et al 2009 & Maharaja 2018). Employers are seeking individuals with the skills to interact with individuals from foreign countries or those with different cultural backgrounds (Chang et al 2012, Stebleton et al n.d., Hubbard et al 2018).

According to Hubbard et al (2018), “seventy-eight percent of U.S. employers agreed that all students – regardless of chosen field of study – should gain intercultural skills and an understanding of societies outside the United States” (p. 6). “Knowledge about cultural differences, empathy for other cultures, the ability to have interactive coping skills and foreign language competency are becoming increasingly important” (Maharaja, 2018, p. 5). A common way for individuals to achieve intercultural competence is through international travel. Patching-Bunch argued that culture shock when traveling abroad served as a “catalyst for change” in the traveler’s attitude and behavior resulting in the ability to adapt to the new cultural environment. As individuals adapt to a new cultural environment, they learn how to appropriately communicate with the locals and acquire increased awareness of what is accepted without violating cultural norms. Learning to communicate with those in the host country leads to the development of intercultural competence (Jackson, 2015).

As employers seek ‘global ready’ graduates (Jackson, 2015), many American universities have invested in programs that allow their undergraduate students to spend time abroad with the goal of creating global citizens. These international experiences include semester long study abroad, alternative break trips, short term class trips, etc. The most common form of international travel being promoted is the semester long study

abroad, where students reside and study in another country for a semester. As the importance of international experience to global learning and development (Braskamp et al, 2009) becomes more well-known, students have been taking advantage of studying abroad during college (Jackson 2015, Maharaja 2018, Anderson & Lawton 2011, Chang et al 2012). According to Jackson, the number of students being educated abroad while earning their undergraduate degree is expected to rise (2015).

Studies have shown that international travel has a positive influence on students' development of intercultural competence (Braskamp et al 2009, Chang et al 2012, Maharaja 2018, Salisbury 2011, Stebleton et al n.d., Hubbard et al 2018, Anderson & Lawson 2011, Clarke et al 2011, Porter 2011). Studies also revealed additional benefits of students traveling abroad. For example, Braskamp et al found that students who traveled abroad during college developed a "greater self-confidence in their ability to meet new situations" (2009, p. 12). Maharaja found that students who traveled abroad during college were able to gain a better understanding of one's own culture, as well as of other cultures (2018). Clarke et al found that students who travel abroad may have a deeper appreciation and be more interested in international issues (2009). Lastly, studies by Paige et al (2009) and Hubbard et al (2018) found that traveling abroad had an impact on some students' success in their careers after graduation. Paige et al's study showed "the dramatic impact of study abroad on career paths and development" (p. 19). One respondent to the survey by Hubbard et al stated that traveling abroad during college helped in "developing skills and intercultural competencies that contributed to obtaining their first job after graduation" (2018, p. 8).

Research Question

This study aimed to answer the following question: how do international travel experiences during SNHU students' undergraduate experience impact their development of intercultural competencies? To address this question, this study investigated the outcome of participating in a variety of international travel experiences to include: traveling abroad for an internship or job, summer study abroad, traveling abroad for community service, traveling abroad for recreation or leisure, participating in faculty led programs abroad, and semester long study abroad. Students that participated in any of these international experiences were invited to complete a survey measuring the impact of international travel on their ability to work with individuals from other cultures, level of intercultural competence, acceptance of cultural differences, and likeliness to engage with individuals of other cultures.

Methodology

Participants and Instrument

On February 20th, 2020, surveys were sent to one hundred and sixty-three (163) SNHU students who participated in international experiences during their undergraduate education since spring 2018. The survey was active through March 1, 2020. Participants were recruited to participate via an email link sent by the Principal Investigator or the Director of the SNHU Study Abroad Office. The survey consisted of five quantitative questions to gain demographic information detailing insights from respondents and six Likert scale questions (with the option to strongly disagree,

somewhat disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, agree, and strongly agree) exploring their international travel experiences and resulting impacts.

Participant Demographics

Of the fifty-one participants, forty-one were between the ages 19 – 21 (80%), nine were between the ages 22 – 24 (18%), and one was age 25 or older (2%). Thirty-seven respondents (73%) were female and fourteen were male (27%). Regarding participants academic year, twenty-seven were seniors (54%), sixteen were juniors (32%), six were sophomores (12%), and one was a freshman (2%). Forty-one participants indicated that they were of Caucasian ethnicity (80%), five were Asian (10%), two were Hispanic / Latino (4%), one was African American (2%), and two identified that they were of other ethnicities (4%). Survey participants were students studying in a variety of majors. The breakdown of the 23 majors can be found in the chart below (Figure 1).

