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SHORT-TERM STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY

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BY

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the growing popularity of short-term study abroad programs and aims to determine the impact of such programs on producing intercultural sensitivity. A pre and post-departure survey were administered to undergraduate and graduate students to analyze students' perceptions of their own intercultural sensitivity prior to a short-term study abroad experience and after. This study uses the Intercultural Sensitivity Index developed by Christa Lee Olson and Kent R. Kroger in 2001 to assess the students' levels of intercultural sensitivity. The study reveals that this particular short-term experience had minimal impact on participants' levels of intercultural sensitivity, but illustrates that short-term programs continue to be valid experiences within the study abroad field. This research provides useful information to educators regarding the effectiveness of short-term study abroad programs and helps them determine whether these programs are meeting their intended goals.

Introduction

Globalization is a term that constantly surrounds the educational arena today. There are continuous discussions about the growing interconnectedness of the world and the impact this has on education. The spread of technology, wide use of English, and international trade all contribute to a more connected global environment. Velta Clarke (2004) suggests that as the world becomes smaller and various cultures intermix, intercultural education is a necessity. Schools hold the power of preparing students to meet the demands of a global society and this must be achieved through preparing students to be "world citizens" (p.52). In an effort to meet the demands of globalization, the education sector is increasingly promoting study abroad programs to encourage students to experience the international world firsthand and prepare them with intercultural knowledge. Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, and McMillen (2009) support a similar idea that study abroad programs are being used to promote diversity and openness toward other cultures. Many scholars in the field argue that students learn best about diverse cultures when they experience them directly and study abroad programs enable this opportunity. Clarke et al. states that study abroad programs enable students to "reconceptualize their views of the various cultures they encounter" (p. 3). It is hoped that by experiencing a new culture students will be more understanding of the world outside their home and better prepared for a future where globalization trends are the norm.

With the concept of world citizenship and globalization comes the necessity for intercultural sensitivity. Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) define this concept as "the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences" (p. 422). Ian Hill (2006) terms this idea intercultural understanding and suggests that attaining this is the ultimate goal of education abroad. Hill extends the definition highlighting the importance of cognitive knowledge, respect, and empathy in order to develop a positive appreciation for other cultures (p. 12). Students who attain a level of intercultural sensitivity are better able to work with individuals from different cultures, appreciate difference, and view the world as a conglomerate of cultural identities. Fuller (2007) further illustrates the goals of study abroad programs such as "increasing students' awareness of the interdependence of nations, enlarging their valuation of diversity, developing global perspectives, sharpening language proficiency, and increasing one's stock in the future job market" (p. 322). Students who attend a study abroad program and come away with a level of intercultural sensitivity are better able to meet the demands of a global world.

Studying abroad has grown tremendously in an effort to meet the demands of globalization and promote marketable students for the job arena. Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, and McMillen (2009) report that in the last ten years the number of students studying abroad has grown by 150% (p. 1). In recent years, study abroad departments have increasingly emphasized short-term international experiences. The Institute for International Education (IIE) reports that for the 2006-2007 school year 55% of students studying abroad are participating in short-term programs, 40% attend mid-length programs, and 4% attend long-term programs (Institute for International Education (IIE), 2008). Short-term programs are increasingly popular for many reasons such as financial

feasibility and lack of interference with courses of study because many programs can take place during summer or spring break. Brubaker (2007) suggests that short-term programs allow students to take credits that fulfill degree requirements outside of their home campus, and offer comfort to students who would rather travel as a group and be away from home for less time (p. 118). Chieffo and Griffiths (2009) provide other ideas about the popularity of short-term programs suggesting they are ideal for non-traditional students who may be older or hold jobs, and would be unable to participate in a longer experience. The authors note that short-term opportunities allow students to engage in multiple experiences abroad contributing to the appeal. These reasons as well as other personal motives are encouraging students to choose short-term programs when they study abroad.

Institutions of higher education continue to promote short-term programs with intercultural sensitivity as a desired outcome, so understanding the nature of a short-term program is of great importance. According to Chieffo and Griffiths (2009) short-term programs include "anything less than a standard academic semester or quarter" (p. 366). Short-term programs can be during the academic school year or in summer, can include internships, service learning projects, or regular academic courses. Many short-term programs are led by faculty members who travel with a group of students to an international location and often relevant themes determine the site location. Short-term programs often incorporate site visits with course instruction, have U.S or international instructors, but usually there is never direct enrollment in an international institution due to the small amount of time for study (p. 366). Given the limited duration of short-term programs it becomes necessary to evaluate if such programs are producing students with

intercultural sensitivity. Schools continue to promote short-term programs but there appears to be little effort to assess whether these programs are meeting their goals. This study evaluates the impact short-term study abroad programs have on intercultural sensitivity to provide insight and further desire for research on the place of short-term programs in the study abroad field.

<div align="center">Theoretical Framework</div>

Many studies surrounding intercultural sensitivity focus on comparing the experiences of students who remain on campus versus those who choose to study abroad. Across the board, results indicate that students who study abroad are more advantageous in their development of intercultural sensitivity than their student counterparts who remain on campus. For example, Chieffo and Griffiths (2004) conducted a survey of students at the University of Delaware to measure global awareness which they define as "intercultural awareness, personal growth and development, awareness of global interdependence, and functional knowledge of world geography and language" (p. 167). They concluded that students abroad, even attending programs for as little as four weeks, were more aware of different cultural perspectives, engaged in activities to learn about a new culture, and were more patient with non-English speaking peers. This resulted in overall greater global awareness than students who remained on campus. Fuller (2007) carried out a study measuring intercultural sensitivity development in theological students who studied abroad in contrast to those who remained at home. Although his overall results proved to be statistically insignificant, the study abroad students scored higher for intercultural sensitivity levels than their peers who did not study abroad (p. 327). Again,

this indicates the correlation between studying abroad and the development of intercultural sensitivity.

Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, and McMillen (2009) studied the intercultural proficiencies of study abroad students which encompasses global mindedness, intercultural communication, openness to diversity, and intercultural sensitivity. They used the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) (Olson and Kroeger, 2001) to measure intercultural understanding as well as other intercultural proficiency scales of students abroad versus their on-campus peers. Clarke et al. (2009) concluded that study abroad students had higher levels of global mindedness and higher levels of intercultural sensitivity scores in the acceptance, adaptation, and integration stages outlined by Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), which the ISI uses as its theoretical framework. However, it should be noted that in the first three stages from the DMIS scale, denial, defense, and minimization, there was no difference in score between the student groups. Interestingly, Clarke et al. (2009) reports that the higher scores in the DMIS stages outlined in this study suggest that students who study abroad "may be better prepared to understand life choices and behaviors within another cultural context" (p. 5). This illustrates the impact study abroad has, although not always statistically great, on the personal development of intercultural understanding in students.

In another study involving a comparison between on-campus students and those that study abroad, Rundstrom Williams (2005) focuses on the intercultural communication aspect of intercultural sensitivity. The study uses the Intercultural Sensitivity Index along with various other measurement instruments to determine the variance in communication skills between the student groups. In correlation with the

previously discussed studies, the results concluded that students who studied abroad had greater intercultural communication skills (p. 368). It also pointed out that location did not determine the level of intercultural skills, and experience with multiple cultures contributed to higher scores. This again highlights that exposure to different cultures through study abroad enhances intercultural skills in students.

