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Investigating University Students' Cultural Competency in Relation to Time Spent Abroad

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INVESTIGATING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' CULTURAL COMPETENCY IN
RELATION TO TIME SPENT ABROAD

by
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A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford
April 2018

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ABSTRACT

ELIZABETH BAYLEE EDWARDS: Investigating University Students' Cultural
Competency in Relation to Time Spent Abroad
(Under the direction of Dr. Laurel Lambert)

Background: The world is becoming increasingly interconnected through the globalization

of economy, resources, and social interactions, creating an environment where individuals

must be able to respect, understand, and work closely with people of different cultures. The

purpose of this research was to investigate how traveling abroad affects university students'

level of competency in five cultural dimensions.

Methods: An electronic survey, designed to evaluate cultural competency, was distributed to

6,000 randomly selected undergraduate students in January, 2018. Descriptive statistics were

used to demonstrate sample profiles. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to

determine factors of competency dimensions for global mindedness. A series of ANOVAs

were conducted to see how competency levels differ based on time abroad.

Results: Out of 1,650 surveys collected, 1,470 were used for data analysis. EFA using

Principal Axis Factoring extraction and Promax rotation revealed five competency

dimensions: *cultural awareness*, *cultural knowledge*, *cultural encounters*, *cultural desire*,

and *cultural skills*. The results of a series of ANOVAs indicated there were no significant

differences on *cultural awareness* and *cultural knowledge*; however, significant differences

were found in *cultural encounters*, *cultural desire*, and *cultural skills*.

Conclusions: As time abroad increases so does cultural competency in three of the five dimensions. Students who have spent time abroad are more comfortable interacting with individuals from other cultures, seek out culturally diverse friendships, and believe there should be more university sponsored cultural activities.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected or globalized through technology and media, daily interactions with individuals from different cultures are becoming increasingly common. The ability to purchase a product from the other side of the world and receive it in a week is no longer unheard of, traveling by air to another country is not uncommon, and the capability to make friends from another country and converse daily is common place (de Sousa Santos, 2006). Every day, the web of diverse personal connections is expanding, and this only further implicates the need for individuals to have the capabilities to interact with people who are different than them (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005).

To prepare our future generations, many schools are amending their vision and mission statements to add exposure to cultural competence in order to reflect the changing environment (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Engberg, 2013; Ramaley, 2016). Research literature in secondary education reports the interests in learning more about how students can adapt to succeed or improve their cultural competency in a connected, globalized world (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Many educational approaches to improving cultural competency have been cited including adding classes (Barner & Okech, 2013), amending class content (LaFave, Kaiser, & Kang, 2015; Lopes-Murphy, 2013), introducing service learning (Long, 2016), and promoting study abroad experiences (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009). Previous literature examines the impact of these additions on students', teachers', and professionals' cultural competency. However, there is a

gap in the literature regarding exactly how traveling abroad impacts students, specifically within the dimensions of cultural competence.

This topic is of importance at the University of Mississippi due to its mission statement that reflects the need to prepare students to better understand globalization and w demonstrate cultural competency ("Vision, Mission and Core Values," n.d.). As previous literature suggests, one way to prepare students is through encouraging travel abroad in that students who spend longer abroad demonstrate greater cultural competency (K. Kehl & Morris, 2008). From this information, the current study was created in order to investigate this relationship.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Globalization

Globalization is a process of removing borders that physically, culturally, socially, economically, and politically separate individuals that has been developing over many centuries and will only continue to be cultivated (de Sousa Santos, 2006). Globalization, although recently growing in popularity, is not a new concept. The idea of globalization goes back to worldwide colonization, trading, and conflict long before the twentieth century (Barner & Okech, 2013). Centuries ago, humans would trek from country to country in order to attain goods and services that could only be found in other places. Scholars would adventure to new lands to learn from native people. History itself is a result of this globalization; students learn about past interactions with diverse people to influence future interactions. The world is a constantly changing place and for centuries humans have been making worldwide connections.

A report published by Edmond Méras (1932) described how the United States realized the large growth of international consciousness and an importance was placed on world-mindedness and its role in world policy. This report, more than eighty-five years old, revealed how the world was becoming more globalized and the importance of world-mindedness. At this time, the computer had not been developed, the World Wide Web had not been invented, and traveling across the globe in one day was not possible. Time and technology have contributed to the inter-connectedness of the world.

Globalization, or interconnectedness around the world, is leading individuals in becoming global-minded or world-minded. A global minded individual thinks of himself not in the terms as a member of his country but instead as a member of the world (K. Kehl & Morris, 2008). Employers who see the value of being global minded are now seeking out employees that possess and can demonstrate these valuable cross-cultural skills (Zlomislić, Gverijeri, & Bugarić, 2016). Companies need individuals with cross cultural skills in order to remain competitive in a connected, globalized world. Employees that demonstrate ability to work in a globalized world can be valuable in organizing and communicating both with internal and external foreign individuals of a company; as expatriates for a company; and in day-to-day interactions with a diverse set of employees (Dollwet & Reichard, 2014).

Importance of Cultural Competency

Globalization has placed importance on individuals being culturally competent. There are various words used conversely to reflect the concept of cultural competence including: multicultural, trans-cultural competence, cross-cultural competence, intercultural competence, international competence, intercultural efficacy, intercultural communication competence, and intercultural sensitivity, as examples (Neculaesei, 2016). However, this large variety of terms encompass essentially the same concept: the ability to understand the importance of other cultures; interact properly with those from other cultures; use both knowledge and skills about a culture to guide interactions; and learn more about other cultures through interaction (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, & Ananeh-Firempong, 2003; Neculaesei, 2016).

Cultural competency is more than just the awareness that the world is diverse. Cultural competency is the appreciation, understanding, awareness, and ability to successfully interact with diverse individuals (Rowland, Jones, Hines-Martin, & Lewis, 2013). Cultural competency is not a "have or have not" skill, rather it is measured on a sliding scale with room to grow within cultural competency.

The importance of cultural competency has been cited over time and throughout a variety of research literature. Neculaesei (2016) wrote of the importance of cultural competence as a tool for a variety of fields of study and many businesses regard these types of skills a necessity. Long (2016) described the importance in healthcare settings for cultural competence since the United States is becoming increasingly diverse in population and healthcare providers must be able to interact with individuals having different cultural norms. In addition to healthcare, as the United States becomes more heterogeneous, daily interactions will increasingly be with individuals who may not be similar to oneself. The ability to interact with diverse populations is now an essential skill and becoming culturally competent allows for easier, more respectful, mature, and pleasant interactions. However, becoming culturally competent requires time and maturity.

