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ASSESSING INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE IN INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP COURSES:
Developing the Global Leader

Abstract

The leaders of the future will have to lead with intercultural competence and with the ability to facilitate this development of competence in others. The development of skills in undergraduate students to meet this challenge is paramount to the establishment of effective leadership for the future. Within this study, researchers address the challenge by quantitatively examining intercultural competency outcomes students derive from leadership-based study abroad experiences. For five years, researchers utilized a pre-post intercultural competency survey of student participants in a leadership education study abroad program in Zambia, Africa. Using the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES), data was analyzed for seventy-eight students who participated in this five-week study abroad course. The results demonstrate statistically significant growth on students' intercultural competency across all ten measures of dimensions and sub-scales. Recommendations provide a framework for leadership educators to employ pedagogies that influence intercultural development within study abroad as a means of developing global leadership in their students.

Introduction

A significant goal of higher learning and leadership education is learning about oneself in relation to others (Boyer, 1990; Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Greenleaf & Spears, 2002; Kloppenborg, Hahnenberg, & Prosak-Beres, 2012; O'Connor & Myers, 2018). Such reflective learning often takes place within the context of cultural settings where individuals must act and react to the norms, attitudes, and values of others, where experience in social settings provides a deeper understanding both of ones' own culture and of other cultures. In particular for those teaching leadership, the call for understanding culture and global perspectives are important outcomes for emerging leaders (Gandolfi, 2012; Reiche, Bird, Mendenhall & Osland, 2017).

The leaders of the future will have to lead with intercultural competence and with the ability to develop this competence in others. The development of a global mindset has been explored in business and education literature alike (Deardorff & Hunter, 2006; Javidan & Bowen, 2013; Levy, Beechler, Taylor, & Boyacigiller, 2007; Tellis, 2011), particularly in leadership studies where Gupta (2009) asserts that "cultural competency and cultural adaptability are foundational skills vital to the success of anyone working in a cross-cultural environment, domestically or internationally…[and] all leaders today must possess these skills due to the tremendous diversity found in many working environments" (p. 147). Sowcik, Andenoro, McNutt, and Murphy (2015) urge leadership educators to prepare leaders for the unprecedented complexity in

an ever-interconnected globe. Zimmerman (2015) notes that intercultural competency forms the foundation for the global leadership skillset required for today's leaders. This focus on the development of intercultural competence has encouraged efforts towards meaningful definition and assessment of global leadership, and how leadership educators can determine student gains in intercultural competence.

One avenue for this development offered by many leadership educators has been international faculty-led study abroad programs. But what gains, if any, are measured in students' intercultural competence after participating in faculty-led study abroad programs? Do the espoused outcomes in developing intercultural competence align with the assessment of student growth? The current research has provided inconsistent answers to these questions (Relvea, Guari, & Fish, 2013; Richards & Doorenbos, 2016) and has not offered a pre/post multi-year design to assess intercultural development. This study seeks to provide further understanding of the development of intercultural competence resulting from a leadership education faculty-led study abroad course.

Through use of the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES), this study examines potential gains in intercultural competences by undergraduate student participants in the LDRS 355, Intercultural Perspectives on Leadership course during a five-week study abroad in Zambezi, Zambia. With the emergence of leadership education within the academy (Mitchell & Daugherty, 2019), and the increased popularity of international study abroad for development of intercultural competence (Niehaus & Wegener, 2018), leadership educators need grounded research to guide their intercultural curriculum and its assessment for global leaders.

International Study Abroad

The Institute for the International Education of Students (2018), states the goal of study abroad programs is to create more "interculturally competent leaders who have both the understanding and skills to effectively, humanely, and positively navigate across different cultures, in politics, education, business, or the non-profit sector" (para. 2). The current research on outcomes for international education primarily addresses the positive effects that study abroad has on college students (Bayne, 2003; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Lambert, 1993; Orahood, Kruze & Pearson, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt & Stewart, 1999; Tolliver, 2000; Langley & Breese, 2005; Richards & Doorenbos, 2016). For example, positive effects of study abroad range from such outcomes as acquiring knowledge and developing skills pertaining to intellectual and personal development to changing attitudes concerning cultural sensitivity and intercultural competence (Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004). Nevertheless, these outcomes are difficult to generalize due to the different types of psychological instruments used and divergent patterns of their findings (Sutton & Rubin, 2004). However, these authors conclude that "taken as a whole, this body of research suggests that study abroad has a healthy effect on many psycho-social outcomes" (p. 68).