Another component that researchers focus on is program duration and intercultural sensitivity. Various studies look at how the length of a program impacts the study abroad experience and development of intercultural skills. Zamastil-Vondrova (2005) used journal writing and interview sessions to evaluate students' perceptions of their short-term study abroad experiences. Zamastil-Vondrova wanted to focus on the intrinsic value of short-term programs by determining if they achieve the goal of enhancing global citizenship. It was concluded that overall students had a "greater level of sensitivity and patience" with regard to cultural and linguistic awareness (p. 46). Students also developed practical coping skills to meet challenges and a realization of the importance of international issues. Although this study focused on perceived skill development, it provides evidence that short-term programs are valid options for producing global-mindedness.

Brubaker (2007) carried out a similar study using interviews and student letter writing to gain insight into the cultural experiences of students on a short-term study abroad program. She determined that culture learning needs to be incorporated into the program development because although students were aware of cultural differences, they did not always understand these differences (p. 120). The study revealed that students had a greater awareness of cultural differences and were open-minded about these

differences, but were not able to fully understand what they were experiencing possibly due to the duration of a short-term program. This is important because it again illustrates that short-term programs have the capacity to produce openness and experience with diversity, but may not allow for full development of skills to manage this new knowledge.

Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004) conducted a study that focused directly on intercultural sensitivity and program duration. The researcher focused on a seven week language program and a sixteen week language program in Mexico. It was concluded that program duration does impact intercultural sensitivity and the students on the longer program had greater levels of intercultural sensitivity. Using a pre and post-departure analysis, Medina-Lopez-Portillo discovered that 67% of students on the longer program advanced to a new DMIS level, while only 31% from the seven week program advanced to a different stage (p.185). Based on these results it is feasible to assume that students who study abroad longer have greater intercultural sensitivity development. Interestingly, Fuller (2007) noted the importance of duration in his study. Although it was not his primary intention, he discovered that students who had studied abroad the longest achieved the highest scores throughout his study and therefore higher levels on intercultural sensitivity.

A final study that is worth noting is that of Velta Clarke (2004) which analyzed the global awareness of college students. Although it does not directly focus on students who study abroad it is worth highlighting because it incorporates similar ideas of measuring the perception students have about their own global awareness. Clarke suggests that students who appreciate various cultures are more globally aware and better

able to adapt to the global world. Of the randomly selected college students, 60% studied a foreign language, 38% had visited a foreign country, and 73% took a course in a foreign culture (p. 57). The study confirmed that there is a positive correlation between global awareness and internationalism illustrating that "knowledge about a country and ability to operate there enhanced sensibility and a desire to interact with other peoples" (p. 62). This study is important to research in this field because it illustrates the impact study abroad programs could have on students who already perceive themselves to be globally aware. By continuing exposure with foreign cultures greater awareness is possible and intercultural sensitivity achievable.

Research Question

What is the impact of short-term study abroad programs on producing intercultural sensitivity? Does a shorter study abroad duration increase levels of intercultural sensitivity? Will a short-term program have little to no impact on intercultural sensitivity levels? How do students perceive their own levels of intercultural sensitivity? Do these perceptions change following completion of a study abroad experience? Do short-term programs have relevance in the study abroad arena by positively impacting intercultural sensitivity?

Research Methodology

This case study used the survey method in order to elicit students' personal responses to the questions that were administered. This is important because it helped determine students' perceptions of intercultural sensitivity prior to attending a short-term study abroad program and following the program. The survey was derived from the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) developed by Olson and Kroeger (2001). It consisted

of 48 questions answered using a 5-point Likert scale as well as several objective

questions necessary for obtaining demographic information. (Refer to Appendix A) The

survey invitations were sent to students via email with the assistance of a study abroad

administrator from the cooperating institution, which is located in a large urban

environment in the mid-west. Opinio Survey Software was used to administer the survey

to students. The study abroad administrator sent the invitation and the link to the survey

directly to the students to ensure their privacy. The survey was distributed to 84 students

that attended a March study abroad program at the cooperating institution; there were 31

graduate and 53 undergraduate students. Study abroad locations included Ireland,

Mexico, Jordan, and Belgium. The duration of a particular program lasted roughly one

week and took place at the end of March. The pre-departure survey was distributed to all

students in early March in order for successful completion. The survey included a section

on demographic information, and questions about previous intercultural experiences and

reasons for studying abroad. This same survey was distributed in mid April after students

completed their study abroad experience. The survey was again distributed to all students

whether they completed the pre-departure survey or not. Demographic information was

included on both surveys so that students who did not complete the initial survey could

be properly represented in the final survey.

The Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) was developed from Milton Bennett's

Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) which includes six theoretical

stages of intercultural sensitivity including denial, defense, minimization, acceptance,

adaptation, and integration (Olson and Kroeger, 2001, p. 119). Hammer, Bennett, and

Wiseman (2003) describe the stages indicating that denial is when an individual's culture

is the only true culture and differences are not acknowledged. The defense stage

discriminates against differences, while minimization eases the differences by finding

commonalities in an individual's worldview. Acceptance is when multiple cultural

worldviews are accepted as equal and adaptation garners the ability to empathize with

elements of various cultures. The final stage of integration is when an individual's

cultural identity borders more than one culture. The ISI survey uses Bennett's model to

group global competencies and experiences into stages of intercultural sensitivity.

According to Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) the DMIS model assumes "that as

one's experience of cultural difference becomes more complex and sophisticated, one's

potential competence in intercultural relations increases" (p. 423). Therefore an increased

level of intercultural sensitivity is hoped to allow an individual to understand greater

cultural differences.

The Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) was chosen because it is believed to be

the most appropriate tool for this study. Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, and McMillen (2009)

suggest that study abroad programs contribute to the production of intercultural

sensitivity and the ISI is suitable to measure this because it not only determines which

stage an individual is in, but also levels of global competency. Olson and Kroeger (2001)

incorporated additional sections within their index beyond that of the DMIS stages to

evaluate these competencies using indexed questions on substantive knowledge,

perceptual understanding and intercultural communication. Substantive knowledge is

important because it evaluates "knowledge of cultures, languages and world issues,"

while perceptual understanding refers to "open-mindedness" and that "one's worldview is

not a universal perspective" (p. 118). Rundstrom Williams (2005) notes the intercultural

communication element of the ISI, which is of great importance to understanding intercultural sensitivity, stating that the "questions draw on the skills needed to engage effectively with others—including empathy, cross-cultural awareness, intercultural relations, and cultural mediation" (p. 361). The ISI is appropriate for this study because it uses the subset of indexes to enhance the understanding of intercultural sensitivity within an individual. The use of this index allowed the results from the pre and post-departure surveys to be analyzed to determine the overall impact of short-term study abroad programs on producing intercultural sensitivity.

Data Analysis

The Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI) uses a 5-point Likert scale to elicit responses from survey participants. A score of 5 describes the student extremely well, while a score of 1 never describes the student. The survey results have been broken down by a pre and post-departure comparison, analyzing demographic trends, specific questions, and indexed stages. Upon completion of the survey the average score between 1 and 5 was generated based on the responses for each question. The average score for each stage within the index was also calculated. The standard deviation was calculated for all questions and those figures determined to be the highest and lowest deviations were analyzed. The highest response rates were calculated for each question; this data is gathered by calculating those respondents who selected a 5 from the scale. This is necessary to evaluate which questions generated a change in response rate pre and post-study abroad. All demographic information was gathered to provide insight into the backgrounds of the survey participants. This information included data about race, gender, age, school major, previous study abroad experiences, as well as students'

thoughts on intercultural experiences. The overall data of the pre-departure survey was compared with the overall data of the post-departure survey to develop conclusions about the impact of short-term study abroad programs on intercultural sensitivity.