As individuals mature, they experience growth and adapt to change on an individual level. Growth and change can stem from a variety of influences including, but not limited to: social issues, religion, emotional skills, intellectual ability, environmental factors, and even social interactions (Braskamp, Braskamp, Merrill, & Engberg, 2012). As an individual ages, he begins to act on the world around him based on his internal self. These interactions with the outside world should be appropriate and reflect one's best self. As the world becomes more globalized, one's interactions with others must reflect a sense of understanding and

respect for all types of people, including those with different backgrounds, beliefs, and values. This sense of understanding and respect is a result of one's own cultural competence, which must be taught to develop an individual capable of properly interacting with and having a positive influence on those from other cultures.

Dimensions of Cultural Competency

Since the origin of the concept of cultural competency, the facets that contribute to the concept have rapidly evolved. Consistently in previous literature, three central dimensions of cultural competence have been designated as *cultural knowledge*, *cultural awareness*, and *cultural skills* (J. Campinha-Bacote, 1999; Rew, Becker, Cookston, Khosropour, & Martinez, 2003; Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994; Stanhope, Solomon, Pernell-Arnold, Sands, & Bourjolly, 2005).

Cultural knowledge is established as background information such as common practices, racial identity, world views and ethnicity of a specific culture (J. Campinha-Bacote, 1999; Sodowsky et al., 1994). Campinha-Bacote (1999) further defines cultural knowledge as obtaining a foundation of information about a culture so that one can understand and interact better.

Cultural awareness consists of both intra-personal awareness and inter-personal awareness as one must know himself in order to know another (Sodowsky et al., 1994). Specifically, in order to be able to truly appreciate of another's culture, one must be aware of his own prejudices so that he can see clearly the other culture without bias. Traditionally, prejudice roots from ethnocentrism and achieving cultural competence requires an awareness of another culture without bias and reducing this ethnocentrism (J. Campinha-Bacote, 1999).

Cultural skills are the ability to properly interact with those of different cultures in a manner that respects both the individual and his cultural norms. Furthermore, it is suggested that the more cultural skills one possesses, the more options for beneficial interactions one has and therefore, the more positive the interactions. (Sodowsky et al., 1994)

Although cultural knowledge, awareness, and skills are the most prevalent referenced dimensions of cultural competency, others have been suggested as well. Rew et al. (2003) adds a fourth component: *cultural sensitivity*. Cultural sensitivity encompasses an attitudinal dimension, or how one individual feels about interacting with another individual from a different culture and the way he acts towards that person.

Campinha-Bacote's (1994) model encompasses a four-dimensional model which includes: *cultural knowledge*, *awareness*, *skills*, and *encounters*. Cultural encounters were defined as repeated engagements with those of another culture in order to prevent stereotyping. If an individual meets several people from a specific culture that behave in similar ways, he may begin thinking all of the people in that culture act the same way. Multiple cultural encounters with multiple individuals allows one to refine his knowledge on a culture continuously.

In a more recent publication, Campinha-Bacote (2009) extended his model to include a fifth dimension: *cultural desire*. As suggested by the name, cultural desire is the individual 'wanting' to expand his cultural competency and become more inclusive in his thinking. Furthermore, these five core dimensions: knowledge, awareness, skills, encounters, and desire can be separated in to two main categories of an affective dimension and a cognitive dimension. An affective dimension relates to the actual interaction between two individuals, this would need to be learned through the practice of interaction. This dimension would

include cultural skills, encounters, and desire. A cognitive dimension would be the background that one has entering into an interaction, perhaps something learned in a classroom setting. This dimension would encompass cultural awareness and knowledge.

Students and Cultural Competency

As professions become increasingly diverse and serve diverse populations, the ability to interact in a positive manner with individuals of different backgrounds becomes imperative. Students preparing to enter the work force must be progressively cultural competent to succeed in an era of diversity (King & Baxter-Magolda, 2005). Just as universities teach math, language, science and leadership, they must adapt to teach students how to thrive in an environment of interconnectedness and global mindedness (Mahon & Cushner, 2002).

While current literature regarding the imperative nature of cultural competency has been more thoroughly investigated in healthcare settings (Betancourt et al., 2003; A. Campinha-Bacote & Campinha-Bacote, 2009; Rew et al., 2003; Rowland et al., 2013; Stanhope et al., 2005), the need for culturally competent professionals is evident in all the disciplines of the professional and academic world. A study titled "Teaching Globalization to Social Work Students: In and Out of the Classroom" stressed the value of a 'globalized' perspective for those working in the social sciences. According to the Council on Social Work Education's Commission on Accreditation in the U.S., the council that develops the standards for education in social work, it is mandated that the social work curriculum contain international or global content to teach global social issues to students.

LaFave et al. (2015) examined how adding cross-cultural intervention modules and critical reflections to a senior-level civil engineering course would influence undergraduate engineering students' intercultural competence. The justification for the case study was due to the impact of globalization on technical professions and the growing importance of human interaction skills such as interacting with team members from different backgrounds. At the conclusion of the study, it was reported that cultural competency skills can be integrated into engineering courses and student surveys showed an increase in competency after finishing the course.

Similarly, educators must be prepared to teach students with various ethnicities and cultural backgrounds. Mahon and Cushner (2002) examined the importance of student teachers having international experiences and how both the future teachers and their pupils benefit from the experience. The student teachers that taught abroad reported that they felt more confident and learned about both themselves and working with people of different cultures. It was concluded that opportunities for student teaching abroad are increasingly needed for better prepared teachers.

Just as universities are expected to graduate independent students that are proficient in math, science, writing, history, and critical thinking, universities must be proactive in preparing students for the globalized world. Universities have evolved over time to meet standards of education that adequately prepare students for professions globally. These evolving standards can stem from various sources such as social issues, societal values, economic change, and environmental standards (Ramaley, 2016). The need for standards for graduating culturally competent students, due to the growing globalization in the world, adds yet another obligation for universities to prepare students properly.

To provide guidance, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007) released a report that stated an essential learning outcome for students was intercultural knowledge and competence. This further stresses the pertinence of cultural competency for students, and how essential it is that higher education addresses topics that encourage students to grow in their cultural competency. Since cultural competence is a multi-dimensional concept, it must be addressed with more depth than a one-dimensional topic.

Universities throughout the United States are updating their vision and mission statements to reflect an evolving need for culturally competent individuals in the workforce. These updates are in response to the need for schools to graduate students who are able to communicate, understand, and interact with individuals of diverse cultures (Ramaley, 2016). Ramaley (2016) further asks the vital question: "How will one's choices change when one understands the impact that each decision has on another part of the world?" Students that are culturally competent should have the ability to recognize that every interaction with another individual, regardless of either's culture, has a lasting impact. Whether this impact is positive or negative is at the will of both individuals.