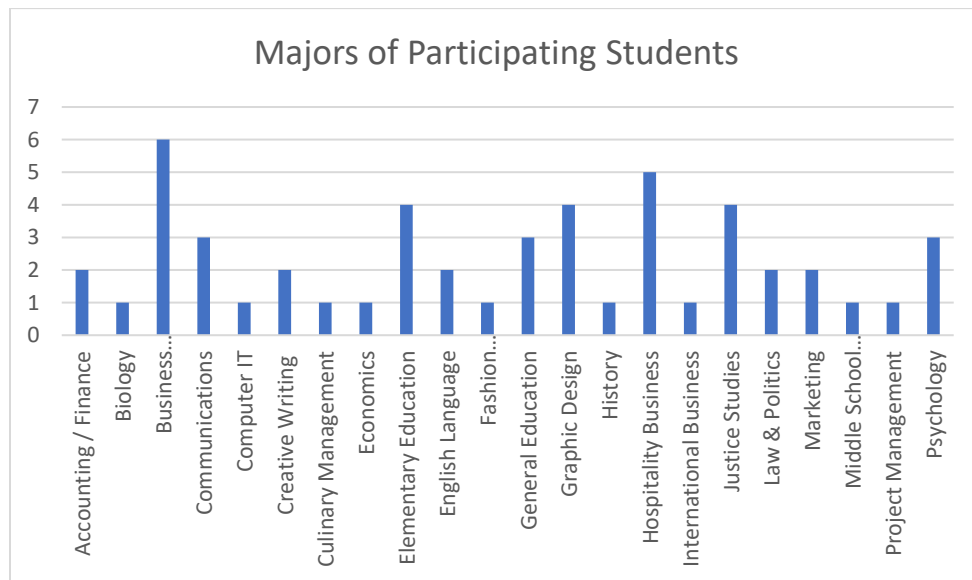


Figure 1: Majors of Participating Students

International Experience Participation

All respondents participated in at least one international experience. A breakdown of the respondents' participation can be found below in Figure 2.