The purpose of generating this material is to present data to study abroad administrators as well as other educators on the effectiveness of short-term study abroad programs on creating intercultural sensitivity. By analyzing the data and discovering any differences in sample averages, the relationship of study abroad programs and intercultural sensitivity levels was determined. The percentage of participants who responded highly to a question, meaning they selected "describes me extremely well" on the scale, was calculated to further evaluate the impact of the experience on a particular question within a stage. Overall, the data is presented to help educators evaluate short-term programs and determine if they are meeting the desired outcome of producing intercultural sensitivity. Educators can use this study to develop assessment tools to evaluate how short-term programs fit into the goals of their department. It is hoped that this study highlights the need for program evaluation and helps educators as they develop appropriate study abroad options for their institutions.

Limitations

General limitations of this study include the various experiences that students encountered at their particular study abroad site. All locations exposed students to different cultural and educational experiences influencing them in different ways. The choice to work with a university in a large urban area incorporated participants with greater intercultural experiences prior to studying abroad than possibly working with students from a rural environment. The decision to work with one particular school

suggests that the findings are not representative of all short-term study abroad programs, just this particular experience. Also, the small participation rate implies that these findings are representative of only the students who responded to the survey and can not be generalized beyond this study. Another limitation is that all students who participated in the March short-term study abroad programs at the cooperating institution were invited to participate in the survey; factors such as previous study abroad experiences, knowledge of a language, or personal cultural backgrounds did not factor into the selection process. In organizing the survey in this fashion a control group was not present for comparison. The voluntary nature of the survey presented limitations in the fact that the survey was unable to guarantee participation of the same students both prior to studying abroad and after.

According to Medina-Lopez-Portillo (2004) surveys should be administered more than twice; a third survey is beneficial months after studying abroad so the experience is properly internalized. Due to time constraints for completion of this project a third survey was not administered. Another limitation was the privacy component in the administration of the survey. Being that the survey was administered directly from the cooperating institution and in order to protect students' privacy, no identifiers were used in order to determine if the same student participated in both the pre and post-departure surveys. If students would have been able to be identified, the results of the survey could illustrate the impact on intercultural sensitivity levels from the study abroad experience on a particular student.

Findings and Conclusions

Pre-departure Demographics

Pre and post-departure surveys were sent to 84 students at the cooperating institution. Of the 84 students, 16 students completed the pre-departure survey, which is a response rate of 19%. The pre-departure survey was comprised of fifteen female respondents and one male, while there were 28 males and 56 females participating in all of the study abroad locations. Of the 16 participants, six were freshman and the remaining ten were graduate students. Fourteen students described themselves as white or Caucasian, while the remaining two students described themselves as Hispanic and of mixed race. This is a common demographic of study abroad experiences as the Institute for International Education (IIE) reports that during the 2007-2008 school year 81.8% of students abroad where white and 1.2% were multiracial (Institute for International Education (IIE), 2009). This data reveals that of the pre-departure participants 87.5% were white and less than 1% of students were multiracial, corresponding with typical demographic trends of students studying abroad. (Refer to Appendix B) From this sample, two students studied in Dublin, seven in Brussels, two in Merida, Mexico, three in Chiapas, Mexico, and two students went to Jordan. There were eight different majors represented but almost all were from the social sciences; International Public Service Management and Public Administration were the most popular.

When asked about previous international travel one freshman student reported to have no experience abroad. Four participants, consisting of freshman and graduate students, had only personal international experience but have never studied abroad. The remaining eleven students all had experience studying abroad. Students were asked about

their intercultural experiences and only one student felt that she had no such experiences. While some students noted experiences with foreign exchange students growing up, the majority suggested the community where they work and attend this institution has provided them with their greatest intercultural experiences because of the exposure to diversity that is offered in a large urban environment.

Students were asked to explain their reason for studying abroad and why they chose a particular location. All of the students who went to Brussels seemed particularly interested in the specific course being offered and learning about European Union foreign policy. Two students traveling to Mexico noted their knowledge of the Spanish language as a reason for choosing their location. Interestingly, several students did not cite clear reasons as to why a specific location was chosen other than it seeming exciting, but suggested the short duration of the program enticed them. A student who chose Jordan explains that "because this program is so short, it gives me some experience for what traveling abroad is like, and the destination is also such an exciting and interesting location which I feel I never would be able to visit otherwise." Another student chose studying over spring break to experience a different culture "without complete submersion." While a third student noted the financial aspect of a short-term program stating, "I've never had an international experience from the perspective as a traveler and this was a relatively cheap way of doing so." This is important feedback because it correlates with previously discussed ideas that short-term programs are appealing to students because of the minimal time spent away from home and the affordability.

Post-Departure Demographics

The post-departure survey garnered eleven responses, which is a response rate of 13%. I had envisioned the response rate would be higher upon completion of the study abroad program, but in actuality the response rate decreased by 6%. I believe the decrease in responses can be attributed to the fact that the surveys were sent roughly two weeks after students had returned from being abroad and their institution sent their own evaluations a week prior. Students may have felt overwhelmed with surveys and therefore neglected to participate. The timing of the survey, being that it was sent at the end of the term when students are busy with other projects and finals, probably contributed to a low response rate. I also believe if greater time were allotted between the submission of the pre and post-departure surveys more students would have participated. Taking the same survey in a relatively close amount of time may have been confusing and some students who took the first survey may have chosen not to participate a second time.

From the eleven responses, there were seven females and four males. Less than 1% of participants were male from the pre-departure survey, yet 36% of respondents were male from the post-departure survey. This is a significant difference from the pre and post-departure surveys even though the overall numbers of male participants was relatively low for both surveys. Low male participation in study abroad programs is typical with the Institute for International Education (IIE) reporting that 65.1% of students abroad were female and 34.9% were male during the 2007-2008 school year (Institute for International Education (IIE), 2009). In this particular study, 33.3% of students abroad were male and 66.6% were female, corroborating these statistics. While

the pre-departure survey garnered more responses from graduate students, the post-departure survey had more freshman respondents, with eight freshman and three graduate students participating. There were nine individuals who identified themselves as white or Caucasian and two students described themselves as mixed race. (Refer to Appendix B) Three students studied in Jordan, two in Ireland, two in Chiapas, Mexico, three in Merida, Mexico, and one in Brussels. Similar to the pre-departure survey, students mainly majored in the social science fields such as International Public Service Management and Psychology.

Students from the post-departure survey described their international experiences revealing that over half of the participants had previously studied abroad. Similar to the pre-departure survey, only one individual, also a freshman, had no international experience prior to this study abroad program. Four students had never studied abroad but participated in personal trips to places such as Italy and Spain. In the pre-departure survey, students cited the place where they live or work as providing them with their greatest intercultural experiences. Although this was mentioned in the post-departure survey, a more common sentiment was that family life had provided intercultural experiences. Many students felt that familial backgrounds such as Cuban grandparents or relatives from Columbia allowed for the greatest intercultural influences.

The post-departure survey asked students their reasons for studying abroad and why they chose a particular location. Similar to the pre-departure, there were two individuals who chose Mexico because of their familiarity with the language. Four students chose their study abroad site because of the course being offered. A couple of students offered more general reasons for studying abroad, but knew they wanted to

experience something unknown. A student who went to Jordan said the program

"presented a once in a lifetime opportunity for me to see a land and experience a culture I

had little knowledge of." On the other spectrum, two students chose Mexico because it

influences their life at home and they "can relate to Mexican culture." This reveals that

while some students chose places because they were exotic and completely foreign to

them, others selected locations that felt more familiar and a sense of comfort in.