University students are also beginning to realize the importance of being culturally competent. According to Loh, Steagall, Gallo, and Michelman (2011), students are expecting to earn higher salaries because of their skills in cultural competence. Additionally, students are beginning to aspire to learn more about other cultures and have a desire to learn about these cultures first hand. Students are reporting that they want to learn about different cultures and personally about their heritage and have a desire to see personal growth through this experience (Loh et al., 2011).

Although providing in-class instruction regarding cultural competence may be helpful to some degree, for a more thorough understanding of other cultures, students require a personal, face-to-face experience (Lopes-Murphy, 2013). These experiences can be brought about in a variety of ways including service learning, cross cultural interviews, traveling abroad, and studying abroad.

Effects of Traveling Abroad on Cultural Competency

LaFave et al. (2015) stated direct contact between people of different backgrounds is vital to reducing prejudice and learning first-hand how to properly interact with those who may seem different. A simple and direct way of establishing this type of first hand contact is traveling abroad. Whether it be a study abroad program through a university, living abroad for any duration, or a journey traveling abroad, these first-hand experiences help prepare individuals for interaction with those from other cultures.

The term *study away* encompasses both off campus learning domestically and internationally (Engberg, 2013). The idea behind this term is that regardless of the actual location of where the student is studying, there is opportunity for internal growth. Internal growth occurs as a result of the external interaction and in turn helps one both internally, in terms of cultural perceptions and externally, in terms of culturally acceptable interactions. Interaction with individuals who are different than oneself may catalyze a reaction internally that causes further self-realization which can lead to a better understanding of both the individual and another culture (Engberg, 2013). This type of interaction is facilitated when a student is able to leave his comfort zone and go into a potentially more culturally

heterogeneous location. Adding opportunities for studying away, domestically or internationally, can help develop students to be more globalized citizens (Engberg, 2013).

While Kehl and Morris (2008) reviewed numerous articles that cited study abroad courses leading to students who are more globalized, they researched the difference in global perspective between students who participated in short term versus long term study abroad programs. The results of the research comparing less than eight-week long study abroad courses to semester abroad courses showed that students who traveled abroad longer showed an increased rate of global mindedness. This result demonstrates that schools should aim to promote semester long study abroad programs over short term (eight weeks or less) study abroad programs if they are to better prepare global minded students.

In a study by Mahon and Cushner's (2002) student teachers who taught internationally reported that their views became more multicultural and they grew to appreciate the differences in varying cultures. Qualitative responses reflected on of how the student teachers felt more prepared for interacting with individuals with different perspectives, personalities, and beliefs. These self- reported changes in the individuals further demonstrate how time abroad can lead to an increase in cultural competence.

Many universities now offer semester study abroad courses with optional short-term study abroad programs. Core (2017) points out, short term study abroad courses can aid students in their global learning, but does not show as strong of an increase in foreign language development. One program, a sociology course with an optional ten day excursion to Shanghai, demonstrated that students who participated in the optional excursion were better able to connect cultural perspectives to social issues (Core, 2017).

The significance of study abroad programs has not escaped the attention of politicians. In particular, in 2005, The Lincoln Commission, a congressionally appointed commission, was created to understand the benefits of studying abroad to U.S. students. The Commission released a statement marking the significance of providing students with affordable opportunities to study abroad (Loh et al., 2011). The Lincoln Commission aims to create a society where students studying abroad are no longer the exception, but rather a reality for most students. Further, 2006 was designated the "Year of Study Abroad" by Congress (Loh et al., 2011). Over the last decade, the importance of studying abroad has appreciated in importance as the connectedness of the world has continued to grow. This stresses the value of an opportunity to travel abroad in order to create a globalized, culturally competent graduate.

Both research literature and education policy have derived the necessity for students to develop a sense of cultural competency. Research shows a variety of methods can facilitate educating students in developing cultural competence. However there is a gap in literature regarding the impact that time abroad can have on cultural competency. Previous research (Clarke et al., 2009; Engberg, 2013; Mahon & Cushner, 2002) has indicated that spending time abroad can lead to a greater proficiency in general cultural competency. However, this literature is limited to comparing only those who have traveled abroad versus those who have not previously traveled abroad. Furthermore, previous literature does not explore how each of the cultural competence dimensions is impacted by duration of time abroad. Conducting research in these areas could allow for a stronger understanding on the impacts that traveling abroad has on students' cultural competency.

Purpose

  The purpose of this research is to investigate how the duration University students spend abroad impacts the students' competency in the five dimensions of cultural competency. Other factors such as demographics of gender, ethnicity, age, and academic classification will also be used to measure the influence they may have on cultural competency dimensions.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Development

A survey to measure the dimensions of cultural competency was developed using questions from three previous models found in the literature (Braskamp et al., 2012; K. L. C. Kehl Robert C., 2005; Rew et al., 2003). An initial survey of twenty-six questions was distributed to a focus group that consisted of ten university students to discuss content and questions. Students were asked to respond based on clarity and readability by rewriting the question in their own words. A few wording revisions were made based on the focus group input. Then four demographic questions and three questions asking about time spent abroad were added, resulting in a thirty- three question survey. After receiving approval from the University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board, the revised survey was distributed to a class of thirty University students to evaluate the amount of time the survey took to complete and to further evaluate for clarity. After completing the revised survey, participants were asked to discuss any questions or comments they had regarding the study.

Based on participants' input, further revisions were made and resulted in the final survey (Appendix 1). This survey included twenty-six questions representing cultural competency, four demographics questions, three travel abroad questions and an optional open ended question. The twenty-six questions measured cultural competency and used a six-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = somewhat agree, 5 = agree, and 6 = strongly agree. An additional three questions included

length of time spent abroad, participation in a study abroad program, and identity of companions when traveling. Time frames for duration abroad options were based on Rew et al (2003) and slightly modified for this study. Demographic information was embedded into the survey distribution and provided ethnicity, academic classification, and gender of participants provided by the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning. A question regarding the age of students remained in the survey.

Data Collection

Participants consisted of undergraduate students at the University of Mississippi, Oxford campus only. The services of the Survey Panel Group (SPG) offered through the University of Mississippi's Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning (OIREP) were used for survey distribution. Procedures included submitting the survey to the SPG for approval. After the survey was approved the SPG provided email addresses for a maximum of 33.3% representative sample of the targeted population. Additionally, demographics of gender, academic classification, and ethnicity were encoded in the distribution list for the survey and therefore were removed from the final survey.

On January 30th, 6,000 surveys were distributed via school email addresses. Each student received an email (Appendix 2) that contained a summary of the study along with a link to the online survey. Surveys were completed using Qualtrics®, an online survey service provided through the University of Mississippi. All data was anonymized and no identifying information was recorded. After completion of the survey, students were directed to a separate survey where they could enter an email address to enter a raffle to win one of eighteen gift cards: eight $50 Amazon.com gift cards and ten $10 Starbucks gift cards.