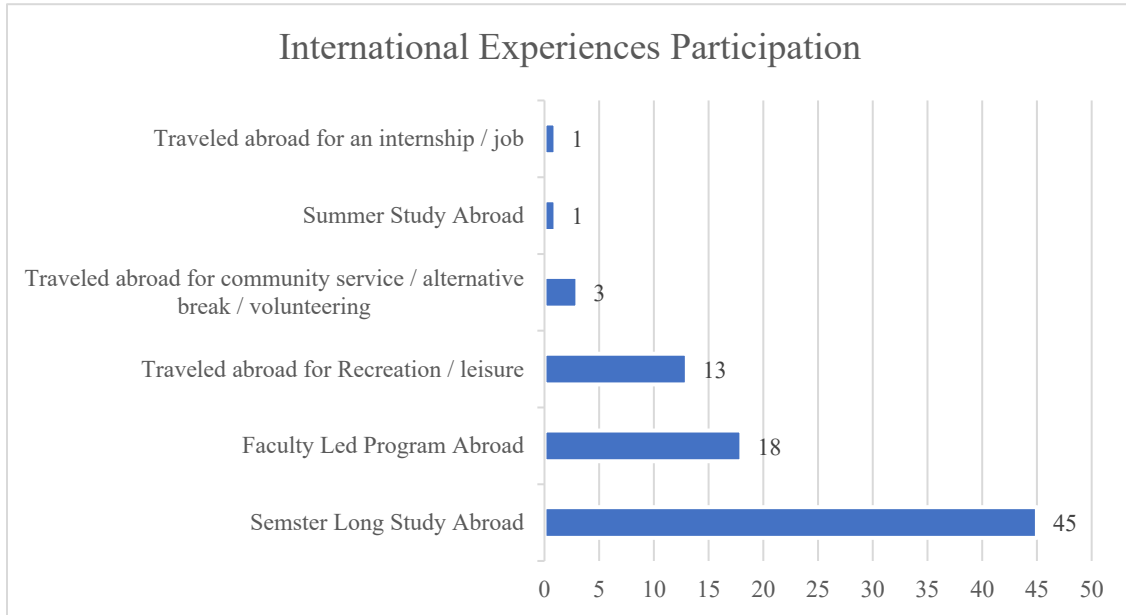


Figure 2: *Interational Experiences*

Survey Responses

The responses to the Likert scale questions can be found in Figure 3 below, along with the descriptive statistics summary in Figure 4. The average response for each statement was above a five, showing that the majority of students who participated in the survey agreed that traveling internationally increased their likelihood and confidence with working with individuals from other cultures, increased their level of intercultural competency and made them more respectful and accepting of cultural differences.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
"I engaged with the local people in the host society while abroad"	3 (5%)	0	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	8 (15%)	20 (38%)	19 (36%)
"I am confident in my ability to work with individuals from other cultures"	3 (5%)	0	0	0	6 (11%)	20 (38%)	24 (45%)
"I consider myself more culturally competent as a result of traveling internationally"	2 (4%)	0	0	1 (2%)	6 (11%)	20 (38%)	23 (44%)
"International travel has made me more respectful and accepting of cultural distances"	2 (4%)	0	0	0	2 (4%)	16 (31%)	31 (61%)
"As a result of traveling abroad, I am more likely to engage with people of other cultures"	2 (4%)	0	0	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	21 (41%)	22 (43%)

Figure 3: Survey Responses

Survey Statement	N	Mean	Mode	St. Deviation
"I engaged with the local people in the host society while abroad"	51	5.823529	7	1.506066165
"I am confident in my ability to work with individuals from other cultures"	51	6.019608	7	1.435133389
"I consider myself more culturally competent as a result of travelling internationally"	51	6.078431	7	1.278172715
"International travel has made me more respectful and accepting of cultural differences"	51	6.372549	7	1.232246474
"As a result of traveling abroad, I am more likely to engage with people of other cultures"	51	6.098039	7	1.31536918
<i>7-Point Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, disagree = 2, somewhat disagree = 3, neither agree nor disagree = 4, somewhat agree = 5, agree = 6, strongly agree = 7</i>				

Figure 4: Descriptive Summaries

Data Analysis

In order to find relationships between survey variables, a correlation analysis was run using Excel. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was used to measure the strength of the association between two variables. Effect size was considered large if $r = +/- .5$,

medium if $r = +/- .3$, and small if $r = +/- .1$. The closer to 1 or -1, the larger the effect or stronger the relationship. As a significance analysis was not run, the findings cannot be generalized.

First, it was found that level of engagement with the locals in the host country was positively correlated with all other variables related to the impact of international travel. The first correlation analysis was run to test the relationship between the level of engagement with the locals in the host country and the level of confidence in ability to work with individuals from other cultures. The Pearson R Correlation Coefficient equaled $r = 0.862$, meaning that for those who responded to the survey, higher levels of engagement with the locals in the host country while traveling abroad are positively correlated with higher levels of confidence in ability to work with individuals from other cultures, $r = 0.86$, which can be considered a large positive effect.

Second, there was a positive correlation between the level of engagement with locals in the host country and the level of intercultural competency as a result of traveling internationally. The Pearson R Correlation Coefficient equaled 0.641, meaning that for the survey respondents, higher levels of engagement with locals in the host country were positively correlated with higher levels of intercultural competency, $r = 0.64$, which can be considered a large positive effect.

Third, there was a relationship between the level of engagement with locals in the host country and students becoming more respectful and accepting of cultural differences. Higher levels of engagement with the locals in the host country while abroad were positively correlated with higher levels of respect and acceptance of other cultures as a result of traveling abroad, $r = 0.55$, which can be considered a large positive effect.

Lastly, level of engagement with locals in the host country was also positively correlated with likelihood to engage with individuals from other cultures. Higher levels of engagement with the locals in the host country while abroad were positively correlated with higher levels of likelihood to engage with individuals from other cultures, $r = 0.57$, which can be considered a large positive effect.

A correlation analysis was also conducted to test the relationship between the number of international experiences in which the students participated and the level of intercultural competency as a result of traveling abroad. The Pearson R Correlation Coefficient equaled -0.179 , meaning that those spending more time abroad is negatively correlated with levels of intercultural competency, $r = -0.18$. This means that there is not a relationship between amount of time abroad and level of intercultural competency.

The correlation between students' majors at SNHU and level of intercultural competence was also tested using Pearson R Correlation Coefficient. The correlation coefficient equaled $r = -0.05$. This means that, major and level of intercultural competence are negatively correlated, $r = -0.05$, which can be considered a small negative effect. This shows that a student's major in college does not impact the extent to which they will develop intercultural competency while traveling abroad.