General Findings

Now that a picture of the demographic component of this study has been

developed, it is important to evaluate the results of the 48 survey questions. Question 34

from the pre-departure survey had the highest response of students selecting "describes

me extremely well," with 93.8% of participants stating they want to continue learning

about the world's cultures and issues. The same question asked of participants from the

post-departure survey elicited a response rate of 70%, while one student chose to not

answer the question. (Refer to Appendix C) It is interesting that following studying

abroad the sample reported lower, rather than improving students' desires to continue

learning about the world. However, by analyzing the score averages, the results show that

the pre-departure score was 4.9 and post-departure it was 4.7. This is only an overall

change of 4% in students wanting to continue learning about the world and cultural

issues. (Refer to Appendix D) Question 34 had the lowest standard deviation of all

questions pre-trip with that being .24. Post-trip the standard deviation was .46, which was

also quite low. This shows the minimal variation in averages for this question from both

surveys, indicating the strength of the question in revealing students' interest in

continuing their education about the world. The lower sample score as well as higher

deviation post-departure could be attributed to the fact that one person refrained from answering the question, impacting the results, while all respondents participated pre-departure.

Question 15, which refers to respecting behavior across cultures, revealed that 75% of students felt this belief described them extremely well. Post-trip only 54.5% of participants responded highly to this question. This question falls into the acceptance stage of the index. Olson and Kroger (2001) describe this stage stating that "those who have moved into this stage have undergone a shift in their perceptions of difference; they no longer find differences threatening" (p. 128). This would suggest that prior to studying abroad students were more accepting of difference. However, if we compare the average score of responses for all questions falling within the acceptance stage there actually proves to be little difference in responses. Pre-trip the average score was 4.4 and post-trip it was 4.3, making it reasonable to suggest that this study abroad experience had little impact on students' overall acceptance of difference.

In calculating standard deviation, it was determined that question 45 post-trip had the highest deviation of 1.67 for all questions across both surveys. This question describes working with individuals from at least three other countries. I believe this question had a wide range of responses for a number of factors. One suggestion for this variance is the fact that five individuals did not respond to the question for unknown reasons. The question elicited responses from two students selecting five from the scale and two students selecting one from the scale. The question is very specific in that it focuses on a professional work environment so it does not pertain to all students, especially those who are undergraduates. Therefore, it would make sense that there would

be responses on both ends of the scale. The remaining responses were a four and a three, and as I can only speculate about these selections, I would suggest that participants might have experience working with individuals from other countries, but possibly they do not do so on a regular basis. Another possible reason for the varied responses is that participants work with less than three people as the question specifies, but still have interaction with people from other countries. Individual interpretation and personal circumstances influenced responses resulting in a selection of a mid-range score within the scale.

In reviewing the post-departure surveys, question 36 elicited the highest response rate of students selecting 5 from the Likert scale. Eighty percent of participants felt that their worldview is not universal, while one student refrained from answering the question. The pre-departure survey produced a 68.8% response rate for the same question. (Refer to Appendix C) This reveals that the post-trip sample reported higher in acknowledging that their worldview is not universal. By looking at those questions grouped under the category perceptual understanding, where question 36 falls, we again see minimal change because the average score from the pre-departure survey was 4.4 and post-departure it was 4.2. (Refer to Appendix D) Clearly, we cannot suggest that the study abroad experience had significant impact on participants' perceptual understanding as the response rate revealed a minimal change of 4%.

Denial and Defense

By analyzing the indexed questions categorically, the survey results reveal that there was little to almost no change in average scores pre and post-study abroad. For example, participants averaged a score of 2.7 on the pre-departure survey and 2.4 post-

departure for the denial stage of questions. Similarly, for the defense stage, respondents averaged scores of 1.5 and 1.7, respectively. (Refer to Appendix D) These overall averages imply that the study abroad experience had little impact on students' intercultural sensitivity levels within these stages. The denial stage depicts individuals with having minimal experiences with differences and maintaining levels of isolation in order to maintain denial of cultural differences. Olson and Kroger (2004) describe the defense stage as such that those cultural differences can no longer be denied but "these differences feel threatening" and individuals become defensive in dealing with those differences (p. 120). The low responses within these categories can be attributed to the urban environment experienced by the participants within this survey. Individuals from large, metropolitan environments would be accustomed to experiencing differences and would likely have low response rates to the denial and defense stages (p. 125). This minimal variation in averages is verified by the standard deviation of .77 for the defense stage, the lowest of all the pre-departure indexed categories. Of the five questions within this section, all responses besides one were below a four on the scale. This reiterates the notion that participants where more comfortable and less defensive towards diversity because of their environment resulting in low scores with minimal variance.

When the denial stage is broken down by individual questions we see that question one from the pre-departure survey had the highest response rate with 50% of students reporting they do not notice cultural differences, and two students refrained from answering this question. On the subsequent survey this question also received the highest response rate, yet only 18.2% of students described themselves this way. (Refer to Appendix C) This might suggest that the study abroad experience had a significantly

positive impact on a student's ability to notice difference, with 32% fewer students

reporting they do not notice cultural differences. The average scores for question one pre

and post-departure also reported a change from 4.4 to 3.5, respectively. (Refer to

Appendix E) This is a change between the samples of 18% which reveals the impact of

the study abroad experience post-trip on this particular question. A lower average score

for this question indicates that the influence of the short-term experience may have

inspired fewer students to be in denial of cultural differences, therefore contributing to

their development of intercultural sensitivity.

By looking at an individual question within the defense stage, question nine

reveals itself to be worthy of evaluation. Averages for this question pre and post-

departure were compatible with scores of 1.2 and 1.17, respectively. With further analysis

question nine from the post-departure survey revealed itself to have the lowest standard

deviation of all questions, that being .37 and a similarly low deviation of .4 was

determined from the pre-departure results. I believe the minimal variance was impacted

by the fact that post-departure only six of the eleven participants actually submitted

responses to this question, while five students refrained from answering. Pre-departure

we see a similar trend as only five students responded and eleven students chose to leave

this question blank. This question refers to having lived in another country for two or

more years and discusses incorporating values of another culture into American society.

In reviewing the question, I believe it was a bit convoluted because of the multiple issues

it addressed, leading many students to bypass the question entirely. In actuality, only one

student from the pre-departure survey had experience living abroad for more than two

years, but even this individual responded with a two on the Likert scale, presumably

because of the complicated nature of the question. Due to students' overall lack of

experience living abroad it would make sense that responses did not deviate from "Never

Describes Me."

Adaptation

Question 19 of the survey greatly encompasses the adaptation stage of the index.

It states that "culture is a process" and "one engages in culture." At this stage a person

would be very interculturally sensitive in their ability to feel for other cultures and would

have the ability to connect with different cultures while maintaining their own cultural

perspective (Olson and Kroger, 2001, p. 123). The survey results reveal that pre-study

abroad 31.3% of participants describe themselves in this manner. The post-departure

results report that 54.6% of participants believe question 19 describes them extremely

well. This illustrates a change of 23.3% of students who believe that culture is a process

of engagement. (Refer to Appendix C) This question also yielded the greatest sample

change pre to post-departure of all questions within the survey, with a pre-trip average

score of 3.9 and a post-trip average of 4.5. This reveals the sample reported a 12% higher

score post-trip for question 19. (Refer to Appendix E) If the overall average score for the

adaptation section of the index is calculated, it reveals a 4.1 for the pre-departure survey

and a 4.3 for the post-departure, signifying an overall reported higher level of

intercultural sensitivity within the adaptation stage of 6%. (Refer to Appendix D)

Although 6% is not an overly high change, it does show that the short-term experience

may have contributed to students' growth within this stage. This section had the lowest

standard deviation of all sections within the post-departure survey with a .73 and pre-

departure this was comparable at .79. Questions within this section refer to positive

feelings about cultural differences and expanding an individual's worldview. The low variance in scores reveals the strength of this section in illustrating the impact of the study abroad experience on the survey participants. Although overall higher sample reporting was minimal, the consistency of response scores reinforced the notion that the study abroad experience did in fact influence intercultural sensitivity.