The most recent study released by the Institute of International Education (2018) found that approximately one in ten U.S. students study abroad during their undergraduate career. Generally, the most common finding in study abroad research is about the "life changing" transformational experiences that students have while abroad. According to Ingraham and Peterson (2004), some of the effects of studying abroad were "quite specific in nature such as the desire to learn another language or appreciation of art, … but more were described as pervasive, intangible change of perception of the world and one self" (p. 94). Bayne (2003) also states that "students who go abroad learn as much about themselves as about the host country" (p. 199).

curiosity to the development of intercultural competency within study abroad. Using Bennett's Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) assessment in her study of year-long study abroad programs, Pedersen (2010) found significant gains in students who study abroad, particularly when faculty utilized some form of intercultural pedagogy. In research examining faculty-led short-term study abroad programs, Gaia (2015) found that students showed enhanced cultural understanding and awareness, along with a willingness to interact with people from other cultures. Conversely, Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard (2006) determined that students on short-term study abroad programs showed only modest increases in intercultural sensitivity. Other studies suggest no gains or a reversal of effects in the period of time after the study abroad has ended (Rexeisen, 2013). Within the literature there are surprising disparities and limited research exploring the intercultural competencies gained by students within study abroad programs. For leadership educators, the questions related to the development of intercultural competence become increasingly important as faculty design learning outcomes and pedagogy for their study abroad courses.

Leadership Studies Programs

Within academia, there has been a growing movement toward establishing leadership studies as an interdisciplinary academic endeavor through developing leadership curriculum, expanding course offering, and creating minors and majors around the study of leadership (Brungardt, Greenleaf, Brungardt, & Arensdorf, 2006; Diallo & Gerhardt, 2017; Mitchell & Daugherty, 2019). This growth in leadership programs in academia has been matched by growth in structures to support the study of leadership. One such advancement has been the establishment of faculty-led study abroad opportunities for undergraduate students studying leadership (Earnest, 2003; Montgomery& Arensdorf, 2012). As Rosch and Haber-Curran (2013) write "leadership-centered study abroad experiences encourage students to look beyond their previously held worldviews and

lenses" (p. 149) and provide valuable opportunities to explore global leadership outside their country of origin. A number of universities within the US have established study abroad programs which provide opportunities for students to understand and practice key concepts of leadership theory through an international experience (e.g. School of Leadership Studies, Gonzaga University; McDonough Center for Leadership & Business, Marietta College; Jepson School of Leadership Studies, University of Richmond; School of Leadership and Education Sciences, University of San Diego).

Intercultural Competence

The past decade has been an important time of defining and exploring intercultural competence through many different academic disciplines (Deardoff, 2011; Fabregas Janeiro, Fabre, & Nuno, 2014; Fitzgerald, Marzalik, & Kue, 2018). Karim (2003) suggested that intercultural competence was a developmental concept, whereas Bennett (2008) stated, "emerging consensus around what constitutes intercultural competence, which is most often viewed as a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts" (p. 3). Chen and Starosta (1996) posited that knowledge of other cultures was not enough to constitute intercultural competence. According to Deardorff (2006), intercultural competence indeed involves the development of one's skills and attitudes in successfully interacting with persons of diverse backgrounds. Chen and Starosta (1996) stressed that cross-culturally competent persons are those who could interact effectively with individuals with diverse cultural identities.

As a developmental model, intercultural competence focuses on striving toward "the successful acquisition of the international perspective" (Bennett, 1993, p. 24) and the effective interaction and association of individuals across cultures (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Fantini, Arias-Galicia, & Guay, 2001; Lustig & Koester, 2003). The interculturally competent

leader overcomes ethnocentrism (Fennes & Hapgood, 1997) while communicating and analyzing the cultural context and selecting appropriate behavior (Samovar & Porter, 2001). Such behavior includes the management of psychological stress and interpersonal relationships (Pusch, 1994). In addition, such a leader possesses cognitive flexibility and tolerates ambiguity (Gudykunst, 1994) with adaptive responses to any intercultural situation. Paige (1993) posited that competency remains the encompassing knowledge of a target culture combined with self-awareness, which then recognizes cultural differences and ultimately reconciles them by transforming conflicting values into complementary values (Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars, 2000). Researchers broadly agree that intercultural competence involves the ability to adapt behavior and communication to intercultural context using a variety of skills and knowledge.