Discussion

Ability to work with individuals from other cultures

Over ninety percent of survey participants agreed that their ability to work with individuals from other cultures increased as a result of traveling abroad. When asked to comment on their ability to work with individuals from other cultures, respondents said

they became more comfortable and confident with working with people in the host culture. A common theme that emerged was the learned ability to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to find ways to communicate despite language barriers.

Respondent number one wrote: “at first it is difficult to communicate with people that have a different language, however after time you learn parts of the language as well as other ways to communicate within the culture”.

Having the ability to work with individuals from other cultures is a transferrable skill that employers are looking for in the globalized world. Hubbard et al wrote that universities “are asked to produce graduates who are capable of communication across borders and citizens who are invested with the capacity to navigate a transparent, permeable world” (2018, p. 7). The results of this study show that international travel is an effective way to produce graduates with these skills. As the workforce becomes more diverse, having the ability to work with co-workers from different backgrounds is essential. Survey participant number twenty-five recognized the impact of international travels impact on her career, writing that “compared to same age peers and those from my local region, I have more in depth knowledge of cultural differences and experiences based on my travels while in college. I gained skills and information that has helped me both in my career path and social interactions which has given me an advantage in networking”. These students recognize the competitive advantages that international travel has provided. They have developed the ability to work with individuals from other cultures, a skill that those who do not travel often lack.

Level of intercultural competence

Over ninety percent of participants agreed that they became more interculturally competent during their time abroad. When asked to comment on their development of intercultural competence, many wrote that initially they found it difficult to communicate with those in the host culture but learned to adapt after the initial shock of being in a new culture. Students wrote they learned to “view situations from multiple points of view”, they “became more comfortable going up to people and trying to understand and communicate with them even though they didn’t speak each other’s first language”, they “had to adapt to their environment and living habits”, and how they felt they “have broken the American bubble and become more culturally competent in understanding the cultures of different countries”.

In a 2011 Salisbury’s study, it was found that “on average studying abroad significantly affects the positive development of intercultural competence” (p. 107). When SNHU participants discussed the initial shock of being in a new culture and how they learned to adapt as they engaged with locals, it’s likely that they developed intercultural competence through the process shared by Patching-Bunch (2015), who wrote that individuals often “experience difficulty as they move away from the comfortable surroundings of what is known into an unknown and uncomfortable environment ... Experiencing culture shock can lead one to be compelled to change the way of performing habitual tasks and daily activities in order to fit the demands of the current environment” (p. 14). Travelers first feel uncomfortable and confused, then move toward acceptance, adaptation, and integration where immersing themselves into the host societies.

Acceptance of cultural differences

Not only were students able to enhance their communication skills with individuals from other cultures while abroad, they also developed an increased level of acceptance and appreciation for unfamiliar cultures. Braskamp et al found that students “showed changes in their level of respect and acceptances of cultural differences” (2009, p. 10). Being accepting of cultural differences is important in becoming a global citizen and avoiding ethnocentrism.

Over ninety percent of participants in this survey reported an increase in respect to cultural differences as a result of international travel during college. Participant number eight wrote that “the cultural differences open your eyes, and help you become more accepting of other people’s way of living”. Another wrote: “I find that I have less ignorance due to my exposure to a variety of cultures through authentic experiences and interactions”. This student commented on how she became more accepting of other cultures through authentic experiences and interacting with the locals, proving that this is of utmost importance, not just the travel itself. Student forty-nine wrote that time abroad allowed him to overcome stereotypes he didn’t even know he had. This shows that many students may not realize their lack of respect and acceptance of other cultures until they are exposed to them.

Likelihood to engage with individuals of other cultures

As a result of international travel, eighty-nine survey participants reported that they are more likely to engage with individuals of other cultures. This allows students to become more confident in their ability to communicate with those from other cultural

backgrounds without fear of violating cultural norms. Braskamp et al found that students who participated in international travel “express a greater self – confidence in their ability to meet new situations, communicate with others not like them and have a lesser need to be continuously supported by others” (2009, p. 12). One survey participant, student number twelve, said she was capable of effectively communicating with individuals from other cultures while abroad, giving a newfound confidence and enhancing the likelihood to be open to communicating with people of other cultures in the future. Developing intercultural competency not only makes students better communicators but makes them more likely to engage with people of other cultures.