Olson and Kroeger (2001) indicate that for and individual to attain the level of intercultural sensitivity present within the adaptation stage of Bennett's DMIS model, a person would need to have spent two years or more in a different environment (p. 123). However, the survey results reveal that students post-departure reported less overall time spent abroad prior to this experience than those participants in the pre-departure survey, yet their scores reported higher. For example, six students participating in the pre-departure survey reported previous international experience for 4 months or longer, with one study actually living for 2 ½ years in one locale and 6 months in another. Students from the post-departure results reported no one length of time abroad greater than three weeks. So in contradiction of the time felt necessary to properly process multiple cultural references, students with less overall experience abroad strengthened their intercultural sensitivity levels within this stage following their study abroad experience. This indicates the positive impact of the short-term experience and it is reasonable to suggest that students' responses to question 19 reported higher because they had just engaged in a new cultural experience first-hand.

Substantive Knowledge

Questions 25 through 31 comprised the substantive knowledge section of the index, but question 29 revealed the most interesting results. The average score pre-

departure was 4.2 while the post-departure average was 2.9. (Refer to Appendix E) Fifty

percent of students pre-departure selected "describes me extremely well" for this

question, which states "I am interested in and spend considerable time working on global

issues," while no students post-departure selected a 5 on the scale. (Refer to Appendix C)

This indicates that there was a reported lower average score by 26%. What becomes of

concern is why so many fewer students responded to question 29 in this manner. Possibly

the wording of the question could have led students to select a lower score within the

scale because they may be interested in global issues, but maybe they don't actually

spend considerable time working on such issues and they were confused as to how to

properly answer the question. Another influencing factor may be that more freshmen

participated in the post-departure survey than in the pre-departure survey, and their

interest in global issues may just be developing. This was the first study abroad

experience for almost half of the post-departure students, so their knowledge of global

issues and ability to work on these issues is most likely just beginning.

Question 27 provided revealing results within this section. The average scores for

this question pre and post-departure were 3.5 and 2.3, respectively. This question had a

standard deviation of 1.45, the highest of all questions from the pre-departure survey, and

a deviation of 1.19 post-departure. This question refers to being knowledgeable of "at

least one language and culture" outside of a student's own culture. I believe this question

had such high variance in responses because of the specificity of the question. Having a

language skill or competent knowledge of another culture is a very particular ability that

is not present amongst all participants. Therefore, it is understandable that this question

elicited a wide range of responses from students, which in turn impacted the high standard deviation determined for this question.

By evaluating the overall average scores for the substantive knowledge section we again see lower scores reported. The averages were 3.7 and 3.2, respectively, indicating a 10% change. (Refer to Appendix D) This section also produced the highest standard deviations of 1.29 and 1.39 for both the pre-departure and post-departure surveys, respectively. Questions within this component of the survey refer to linguistic competency, education about various cultures, and the ability to comprehend globalization concepts. For the demographics representative within this survey, especially regarding the post-departure participants, it would be reasonable to suggest that students do no have substantial knowledge of global issues and are just beginning to develop their understanding of an intercultural society. The specific skills and competencies relating to global issues within this section would pertain to some students and not others, creating wide ranges of responses. I do not believe the study abroad experience negatively impacted the response of students within this section, but again attribute the sample reporting lower scores to the overall inexperience of the post-departure students. These results also make it reasonable to suggest that one week spent abroad is not enough time to produce a substantial impact on this type of knowledge and subsequently the intercultural sensitivity levels of students within this sub-section of the survey.

Final Conclusions

In coming to a final conclusion about the impact of short-term study abroad programs on intercultural sensitivity, this study reveals that overall a one-week experience provided minimal change in students pre and post trip. Overall, only three

sections within the index averaged higher scores post trip and these were the defense, adaptation, and integration stages with reported changes of 6%, 6%, and 2%, respectively. (Refer to Appendix D) The study results reveal that pre-departure the highest overall average within those stages of the DMIS model was the acceptance stage. Post-departure this was the same stage with the highest overall score, even though the score post-trip reported lower by 2%. If we look at an additional part of the index with the categories of substantive knowledge, intercultural communication, and perceptual understanding, we again see that within this subset perceptual understanding had the highest overall average for both pre and post-departure participants, even though post-trip the sample reported lower by 4%. This suggests that the short-term study abroad experience had little impact on improving students' intercultural sensitivity levels since both groups of the participants averaged their highest scores within the same stages. The minimal change in average scores post-trip can possibly be attributed to the lack of overall international experience of students from this group compared to the pre-departure participants, the majority of freshman students, or any number of factors not specifically measured by the index.

This study illustrates that although no significant changes in intercultural sensitivity were determined, the short-term experience did impact students within several stages. Through this evaluation we saw positive changes in regards to specific questions, but not necessarily overall stages, still revealing that in response to individual questions students were impacted by their experience abroad. This suggests that short-term programs do have relevance in the study abroad arena, but the ability of these programs to strongly impact intercultural sensitivity should continuously be evaluated. In further

assessing short-term programs, educators can develop the best experiences for producing students who are prepared to meet the demand of a global community.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study reveals that the study abroad field is an area that can only grow through further evaluation and research. Educators are encouraged to evaluate programs at their institutions to determine what impact the experience is having on students. Tools such as this survey could help study abroad advisors understand elements of their programs to determine how factors such as length, location, or the actual courses being offered need to be modified to best suit the needs of students in preparing interculturally sensitive individuals for the globalizing world. In future assessment, it may be important to control the location by focusing on participants at one site or the specific group of participants, such as only working with undergraduates, to narrow the margin under evaluation. After concluding this research, I believe some of the questions may have been difficult for certain students to interpret, possibly affecting the way they responded to a particular question. Therefore, educators interested in assessing intercultural sensitivity may want to develop their own variations of this particular index to create questions that are most appropriate for the students they work with. Another suggestion for further assessment would be to evaluate various lengths of programs deemed short-term. For example, it may be interesting to compare the impact of a one week program to a three week program on producing intercultural sensitivity.

Although not the focus of this particular study, it did reveal common trends in study abroad, which is the greater participation of females and white students. Study abroad educators can look at information gathered through their assessments to conduct

further research on how to encourage men and minorities to study abroad. Educators may want to consider requiring students, as part of their study abroad experience, to complete a pre and post-departure evaluation in order to better understand their programs. Possibly conducting courses in regards to global awareness as a prerequisite to studying abroad would also promote intercultural sensitivity in students. The results of this study are intended to highlight the importance of program evaluation in the field of study abroad. Intercultural sensitivity is just one realm of evaluation in a field that has great room to expand.

APPENDIX A:

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SURVEY

INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY SURVEY

Survey questions 1-48 based on the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI). Olson, C. L. & Kroeger, K. R. (2001). Global competency and intercultural sensitivity. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 5*, 116-137.

Demographic Information

Age: School:

Gender: Grade Level:

Race/Ethnicity: Major:

Have you previously traveled internationally (personal and/or school-related)? Please list all experiences and indicate whether personal or study abroad related and the duration of each.