Reminders to complete the survey were sent to students who had not completed the survey on February 5th and February 11th using the same email and survey link. The survey was closed on February 13th. Of 6,000 surveys distributed, 1,776 surveys were started and 1,479 surveys were completed.

The study was approved by the University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to all data collections.

Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed using SPSS software package version 25 (SPSS, 2017). Descriptive statistics provided means, frequencies, and standard deviation of questions. Factor analysis using promax rotation was used in order to group questions relevant dimensions of cultural competency. Each factor was then contrasted using an independent sample t-test to compare the difference in means based on the duration abroad. Using the dimensions of cultural competency from the factor analysis, One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in order to test the differences in the dimensions based on time abroad, gender, and ethnicity.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics

Of 6,000 surveys distributed, 1,470 students completed the survey. Incomplete surveys (N= 232) were removed from the data. Demographic information of student participants is included in Table 1. Demographics include gender, academic classification, age, and ethnicity. Demographics of both the distributed population and the responding population are included in Table 1.

On Table 1, the largest categories for both distribution and responding students were female, senior, and white. Out of 1,470 students who completed the survey, 1,000 (68.0%) were female, 1,001 (68.1%) were classified as seniors, and 1,212 (82.4%) were white. The students that were least represented in distribution included male, freshmen, and American Indian.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of responding student participants and population receiving survey

Characteristic	Participants N=1470		Distributed Population N=6000	
	n	%	*n*	%
Gender				
Male	470	45.5	2731	32.0
Female	1000	54.5	3269	68.0
Classification				
Freshman	21	1.1	66	1.4
Sophomore	77	6.4	386	5.2
Junior	371	25.2	1697	25.2
Senior	1001	64.2	3851	68.1
Ethnicity				
White	1212	80.3	4816	82.4
Black	137	12.0	717	9.3
American Indian	5	0.3	17	0.3
Asian	41	2.5	150	2.8
Hispanic	51	2.9	176	3.5
Other	24	2.0	124	1.6

Time Abroad

The duration of time abroad was self-reported information included at the end of the survey. Table 2 displays the frequencies and means of the responses regarding the duration of time abroad reported by students.

Out of the 1,470 students who completed the survey, the largest group, 452 (30.7%), students reported that they spent 1 to 4 weeks abroad. Almost a quarter of the participants (24.1%) reported that they had never spent time abroad.

Table 2

Duration of time abroad for responding sample (N=1470

Characteristic	*n*	%
Duration abroad		
Never	355	24.1
Less than 1 week	166	11.3
1-4 weeks	452	30.7
1-3 months	223	15.2
3-6 months	116	7.9
6 months or more	158	10.7

Cultural Competency Dimensions

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used in order to categorize the twenty-six questions into cultural competency dimensions using SPSS version 25 (2017). EFA was conducted using principal axis factoring with promax rotation with Kaiser Normalization. A total of seven questions were removed because they did not load, double loaded, or failed to meet a minimum factor loading of .4 or above. This included questions 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 24, and 26.

For the EFA, principal axis factoring was used since the purpose of using EFA was to reduce the questions into factors or dimensions that have a broader meaning and were used to investigate any relationships among the dimensions and demographics and travel abroad responses. Promax rotation was used because it is an oblique rotation method, allowing correlations between the variables, and it uses as few rotations as possible to reduce the data set, which is ideal because of the large data set (*n*=1470). Results of the EFA are displayed in Table 3. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of constructs ranging from .66 to .85 confirmed internal consistency. Means and standard deviations for each question are also reported.

After EFA, each factor was assigned one of the five cultural competency dimensions based on Campinha-Bacote and Campinha-Bacote's (2009) model of cultural competence which included the dimensions; cultural knowledge, cultural awareness, cultural encounters, cultural skills, and cultural desire. Factors were designated a dimension based on the questions within the factor. For example, factor 1 was assigned cultural awareness with questions such as "Americans can learn something of value from all ethnicities/cultures" which addresses the competency, as defined by how cultures can impact one another. Similarly, each factor was designated a cultural competency dimension.

Table 3

Results of exploratory factor analysis (n=1470)

Factors (Cronbach's alpha)	M (SD)	Factor Loading	Eignenvalue	Variance
Dimension 1: Cultural Awareness (α =.76)			6.10	23.48
Americans will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected.	1.99 (0.97)	0.89		
The United States is enriched by the fact that it is comprised of many people from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds.	1.93 (0.94)	0.79		
Americans can learn something of value from all ethnicities/cultures.	1.72 (0.85)	0.65		
I think of myself, not only as a citizen of my country but also as a citizen of the world.	2.35 (1.19)	0.43		
Dimension 2: Cultural Knowledge (α =.85)			2.63	10.11
My instructors use examples in class that incorporate information about various ethnic/cultural groups.	2.69 (1.14)	0.89		
My instructors at Ole Miss adequately address multicultural issues.	2.72 (1.10)	0.80		
My instructors use examples and/or case studies to teach about various cultural and ethnic groups.	2.85 (1.20)	0.74		
Dimension 3: Cultural Encounters (α =.76)			2.07	7.97
I am less patient with individuals of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds. *	4.88 (1.13)	0.90		
I typically feel uncomfortable when I am in the company of people from a different ethnic/cultural background. *	4.82 (1.25)	0.69		
I sometimes feel irritated with people from other countries because they don't understand how we do things here in America. *	4.40 (1.30)	0.57		
When I notice cultural differences, my culture tends to have the best approach. *	4.01 (1.25)	0.56		
Dimension 4: Cultural Desire (α =.73)			1.63	6.26
I frequently interact with students from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.	2.39 (1.12)	0.82		
I have friends from other ethnic/cultural backgrounds.	1.90 (0.93)	0.79		
I enjoy trying to understand people's behavior in the context of their culture.	2.05 (0.69)	0.45		
I try to stay informed of current issues that impact other ethnicities/cultures.	2.48 (1.07)	0.45		
Dimension 5: Cultural Skills (α =.66)			1.24	4.76
I believe some aspects of the classroom environment (e.g. teacher's examples, posters, lecture content) may alienate students from different cultural backgrounds.	3.26 (1.41)	0.79		
My instructors should offer opportunities for activities outside of the classroom related to multicultural affairs.	2.77 (1.25)	0.55		
It is important that universities provide programs designed to promote understanding among students of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.	2.03 (1.07)	0.50		
I think students' ethnic/cultural backgrounds influence their classroom behaviors (e.g., asking questions, participating in groups, offering comments).	2.36 (1.17)	0.49		

Note: *Reverse coded

Cultural Competency by Demographics

After EFA identified of the dimensions, demographic data was compared to results using independent-samples t-tests. An independent samples t-test contrasts the means of two independent samples to determine whether the means are significantly different. Demographics compared to cultural competency dimension included gender, ethnicity and academic classification. Since academic classification was used, an analysis using age was not warranted.