Importance of quality of travel

The results of the survey showed that there is a relationship between international travel and students’ development of intercultural competence. It was concluded that the level of engagement with the locals in the host country had more value than the amount of time spent abroad. The survey data supported the positive correlation between level of engagement with locals in the host country and levels of intercultural competency. Along with this, there was a negative correlation between the number of international experiences in which students participated and levels of intercultural competence, which further supported this conclusion. The survey data does not prove that spending more time abroad assists in development of intercultural competencies. Students who reported higher levels of engagement with the local people while abroad also reported higher levels of each of the other impacts.

The conclusion that it is the quality, not quantity of international travel which is important in developing intercultural competence is supported by Chang et al (2012) and

Patching-Bunch (2015). Chang et al found that “there is no significant relationship between frequency of international experiences and cross-cultural adaptability” (p. 5) Patching-Bunch wrote that “greater learning comes from deeper involvement in one’s local setting. In many cases when entering a new culture, ideas about this culture are skewed. As involvement increases, these ideas are amended to fit reality which will increase adaptability” (p. 10). The results of this study suggest that international travel is a valuable experience that should be included in a student’s undergraduate experience, but higher levels of interaction with the locals in the host country should be encouraged in order to obtain the most benefit.

Survey Questions

Q1 What is your age?

- 18 years old or under
- 19 - 21 years old
- 22 - 24 years old
- 25 + years old

Q2 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to answer

Q3 Choose your academic year

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

Q4 What is your ethnicity?

- Asian
- Black / African American
- Caucasian
- Hispanic / Latino
- Native American
- Pacific Islander
- Other _____

Q5 What is your major at SNHU?

Q6 While a college student, which of the following international experiences have you participated in? Check all that apply.

- Semester Long Study Abroad
- Faculty Led Program abroad
- Traveled abroad for Community Service / Alternative Break / Volunteering
- Traveled abroad for Recreation / Leisure
- Traveled abroad for an Internship / Job
- Other _____

Q7 I engaged with the local people in the host society while abroad

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Q8 I am confident in my ability to work with individuals from other cultures

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Q9 I consider myself more culturally competent as a result of travelling internationally

Cultural Competence: the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain

Q10 International travel has made me more respectful and accepting of cultural differences

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Please explain: _____

Q11 As a result of traveling abroad, I am more likely to engage with people of other cultures

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Annotated Bibliography

Braskamp, L., Braskamp, D., & Merrill, K. (2009). *Assessing progress in global learning and development of students with education abroad experiences*. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ883693.pdf>.

This paper focuses on the question if students who take part in international travel experience growth in their global learning and development. The author recognizes the importance of students developing intercultural competence during their education in order to be successful in a pluralistic society. To measure the changes in students' global perspectives, this study used a pretest and posttest design, meaning they took the same survey before and after the semesters of study abroad. The students who participated in the study demonstrated an increased global perspective, increased knowledge of intercultural affairs, greater confidence in living in unfamiliar situations, and a greater concern of other citizens. Also, students showed changes in their acceptance of people from other cultures after spending a semester abroad. Overall, this study supports the idea that study abroad is a valuable experience that helps develop global citizens.

Chang, W., Yuan, Y., & Chuang, Y. (2012, July 9). *The relationship between international experience and cross-cultural adaptability*. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/Relationship%20Between%20International%20Experience%20and%20Cross%20Cultural%20Adaptability%20-%20Wei-Wen.pdf>.

The focus of this article is the effectiveness of organizations increasing employees' international experience in order to develop their intercultural adaptability. This study is to understand the relationship between international experience and cross-cultural adaptability. The study included 356 questionnaires completed by workers in Taiwan. When the results of the questionnaires were analyzed, it was found that there is not significant relationship between frequency of international experiences and cross-cultural adaptability. What's important isn't the amount a person travels, but how they engage with the people in their host society and their level of engagement.

Hubbard, A., Rexeisen, R., Watson, P. (2018). *AIFS study abroad alumni outcomes*.

Retrieved from http://educationdocbox.com/College_Life/78066781-Aifs-study-abroad-alumni-outcomes.html.

The American Institute for Foreign Study published this report that details the outcomes of their study abroad programs to determine their impact. The study included a survey completed by 1,405 alumni, 865 of which reported that AIFS study abroad programs were a meaningful and valuable aspect of their undergraduate education. Important outcomes of the study include willingness to counter stereotypes of other cultures, a broadened range of industries alumni are interested in working in, and the development of skills and intercultural competencies that will assist in their success in their careers.