What, if any, intercultural experiences have you had? (Home life, community/neighborhood, work environment, etc.)

Please indicate which program/site location you are attending through DePaul and the length of stay. Please describe your reasons for studying abroad and why you chose your specific location.

Please answer all questions about yourself using a scale of 1 to 5.

5 ="Describes Me Extremely Well"
4= "Describes Me Well"
3="Describes Me Some of the Time"
2= "Seldom Describes Me"
1="Never Describes Me"

Using the above scale please select the appropriate number from the dropdown menu. There are a total of 48 questions.	Dropdown Menu

1. I do not really notice cultural differences.

2. I think that cultural diversity really only exists in other places.

3. I feel most comfortable living and working in a community where people look and act like me.

4. I have intentionally sought to live in a racially or culturally distinct community.

5. I am surrounded by culturally diverse people, and feel like my cultural values are threatened.

6. I sometimes find myself thinking derogatory things bout people who look or act differently from me.

7. I believe that aid to developing countries should be targeted to those efforts that help these countries evolve toward the types of social, economic, and political systems that exist in the United States.

8. I believe that certain groups of people are very troublesome and do not deserve to be treated well.

9. I have lived for at least 2 years in another country and believe that American society should embrace the values of this culture in order to address the problems of contemporary American society.

10. I understand that difference exist but believe that we should focus on similarities. We are all human.

11. I think that most human behavior can be understood as manifestations of instinctual behavior like territoriality and sex.

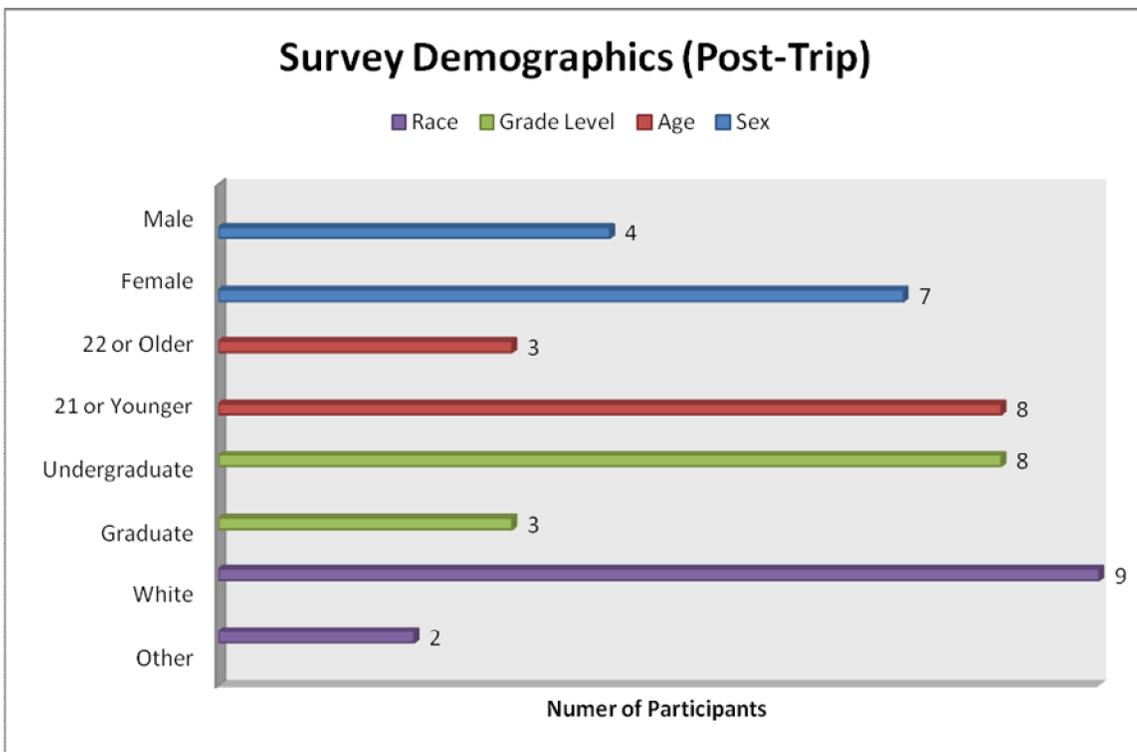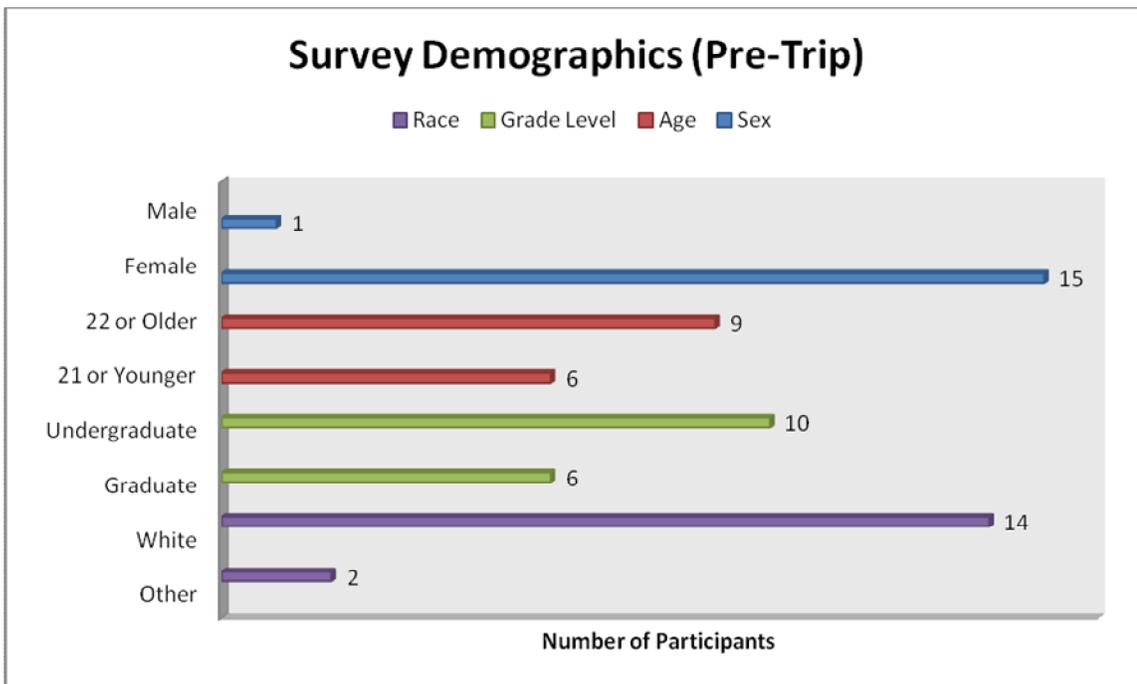| Using the above scale please select the appropriate number from the dropdown menu. There are a total of 48 questions.	Dropdown Menu

12. I think that all human beings are subject to the same historical forces, economic and political laws, or psychological principles. These principles are invariable across cultures.

13. I believe that physical displays of human emotions are universally recognizable: A smile is a smile wherever you go.

14. I acknowledge and respect cultural difference. Cultural diversity is a preferable human condition.

15. I believe that verbal and nonverbal behavior varies across cultures and that all forms of such behavior are worthy of respect.

16. I think that cultural variations in behavior spring from different worldview assumptions.

17. I believe that my worldview is one of may equally valid worldviews.

18. I have added to my own cultural skills new verbal and nonverbal communication skills that are appropriate in another culture.