An independent-samples t-test indicated that there was a significant effect ($t(1468)=5.42$, $p<.001$) for *cultural awareness* with males ($M=2.15$, $SD=0.86$) reporting higher agreement than females ($M=1.92$, $SD=0.70$). There was also a significant difference for *cultural desire* with males ($M=2.96$, $SD=1.03$) again reporting higher agreement than females ($M=2.44$, $SD=.717$); ($t(1468)=11.34$, $p<.001$). These results suggest that males in the study demonstrated higher competency in *cultural awareness* and *cultural desire* than females.

For analysis, two groupings were created for the ethnicity category in order to maintain statistical significance: "white" and "non-white." "Non-white" includes the ethnic groups Black, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, and Other. An independent-samples t-test was used to determine if the groups of white and non-white showed any significant difference in among the dimensions. There was a significant difference ($t(1468)=6.95$, $p<.001$) in *cultural knowledge* between the white and non-white groups with non-white ($M=3.14$, $SD=1.13$) showing significantly higher agreement in *cultural knowledge* than the white ($M=2.67$, $SD=.96$). White students ($M=2.68$, $SD=0.87$) showed significantly greater *cultural desire* than non-white students ($M=2.24$, $SD=0.74$); $t(1468)=-7.65$, $p<.001$.

For academic classification analysis, freshmen and sophomore students were grouped into "lower classmen" and juniors and seniors were grouped into "upper classmen." An independent-samples *t*-test revealed that lower classmen (*M*=2.15, *SD*=0.86) showed significantly greater *cultural awareness* than upper classmen (*M*=1.99, *SD*=0.75); *t*(1468)=2.07, *p*<.05. Furthermore, analysis revealed that upper classmen (*M*=4.54, *SD*=0.92) showed a significantly greater *cultural encounters* than lower classmen (*M*=4.38, *SD*=1.13); *t*(1468)=-1.60, *p*<.01.

Impacts of Time Abroad on Cultural Competence Factors

In order to evaluate the differences between the means of each dimensions, a series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)s were used. A Bonferroni correction post hoc-test was to ensure the significance of the ANOVA test by lowering the alpha value (alpha/ number of tests run). Each dimension (*cultural awareness, cultural knowledge, cultural encounters, cultural desire,* and *cultural skills*) was analyzed against the dependent variable, "duration abroad", in order to see if there was a relationship between each dimension and the duration abroad. Results showed significant (*p* <.05) difference between groups for *cultural encounters, cultural desire* and *cultural skills*.

Cultural encounters: A main effect for duration abroad was found for *cultural encounters F*(5,1464) = 2.89, *p*< .05, with students who spent 6 months or more abroad (*M*=4.71, *SD*=0.87) reporting greater competency in *cultural encounters* than those who spent less than 1 week abroad (*M*=4.34, *SD*=1.05).

Cultural desire: Significantly different *cultural desire* was found between two groups (*F*(5,1464) = 2.95, *p*< .05). Further analysis, using Bonferroni correction test indicated that

cultural desire was significantly higher ($p<.05$) for students who spent 1-4 weeks abroad

(M=2.72, SD=0.87) compared to those who spent less than 1 week abroad (M=2.48,

SD=0.83).

Cultural skills: There was also significant difference in *cultural skills* between groups

based on duration of time abroad $F(5,1464) = 5.76$, $p< .001$. Using Bonferroni correction

test, post hoc analysis indicated that *cultural skills* was significantly higher ($p<.01$) in

students who spent 6 months or more abroad (M=1.98, SD=0.64) than students who spent

less than 1 week abroad (M=2.27, SD=0.77) and was significantly higher *(p<.001)* than

students who spent 1-4 weeks abroad (M=2.32, SD=0.78)

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Participants

Of the 1,470 participants who completed the survey, 68% were female. This is not surprising since it has been shown that female students may be more inclined to respond to an online survey (Laguilles, Williams, & Saunders 2011). The University of Mississippi Mini Fact Book (2016) reports that undergraduate students are comprised of 29.0% freshmen, 21.6% sophomores, 22.0% juniors, and 27.4% seniors. The number of students from each class that were sent the survey is not demonstrative of the demographics of the University of Mississippi, and therefore, is not an accurate representation of the student population.

The response rate to the survey (24.5%) was relatively low compared to two other previous similar surveys, measuring cultural competency, distributed at other universities in the U.S. Stebleton, Soria, & Cherney (2013) reported a response rate of 34.7% ($n = 99,810$) and Kehl and Morris (2008) reported a response rate of 52.0% ($n = 520$). This lower response rate may be attributed to the timing of the survey or the limited two week duration the survey was available.

There are various reasons why students may not have completed the survey such as the time to complete, not receiving the survey, or even the current political climate. The survey was determined to take about six minutes to complete based on the pilot focus group. However, potential participants may have seen that there were thirty questions and felt

overwhelmed. Since the survey was sent through a third-party service, Qualtrics ®, some of the emails may have gone into the students' junk mail. Finally, due to the current political climate regarding other ethnicities and cultures, some students may have felt uncomfortable completing a survey regarding cultural competence.

Comments on the survey such as one student, "I feel uncomfortable discussing cultural differences and issues in class because although I see myself as accepting of other cultures,…and "I think the perception of the question and discussion is biased against me as a white female," indicate that students may have felt uncomfortable answering questions regarding cultural competency because they feel like they may be judged based on their responses.

Time Abroad

From the self- reported information on duration abroad, the largest percentage (30.7%) of students spent 1-4 weeks abroad. The University of Mississippi has study abroad programs as short as 1 week to a full academic year. This time spent abroad reported by students could be time spent traveling or studying abroad. If the time reported abroad was part of a school program, this would be considered a short-term study abroad program. According to Kehl and Morris (2008) short term study abroad programs are those which are 8 weeks or less.

The longest option, "6 months or more" may have been reported by students who live permanently abroad and are currently enrolled in a study the University of Mississippi. This category could also include students who have lived abroad on their own, have traveled abroad frequently, have studied abroad and spent time abroad additionally, or any combination thereof. The second most frequent response for duration abroad was "never"

(24.1%). This is almost a quarter of the responding students, so this indicates that a fairly large number of students have not traveled abroad independently or studied abroad. Interestingly, 81.7% of the student participants reported that they had not studied abroad. These results imply that the majority of student participants have traveled abroad but not in connection with the University of Mississippi's programs.

The Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (2005) set a goal for 50% of university students to study abroad in the United States by 2016-2017. Based on the results of this survey, greater than 50% of the responding students at the University of Mississippi have spent time abroad, but only 18.3% have studied abroad.

One study compared duration abroad with cultural competence in students at twelve universities and found that 17.0% had studied abroad while 64.5% had traveled abroad for a total of 81.5% spending time abroad (Stebleton et al., 2013). These rates were close to the reported traveling abroad rates for students in the current study, indicating that the percent of students at the University of Mississippi who travel abroad is comparable to that of other schools.

However, since the University of Mississippi's Mission statement states that the school "provides an academic experience that emphasizes critical thinking; promotes research and creative achievement to advance society; uses its expertise to engage and transform communities; challenges and inspires a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students; offers enriching opportunities outside the classroom; supports lifelong learning; and develops a sense of global responsibility ("Vision, Mission and Core Values," n.d.)," it may be vital that the University take an active role in promoting

study abroad courses to assist in meeting the vision for preparing students to be global citizens.

Cultural Competence Dimensions

The first dimension included questions from the survey such as "Americans will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected." This question fits closely with the definition of cultural awareness which describes both the awareness of one's own culture and how one's culture can impact another. The other questions included in this dimension are shown in Table 3 and also represent cultural awareness.

Cultural awareness and *cultural knowledge* are terms that comprise the cognitive domain of cultural competency. As described in the literature review, the cognitive domain is that which includes background information and change internally in order to guide one's interactions. The affective domain includes *cultural encounters, cultural desire,* and *cultural skills.* These are the competencies which include actual interaction as opposed to knowledge that can be gained simply in a classroom. Since these dimensions were not impacted by time abroad, increased competence in *cultural awareness* and *cultural knowledge* could potentially be achieved in the classroom. Support to increase cultural competence in university courses can be seen in Table 3 as the mean response to *cultural awareness* and *cultural knowledge* indicates low competence for student participants. As an example, the mean response was "disagree" for the question "Americans will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected." Similarly, the mean response to "My instructors use examples in class that incorporate information about various ethnic/cultural groups" was

slightly disagree. Therefore, the University of Mississippi has to further assess how to provide education for students in order to increase proficiency in these competencies.

As seen in a previous study (Coffey, Kamhawi, Fishwick, & Henderson, 2017), one way to improve intercultural sensitivity, part of the *cultural awareness* dimension, is to add 3D virtual computer based teaching. The results of this study showed that immersing students in a 3D virtual environment improved students' intercultural sensitivity at a greater rate than a regular, 2D environment. If the University were to invest in this technology, it could be expected that students' *cultural awareness* could be improved.

Cultural Competency by Demographics

From the independent-sample *t*-tests, it was revealed that the males in the study showed greater competency for both *cultural awareness* and *cultural desire.* A thorough review of the research literature found no previous studies reporting that male students show greater cultural competence than female students. This finding could have many implications for future research regarding cultural competency. This result may imply that male students actively try harder to interact with students from other cultures or that male students are more interested in developing cultural competency. Male students may also be more outspoken than female students and therefore more able to make friends with students of other cultures. Further research should be conducted in order to investigate these results.

Ethnicity also showed an impact on students' cultural competence. The independent-samples *t*-test showed that non-white students displayed greater *cultural knowledge* than white students. It was also shown that white students showed greater levels of *cultural desire* than the non-white students. This could imply that these ethnically different students

experienced different influences that caused these differences in the cultural competence levels. One possible influence on non-white students is attending a school where they are a minority. For this reason, they may be more inclined to notice the differences in their culture or notice when teachers use examples that relate to them or their particular culture. As demonstrated in a previous study, teachers are increasingly using cross-cultural examples in classes. It was surprising that white students showed a greater competence in *cultural desire* than non-white students. The cultural desire competency included questions such as "I frequently interact with students from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds." This was considered surprising due to the largely homogenous ethnicity breakdown at the University of Mississippi, where 77.9% of the students are white (The University of Mississippi, 2016). Since the majority of the population is white, it would be more expected that non-white students would have more occasions to interact with white students than the opposite. However, as seen in previous research, in response to prejudicial attitudes and exclusive behavior by ethnic majority students, ethnic minority students may be inclined to preferentially interact with students from their own ethnic group (Houshmand, Spanierman, & Tafarodi, 2014). If this were the case at the University of Mississippi, this would explain why the non-white students reported lower *cultural desire.* Further research may be beneficial by breaking down the ethnicities further and investigating the causation of this response. Based on this information, the University of Mississippi may need to make changes that foster relationships between varying ethnic groups. As proposed in (Houshmand et al., 2014) study, one option for improvement is for the University to provide workshops for students and teachers to learn how to identify and respond to these micro-aggressions to promote inclusiveness on campus.

The final comparisons made within the demographics for the cultural competencies were between academic classes. The freshmen and sophomores were grouped into lower classmen and the juniors and seniors were grouped into upper classmen. The results from the independent-samples *t*-test showed that the lower classmen showed greater competence in *cultural awareness* than the upper classmen. This could potentially imply that after students spend more than two years at the University of Mississippi they become less cultural competent in cultural awareness. This could be attributed to the ethnic homogeny of the University of Mississippi; however, further research is required to make conclusions. Conversely, upper classmen showed greater competence in *cultural encounters* than lower classmen. This may imply that upper classmen have interacted more with those from other cultural backgrounds than lower classmen and are more comfortable with interactions between the different cultural/ethnic groups. Since only 3.1% of lower classmen reported that they had studied abroad while 24.0% of upper classmen had studied abroad, upper classmen have had a longer amount of time and opportunity to spend time abroad and therefore improve their cultural encounters.

To the knowledge of the researchers, no previous studies exist examining the effects that demographic factors have on competency within the different cultural dimensions. This suggests that more research should be completed to test the generalization of the results. The impact that demographics have on the students' cultural competency implies that a student's background can have an effect on competency as evaluated through cultural dimensions, and therefore, may be a confounding variable in studies that neglect to consider this information.

Impacts of Time Abroad on Cultural Competence Factors

One- way ANOVAs and post-hoc Bonferroni corrections tests were used to analyze the relationship between competency factors and duration abroad. The first significant result was the difference in students' *cultural encounters*. Analysis revealed that students who spent 6 months or longer responded with greater competence in *cultural encounters* than students spent who spent less than 1 week abroad. This result supports that spending time abroad past six months can significantly impact *cultural encounters*. Based on the definition of *cultural encounters*, this difference is not surprising since the more interaction one has with a culture, the more refined interaction one may have with people of the same culture in the future.