One historical challenge of assessing intercultural competence has been the lack of a measurement tool that takes into account knowledge and skills as well as attitudes and awareness (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012). This has led to the development of a number of quantitative assessment tools, as listed in Bird and Stevens (2013) chapter, Assessing Global Leadership Competencies. These include Hammer and Bennett's Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) based on Bennett's theory (1993) and the Development Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS); Kelley and Meyers' (1995) Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI); Earley and Ang's (2003) Cultural Intelligence (CQ) assessment; Hunter's (2004) Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA); Bird, Stevens, Mendenhall, Oddou, and Osland's (2008) Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES). To guide those assessments at an institutional level, the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) (2010) developed the Intercultural Knowledge and Competence VALUE Rubric. Overall, the research indicates the need for further study into the impact of study abroad upon intercultural competence and global leadership.

Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES). Developed by Mendenhall, Stevens, Bird, Oddou, and Osland (2012) the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) synthesizes intercultural effectiveness into three domains and six competences in line with the AAC&U VALUE rubric (2010). The IES was designed to evaluate individual's ability to interact effectively in cultures different than one's own through three critical dimensions of focus, each with two subdomains or intercultural competencies of interest. Mendenhall, et al, (2012) name these critical dimensions as Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement, and Hardiness. Further description of the IES will be provided in the methodology section.

Previous studies that focused purely on short-term programs often framed gains quantitatively through the use of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Anderson et al., 2006; Jackson 2008) or through other survey instruments (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). The IES has been utilized in past research projects to assess intercultural development for on-campus courses (Feng, 2016) and provide understanding to intercultural profiles of international graduate students (Robinson, Harrington, Cartwright, & Walsh, 2017). In one study involving study abroad in India, Richards and Doorenbos (2016) assessed eighteen students participating in a three-week health course. Students in this pre/post test design exhibited upward growth in the overall IES, but the study found no statistical significance in this growth.

Purpose of the Study

The discourse around global leadership and intercultural competence has been growing. The goal of this research is to expand the understanding of the intercultural competence students derive from international faculty-led study abroad experiences. In particular, this study examines the outcomes for an international leadership curriculum that utilizes service-learning within the course pedagogy. The basis for this research is the intercultural assessment of students at a mid-sized Jesuit university who served in rural Africa during a summer study abroad course over a five-year period, 2013-2017.

Research Design

The data from this study focused on intercultural growth occurring in a short-term study abroad program at a mid-sized, private liberal arts university utilizing a pre-post self-report survey design, without a control group. The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) was used in a pre-test and post-test over a nine-month period for each cohort of approximately twenty students, (see Table 1) annually over a five-year period (2013-2017).

The IES was developed by the Kozai Group to evaluate an individual's ability to interact "effectively with people who are from cultures other than [their] own," and is a sixty-item survey that generates an in-depth graphic profile across three main competency areas of intercultural effectiveness (Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement, and Hardiness) and six intercultural competencies. Portalla and Chen (2010) examined the reliability and validity of the IES and determined it significantly correlated with other related instruments. The overall coefficient alpha reliabilities of the three main dimensions are all above .84 and for each of the six subscales the alpha reliability is above .76 (Mendenhall et al., 2012, pp. 13-16) and has face and content validity. The survey takes approximately fifteen minutes to complete and measures self-reporting statements written from responses to a five-point Likert format, ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree' (Mendenhall et al., 2012, p. 13). Participants are given a report that places them into one of three categories: low, moderate, or high, which are ranked on a scale of one to six. These categories indicate participant results within a large sample comprised of cross-section of thousands of previous IES participants. The comparison group is drawn from 69 different nationalities, 56% from North America, Asian countries provided 26%, and Europe providing 11%, with remaining 7% from countries across Latin America, Africa and Middle East. From the IES Technical Report, below is a brief description of each dimension and its competencies (Mendenhall et al, 2012).

Continuous Learning. The assessment of an individual's curiosity in learning about other cultures and the accuracy of that learning.