19. I believe that culture is a process. One does not have culture: one engages in culture.

20. I am able to temporarily give up my own worldview to participate in another worldview.

21. I have two or more cultural frames of reference, and I feel positive about cultural differences.

22. I feel culturally marginal or on the periphery of two or more cultures.

23. I am able to analyze and evaluate situations from one or more chosen cultural perspectives.

24. When faced with a choice about how I am going to respond to a given situation, I am able to shift between two or more cultural perspectives and consciously make a choice to act from one of these cultural contexts.

Using the above scale please select the appropriate number from the dropdown menu. There are a total of 48 questions.	Dropdown Menu

25. I believe the world has become economically, environmentally, and politically interdependent.

26. I have substantive knowledge about at least one other culture outside of the United States, and I apply this knowledge with confidence in my professional work.

27. I am linguistically and culturally competent in at least one language and culture other than my own.

28. I use a language other than my native language at least 25% of the time.

29. I am interested and spend considerable time working on global issues.

30. I have substantive competence in analyzing global issues and a working knowledge of concepts and methods that can describe, explain, and predict changes in global systems.

31. I think the choice one makes at home have relevance for other countries and vice versa.

32. I appreciate how people from other cultures are different from me.

33. I am conscious of my own perspectives and culture.

34. I want to continue to learn about the world's peoples, cultures, and issues.

35. I question my own prejudices as well as all national and cultural stereotypes.

36. I recognize that my worldview is not universal.

37. I find people from other places exotic and unusual.

38. I feel uncomfortable when I am with people who are speaking a language I do not know.

39. I try to learn about people from other cultures so that we can work and socialize together.

Using the above scale please select the appropriate number from the dropdown menu. There are a total of 48 questions.	Dropdown Menu

40. I incorporate the attractive aspects of other cultures into my own way of doing things.

41. I have learned how to produce work with people from other places in the globe.

42. I feel self-confident and comfortable socializing with people from other cultures.

43. I have lived abroad and experiences intense interaction with a variety of people from this other culture.

44. I have long-term friendships with several people from other cultures.

45. I am currently engaged in professional work with at least three people in other countries.

46. I have the ability to deal flexibly with and adjust to new people, places, and situations.

47. I have the ability to psychologically put myself into another person's shoes.

48. I can act as a cultural mediator and serve as a bridge between people of different cultures.

APPENDIX B:

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Survey Demographics (Pre-Trip)

■ Race ■ Grade Level ■ Age ■ Sex

- Male — 1
- Female — 15
- 22 or Older — 9
- 21 or Younger — 6
- Undergraduate — 10
- Graduate — 6
- White — 14
- Other — 2

Number of Participants

Survey Demographics (Post-Trip)

■ Race ■ Grade Level ■ Age ■ Sex

- Male — 4
- Female — 7
- 22 or Older — 3
- 21 or Younger — 8
- Undergraduate — 8
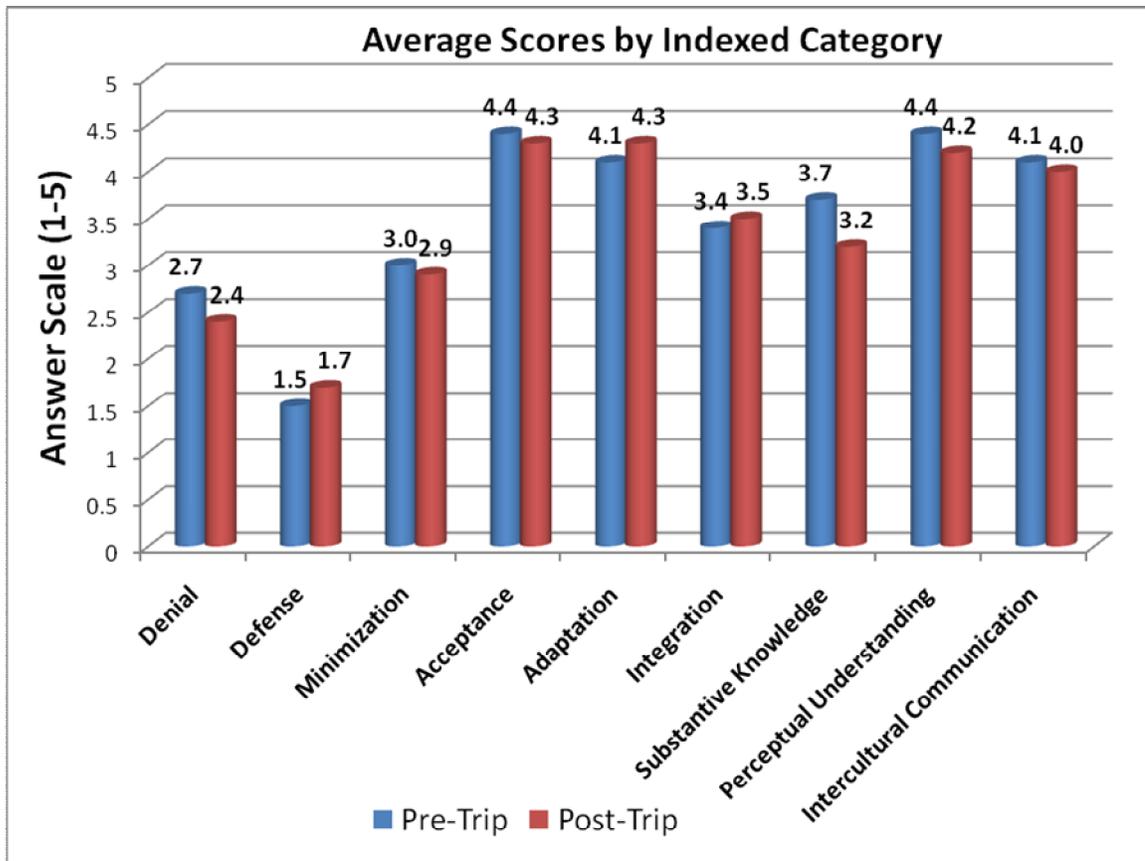- Graduate — 3
- White — 9
- Other — 2

Numer of Participants

APPENDIX C:

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS SELECTING

"DESCRIBES ME EXTREMELY WELL"

Percentage of Respondents Selecting "Describes Me Extremely Well"		Pre Trip	Post-Trip
Denial	Question 1	50.0%	18.2%
	Question 2	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 3	12.5%	0.0%
	Question 4	0.0%	0.0%
Defense	Question 5	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 6	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 7	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 8	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 9	0.0%	0.0%
Minimization	Question 10	18.8%	45.5%
	Question 11	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 12	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 13	25.0%	9.1%
Acceptance	Question 14	68.8%	54.5%
	Question 15	75.0%	54.5%
	Question 16	37.5%	27.3%
	Question 17	50.0%	55.6%
Adaptation	Question 18	37.5%	30.0%
	Question 19	31.3%	54.5%
	Question 20	25.0%	36.4%
	Question 21	50.0%	40.0%
Integration	Question 22	0.0%	0.0%
	Question 23	33.3%	40.0%
	Question 24	18.8%	20.0%