Competency in the *cultural desire* dimension was impacted based on time abroad. Students who spent 1-4 weeks abroad showed significantly greater competence in *cultural desire* than students who spent less than 1 week abroad. This result may imply that traveling between 1 week and a month abroad allows one to significantly increase his/her competence in *cultural desire*. By spending more time abroad, one has the chance to improve the desire to interact with others from different cultural backgrounds.

The last cultural dimension that showed significant difference based on time abroad was *cultural skills*. Students that traveled abroad for 6 months or more showed significantly greater competence in *cultural skills* than students who spent either less than four weeks abroad. This result is not surprising since *cultural skills* were defined as proper interaction with people of different backgrounds. This reflects that students who spend 6 months or more abroad are able to significantly increase their cultural skills than students who spend 4 weeks or less abroad.

All three of the dimensions, *cultural encounters, cultural desire,* and *cultural skills* that were impacted based on duration abroad were part of the affective domain. This shows that traveling abroad impacts the affective domain of cultural competence while traveling abroad showed no significant impact on the cognitive domain, *cultural awareness* and *cultural knowledge*. Each result showed greater competence when students spent more than 1 week abroad. Short term study abroad programs were reported at a higher rate (65.9%) than long term study abroad programs (35.1%) in the current study. At the University, short-term study abroad programs can be varying lengths from a couple days to three months. These results indicate that short term study abroad courses that last less than 1 week are insufficient to properly instill in students' cultural competence and therefore schools may not be as successful in increasing students' cultural competency when providing programs that are shorter than 1 week.

Based on study abroad literature, increased cultural competence, intercultural competence, and global mindedness is a common result of time abroad, whether it be through university study abroad programs or students personally traveling abroad. Clarke et al. (2009) reported that students who participated in a study abroad program had stronger scores in cultural pluralism, efficacy, and interconnectedness in the category of global mindedness and stronger scores in cultural adaptation and integration within the intercultural sensitivity category. Similarly, these categories seem to be part of an affective dimension, in particularly the dimensions interconnectedness, cultural adaptation, and integration. Based on results from their study, researchers concluded that students who study abroad are more intercultural proficient than students who do not study abroad.

Kehl and Morris (2008) compared and evaluated global mindedness in students who had not studied abroad, students who had completed a short-term study abroad course, and students who had completed a semester-long study abroad course Similar to the results in this study, they found that global mindedness scores were highest in students who completed a semester-long study abroad course compared to those who had not studied abroad and those who had only completed a short-term study abroad course.

As reported in Stebleton et al.'s (2013) study of 12 universities, students who spent time abroad showed a significant increase in abilities of working with people from other cultures, comfort in working with people in other cultures, understanding global issues, and skills of knowledge in a global context compared to those who had not traveled abroad.

In general, literature and the results of this study suggest that the longer a student spends abroad the more cultural competent he or she becomes and simply reflects that students who spend extended time abroad have an opportunity to learn about other cultures first hand, experience what it is like to be a minority, and have greater interactions with those of other cultures.

Cultural Competence at the University of Mississippi

Although differences in cultural competency based on time abroad are prevalent, the responses to the various questions show low competency. One question from the dimension *cultural encounters*, "I am less patient with individuals of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds" received a mean of 4.88 (agree). From *cultural knowledge*, "my instructors use examples in class that incorporate information about various ethnic/cultural groups." Received a mean of 2.69, or slightly disagree.

This low cultural competency level seen in the survey results displays a need for the University of Mississippi to make a change in order to properly prepare students for the future. Other undergraduate programs have seen similar low competency in students, as reported in Loue, Wilson-Delfosse, and Limbach's (2015) needs assessment study where students displayed both low competency and low belief for the need for cultural competency.

The mission statement of the University of Mississippi states that the school "provides an academic experience that emphasizes critical thinking; promotes research and creative achievement to advance society; uses its expertise to engage and transform communities; challenges and inspires a diverse community of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students; offers enriching opportunities outside the classroom; supports lifelong learning; and develops a sense of global responsibility ("Vision, Mission and Core Values," n.d.)", however this sense of global responsibility is not seen in the results of the survey responses. There are various methods that the University may seek out to achieve a change in this outcome. As displayed in the current study, students who spend a longer time abroad report higher cultural competency; however, few students spend long amounts of time abroad. If more funding were provided to support students to travel abroad for a longer duration, students may achieve increased competence.

A less expensive method, reported in previous literature, adds content regarding cultural competency to existing mandatory classes. LaFave et al. (2015) provided a case study where a semester long project incorporated working with students of different backgrounds to a civil engineering class that was mandatory in order to graduate. Students reported higher intercultural competencies at the end of the semester, after working with group members with different backgrounds.

Perhaps using this model and adding a semester-long project in a mandatory course where students must work with those of a different background on a weekly basis would provide a foundation for cultural competence in students. One such class could be EDHE, a course that both first year students and transfer students enroll in at the University of Mississippi.

A previous study surveyed students from one university regarding diversity and inclusiveness and asked participants to report ways that the school may become more inclusive (Cardona Moltó, Florian, Rouse, & Stough, 2010). Many of the ideas are applicable and reasonable to be incorporated at the University of Mississippi. Some ideas included "more training opportunities on diversity," "workshop for professors on how to accommodate students," and "educate the university community so that they can see for themselves what is a person beyond a label [sic]." A similar survey may be beneficial for the University of Mississippi to distribute a survey to investigate what students, staff, and faculty think may promote cultural competence.

Whether it be providing more financial support for study abroad programs or adding content to courses to aid students in achieving cultural competency, the University of Mississippi should explore different avenues for achieving success in preparing future graduates for a global environment Since the future is becoming increasingly interconnected, this is what students must be prepared for upon graduation. Further research may provide more insight into the best method for the University to achieve this standard. However, as the need for culturally competent graduates increases, the pressure on the University of Mississippi to produce such graduates intensifies.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of duration abroad on students' level of cultural competence as defined by A. Campinha-Bacote and J. Campinha-Bacote (2009). Using survey methods, an online survey, that contained cultural competence measures, was distributed to undergraduate students at the University of Mississippi. Included in the survey was a measurement for a student's duration abroad which was then analyzed for impact on cultural competence outcomes By linking these two outcomes, researchers were able to gain knowledge on the impact traveling abroad on students' cultural competency.

The knowledge gained from this study may help provide insight for future research and guide universities in promotion of study abroad courses and perhaps the addition of cultural competency material in classes. Furthermore, if parents and students can understand the long term effects of traveling abroad on becoming more globalized, both parents and students may make greater efforts to have this experience.

The findings from this study revealed that many factors can contribute to a student's cultural competency. The comparison of the cultural competency dimensions and demographics from the survey showed differences in how gender, ethnicity, and academic classification view difference cultures.