Jackson, J. (2015, January 20). *Preparing students for the global workplace: the impact of a semester abroad*. Retrieved from

file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/Preparing%20Students%20for%20the%20Global%20Workplace%20-%20Jackson.pdf.

Jane Jackson conducted this study in order to determine what students gain from a semester long international exchange program, focusing on their intercultural competence, confidence in their second language, and global mindedness. The study included 105 Chinese students from a Hong Kong university in an experimental group (those who went on a semester abroad), and 141 students in the control group (those who stayed in their home city for the semester). By analyzing surveys completed by the participants both before and after their semester abroad, Jackson concluded that a semester abroad had a positive impact on the students' intercultural development and readiness for the global workplace.

Maharaja, G. (2018). *The impact of study abroad on college students' intercultural competence and personal development*. Retrieved from

file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/Impact%20of%20Study%20Abroad%20on%20College%20Students%20Intercultural%20Competence%20-%20Maharaja.pdf.

Gita Maharaja conducts this qualitative study with the purpose of exploring the impact of a semester long study abroad program on the intercultural competencies and personal development of students attending a research-intensive university. To explore the correlation, 150 college students who studied abroad for one semester wrote essays discussing their experiences while abroad. The students' responses were analyzed, and themes were found. The study concluded that

studying abroad for one semester has a positive impact on college students' intercultural competencies and personal development.

Paige, R.M., Fry, G., Stallman, E., Josic, J., & Jon, J. (2009, November 27). *Study abroad for global engagement: the long-term impact of mobility experiences*. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14675980903370847?needAccess=true>.

The purpose of this study was to determine the long-term impacts of study abroad. Specifically, the study looks at the impacts on alumni's global engagement contributions, and professional and personal development. 24, 019 alumni who studied abroad while pursuing their undergraduate degrees completed surveys for this survey. Following the surveys, qualitative interviews were conducted to identify how study abroad impacted the alumni in ways that were not recognized in the survey. The study shows that study abroad has a significant impact on career paths, as many of the participants in the study now work in internationally oriented careers. Also, the study found that many participants viewed study abroad as the most impactful of their college experiences.

Patching-Bunch, J. (2015). *Learning intercultural competency through international immersion travel*. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/Learning%20Intercultural%20Competency%20Through%20International%20Immersion%20Travel%20-%20Bunch.pdf>.

This paper was written to propose the idea that long term international travel is an important part of achieving intercultural competency. The focus of the paper is on how this affects United States citizens in the white middle class. Within this literature review, the author discusses the effects of globalization and international travel. When discussing international experience, experiences are broken up by quality and quantity and it's argued that the level of social involvement while abroad is more important than the frequency of travel. This paper details the process through which one achieves intercultural competency through travel. The steps of the process that are discussed are international travel, exposure, culture shock, reflection, adaptation, change of perspective, and intercultural competency.

Salisbury, M. (2011). *The effect of study abroad on intercultural competence among undergraduate college students*. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/Effect%20of%20Study%20Abroad%20on%20Intercultural%20Competence%20Among%20College%20students%20-%20Salisbury.pdf.

In this dissertation, Salisbury explores the effect of study abroad on undergraduate college students' intercultural competencies. Using data collected from undergraduate college students from three points in their college careers, two methods of analysis are used to estimate what effect study abroad has on college students' intercultural competencies. The results of the study show clear evidence that studying abroad does in fact provide educational benefit and have a positive impact on the development of intercultural competence.

Stebbleton, M., Soria, K., & Cherney, B. (n.d.). *The high impact of education abroad:*

college students' engagement in international experiences and the development of

intercultural competencies. Retrieved from

file:///C:/Users/Lindsay/Desktop/Honors%20Senior%20Thesis/References/The%

20High%20Impact%20of%20Education%20Abroad%20-%20Stebbleton.pdf.

In this study, Stebbleton, Soria and Cherney look at five types of international travel activities and attempt to discover whether each activity yields a different outcome for development of students' global and intercultural competencies.

99,810 surveys were completed for the study by undergraduate students across twelve universities with very high research activity. The survey asked the students questions regarding their participation in their travel experiences and how they would rate certain abilities related to their intercultural competency. The results of the study suggest that study abroad programs through a university help to develop students' intercultural competencies more than the other four types of international opportunities reviewed.