Percentage of Respondents Selecting "Describes Me Extremely Well"			
		Pre Trip	**Post-Trip**
Substantive Knowledge	Question 25	50.0%	55.6%
	Question 26	21.4%	33.3%
	Question 27	35.7%	10.0%
	Question 28	13.3%	0.0%
	Question 29	50.0%	0.0%
	Question 30	37.5%	12.5%
	Question 31	43.8%	37.5%
Perceptual Understanding	Question 32	75.0%	40.0%
	Question 33	68.8%	30.0%
	Question 34	93.8%	70.0%
	Question 35	62.5%	60.0%
	Question 36	68.8%	80.0%
	Question 37	12.5%	0.0%
Intercultural Communication	Question 38	0.0%	10.0%
	Question 39	37.5%	50.0%
	Question 40	25.0%	20.0%
	Question 41	41.7%	14.3%
	Question 42	50.0%	50.0%
	Question 43	60.0%	33.3%
	Question 44	64.3%	57.1%
	Question 45	30.0%	33.3%
	Question 46	60.0%	40.0%
	Question 47	53.3%	40.0%
	Question 48	42.9%	30.0%

APPENDIX D:

AVERAGE SCORES BY INDEXED CATEGORY

Average Scores by Indexed Category

Pre-Trip ■ Post-Trip

APPENDIX E:

QUESTIONS ILLUSTRATING GREATEST CHANGE

Top 5 Questions with the Greatest Increase Post-Trip

	Question 2	Question 7	Question 10	Question 19	Question 38
Pre-Trip Avg Score:	2.1	2.0	3.6	3.9	2.1
Post-Trip Avg Score:	2.5	2.5	4.0	4.5	2.5

Top 5 Questions with the Greatest Decrease Post-Trip

	Question 1	Question 3	Question 27	Question 28	Question 29
Pre-Trip Avg Score:	4.4	2.4	3.5	2.2	4.2
Post-Trip Avg Score:	3.5	1.5	2.3	1.3	2.9
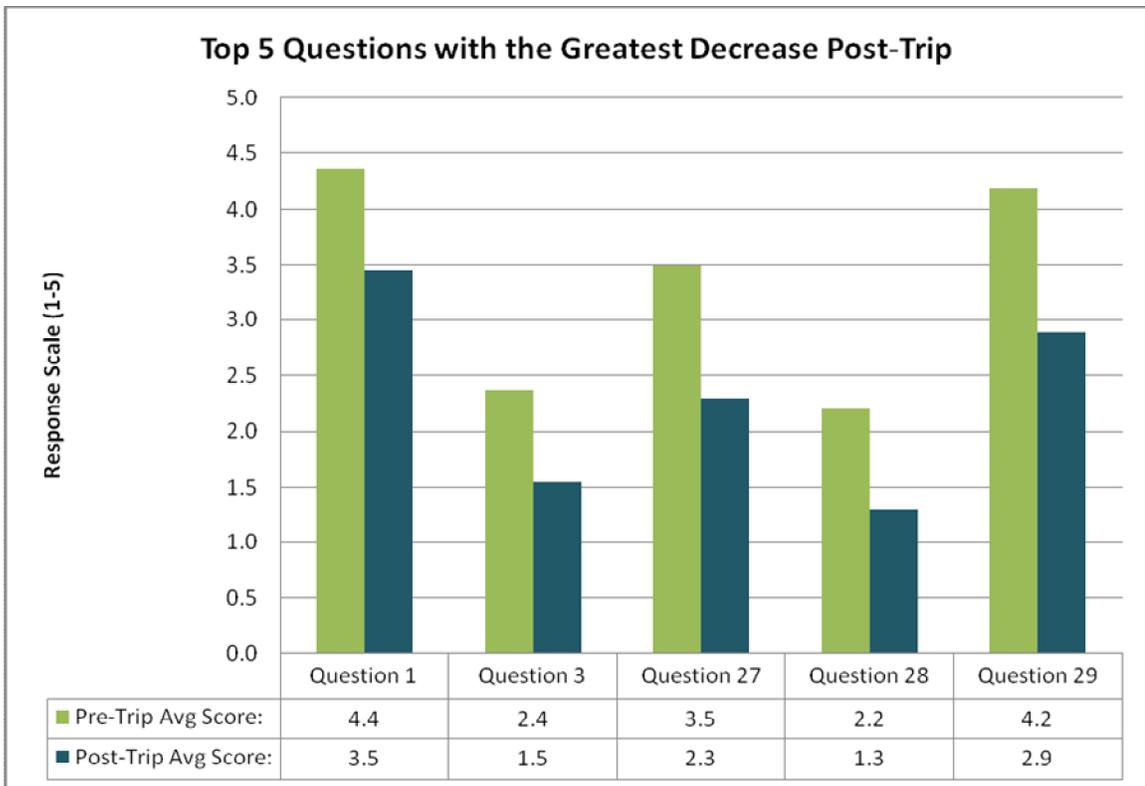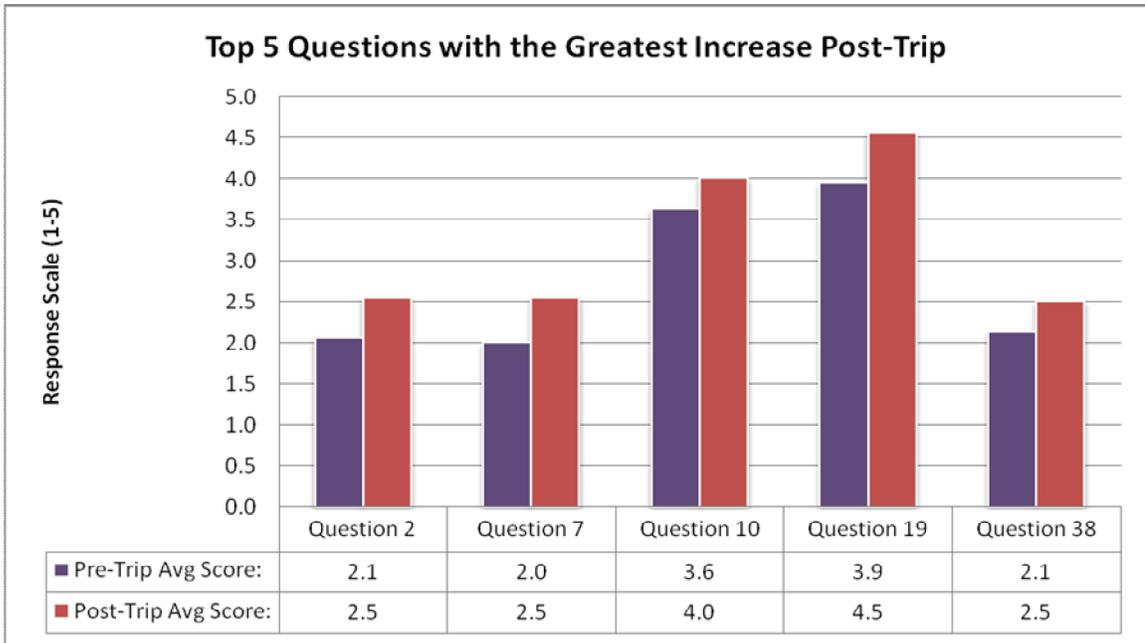
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VITA

I received a B.A. in Humanistic Studies in May 2005 from Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. My professional experience includes positions at The Vanguard Group in Malvern, Pennsylvania and at LÁrche Erie, Inc. in Erie, Pennsylvania. I am pursuing a M.A. in Cultural and Educational Policy Studies, concentrating in Comparative and International Education from Loyola University Chicago. I have travelled extensively throughout Europe and spent time teaching in Tanzania. My study abroad experiences include the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and Loyola's summer study abroad program at the John Felice Rome Center in Italy.

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The thesis submitted by Barbara E. Zarnick has been read an approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the thesis is now given final approval by the committee with reference to content and form.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts of Cultural and Educational Policy Studies.

_____   _____

Date   Director's Signature

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