Additionally, findings regarding the impacts of duration abroad on cultural competency dimensions suggests that longer periods abroad (greater than 4-weeks) lead to

increased competencies in the affective domain that includes the *cultural encounters*, *cultural desire*, and *cultural skills* dimensions. The affective domain consists of the action-oriented features of cultural competency rather than the background-classroom features. All three of these dimensions displayed a stronger response in competency for students that spent more time abroad compared to less time (4-weeks or less) abroad.

As the world continues to become more interconnected, businesses are expecting skills from students that reflect these changes. Employees are experiencing inter-cultural interactions at a greater rate than previous generations. As this change occurs, students and universities alike must be prepared to meet these demands. This study has revealed that traveling abroad is a source of learning for students to grow in cultural competency. This information may prove beneficial in guiding universities and students in future decisions regarding cultural competence.

Overall, it is evident that many factors can impact a students' cultural competence. These factors include gender, ethnicity, academic classification, and time traveling abroad. Since time traveling abroad is the only aspect that students can influence about themselves, spending more time abroad may be the best method to improve cultural competence. However, since traveling abroad can be expensive, this option may not be a reality for the majority of students. If universities can aim to incorporate more activities and programs to increase cultural competency graduating students may be more culturally competent.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was the population size of the participants. Since the population was provided by the Office of Institutional Research, Effectiveness, and Planning, a maximum of 6,000 students or 33.3% of the undergraduate student population could be targeted. The demographics of the distribution list provided by the Group Survey Panel did not mirror the demographics of the student population at the University of Mississippi, in particular regarding the academic class distribution; therefore, the results may not be generalized to the entire student population at the University of Mississippi. Another limitation that could be identified was the self-reporting of duration abroad. Students may have over or underreported this background information for a variety of reasons.

The question regarding companions abroad was unable to be used in the current study due to the phrasing of the question. The results from the question were impractical to perform analysis due to the ability to have multiple responses. However, the relationship between cultural competency and duration abroad may be impacted based on the circumstances which students spent time abroad. This question would need to be re-worded for future studies.

Acknowledgements

APPENDICES

Survey Instrument

Q1 Title: Measuring the impact of traveling abroad on University Students' cultural competence.

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Description

 The purpose of this research project is to investigate if students' cultural awareness is impacted by traveling abroad. We would like to ask you a few questions about cultural competency. You will not be asked for your name or any other identifying information. Risks and Benefits

 You may feel uncomfortable answering if you agree or disagree with some of the questions regarding cultural awareness. We do not think that there are any other risks. At the end of the survey, each participant will be directed to another survey where an email can be entered for a raffle to win one of eight $50 Amazon gift cards or ten $10 Starbucks gift cards.   Confidentiality

 No identifiable information will be recorded; therefore, you cannot be identified from this study. Right to Withdraw

 You do not have to take part in this study and you may stop participation in completing the questionnaire at any time.   IRB Approval

 This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a participant of research, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.   Statement of Consent   I have read and understand the above information. By completing the questionnaire, I consent to participate in the study.

By checking this box I certify that I am 18 year of age or older

Q2 My instructors at Ole Miss adequately address multicultural issues.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q3 My instructors use examples in class that incorporate information about various ethnic/cultural groups.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q4 My instructors should offer opportunities for activities outside of the classroom related to multicultural affairs.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q5 My instructors use examples and/or case studies to teach about various cultural and ethnic groups.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q6 I think students' ethnic/cultural backgrounds influence their classroom behaviors (e.g., asking questions, participating in groups, offering comments).
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q7 I believe some aspects of the classroom environment (e.g., teacher's examples, posters, lecture content) may alienate students from different cultural backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q8 I feel comfortable discussing ethnic/cultural issues in the classroom.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q9 I rarely question what I have been taught in college about other ethnicities/cultures.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q10 I try to stay informed of current issues that impact other ethnicities/cultures.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q11 I have friends from other ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q12 I am less patient with individuals of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q13 I typically feel uncomfortable when I am in the company of people from a different ethnic/cultural background.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q14 When I notice cultural differences, my culture tends to have the better approach.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q15 I take into account different perspectives before drawing conclusions about other ethnicities/cultures.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q16 I am willing to defend my own views when they differ from other ethnicities/cultures.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q17 I am accepting of ethnicities/ cultures whose religious and/or spiritual traditions differ from my own.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q18 I frequently interact with students from different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q19 I enjoy trying to understand people's behavior in the context of their culture.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q20 I sometimes feel irritated with people from other countries because they don't understand how we do things here in America.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q21 The United States is enriched by the fact that it is comprised of many people from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q22 Americans will benefit from the fact that the world is becoming more interconnected.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q23 Americans can learn something of value from all ethnicities/cultures.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q24 American values are the best.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q25 I think of myself, not only as a citizen of my country but also as a citizen of the world.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disgree
o   Strongly disagree

Q26 I often think about the kind of world we are creating for future generations.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree
o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q27 It is important that universities provide programs designed to promote understanding among students of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds.
o   Strongly agree
o   Agree
o   Somewhat agree
o   Somewhat disagree

o   Disagree
o   Strongly disagree

Q28 Tell us a little about yourself

Q29 Approximately how many days or weeks have you spent living/traveling OUTSIDE of the United States.
o   I have never travelled outside of the United States
o   less than 1 week (or 7 days)
o   1-4 weeks (7-30 days)
o   1-3 months
o   3-6 months
o   6-12 months
o   greater than 1 year

Q30 Study Abroad Course
o   Short Term (less than a semester)
o   Long Term (1 semester-a year)
o   I have not studied abroad.

Q31 Age
o   Under 18
o   18-19
o   20-21
o   22-23
o   24+

Q32 When traveling/living outside of the United States, who have you travelled/lived with? (You may select multiple answers)
☐   I have never travelled outside of the United States
☐   With family
☐   With friends
☐   Alone
☐   With my high school
☐   With a University class
☐   As a student at a international university

Q33 Please feel free to provide any comments.

_____

APPENDIX 2

Student Distribution Email

Hello _____,

I am Baylee Edwards, an undergraduate student in the Nutrition and Dietetics Program. I am currently conducting research on the impacts that traveling abroad has on students' cultural understanding.

The attached, anonymous survey generally takes **less than 6 minutes** to complete; at the end of the survey, there is a link to enter a raffle to win one of 18 gift cards (**eight $50 Amazon gift cards or ten $10 Starbucks gift cards**).

All answers to the initial survey are anonymous and cannot be linked to you. Although your participation is valuable to this project, it is still voluntary, and you can refuse to participate without facing any penalties.

In order to enter, you must be at least 18 years of age and be a current undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Mississippi.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Copy and paste or Follow this link to take the survey:
${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}

Thank you for your time,
Baylee Edwards
ebedward@go.olemiss.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:
${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
${l://SurveyURL}

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe}

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