> Self-Awareness – Measures the degree of awareness concerning strengths and weaknesses, personal worldviews, and the impact of past experiences and relationships with others.

> Exploration – Measures openness and active pursuit of learning about new and different ideas, values, and norms.

Interpersonal Engagement. The assessment of an individual's interest in understanding people with other viewpoints and developing meaningful relationships with different people.

> Global Mindset – Measures the degree of interest in learning about different cultures and the people that make up those cultures.

> Relationship Interest – Measures the degree of effort people are willing to put into maintaining relationships with people from other cultures.

Hardiness. The assessment of an individual's capacity to cope with the psychological and emotional stress of interacting with people from other cultures.

> Positive Regard – Measures the degree to which an individual will generally view other cultures in a positive light.

> Emotional Resilience – Measures the degree to which an individual has the mental strength to handle challenging intercultural situations. (pp. 7-12)

Sample and Population

After reading of the purpose of this research, a total of 91 students enrolled in the study abroad leadership studies course participated in the study and signed informed consent forms. Each of the 58 women and 33 men were undergraduate students, while most of the participants were sophomore or junior

students. Many of these students were members of an academic cohort leadership studies program, while majoring in various disciplines from business to nursing.

The undergraduate students were each participating in the five-week faculty-led study abroad program in Zambia, Africa sponsored by a Jesuit university in the United States. The setting for this program was a small African town situated in the Northwestern province of Zambia. This small rural community is defined by its agriculturally based economy and resource-poor surrounding villages. Besides the mostly tarred M8 road, "Zambezi's highway", all the other roads in the District are sandy and only drivable by oxcarts or four-wheel drive vehicles. The lack of a reliable road system contributes to the District's reputation as being 'entirely in the bush'. While some aspects of modernization, such as cell phone use, have begun to creep into the life of Zambezi, it is a place ruled by cultural norms and traditions. There are two main tribes, the Lunda and Luvale people, each with its own rich history and cultural traditions which make up the fabric of this community. The program is hosted by a local Catholic parish, who is intimately involved in the project as full partners.

The academic curriculum of this study abroad course in Zambia consisted of nightly faculty-led teachings and reflections, a group journal, a daily blog posting, speakers representing business, health care, cultural/tribal customs, and community issues, and various written assignments. The daily faculty-led reflections offered an opportunity to process the intercultural experience and develop the student's learning around servant-leadership, authentic leadership, intercultural development, and the principle of accompaniment. While students did not spend much time in a "typical classroom" the teaching consisted of examining the group's cultural experience through the lens of the leadership theories that were studied during the previous spring semester and during this immersion experience. Throughout the study in Zambia, students were able to spend time with various leaders representing local businesses, health care, schools, churches, and tribal culture. While

being presented with new information about the leadership structures in Africa, students also learned from their involvement in community development projects. Each student spent 4-5 hours daily serving in one of the program's community development programs that focused on teaching leadership and sustainability, computer lessons, health care or a primary school literacy project.

Data Collection

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) was distributed online to participants in the Zambezi study abroad program. Participants took the IES two times, once in February during a one-credit spring course, before the study abroad immersion course in May/June, and again in October after completion of the study abroad course. Table 1 outlines the response rate for participants over the five years, which had 78 students complete both the pre and post test. This provided a combined response of 85% for completion of both IES tests. In addition, Table 1 provides mean scores over time for each individual cohort of students participating in the study.

Data Analysis

The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) data uses raw scores ranging from one to six based scoring on the intercultural competency dimensions of Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement, and Hardiness and its sub-competencies. For the 78 respondents, each of the ten IES components was analyzed using all survey participants in total and then again at the annual program level. Table/Graph 2 outlines the Mean Scores of the Overall Intercultural Effectiveness scale for the pretest, the posttest, and the difference of means for each of the five years studied.

Table 1.
Response Rate and Mean Scores of Participants, 2013 – 2017 .

	Participants	Response Rate	Continuous Learning	Interpersonal Engagement	Hardiness	Overall IES
Pre- 2013	17		3.47	3.23	3.82	3.70
Post- 2013	17	100%	4.94	4.58	4.76	5.11
Pre- 2014	20		3.72	2.65	4.33	3.72
Post- 2014	17	85%	5.17	4.17	4.47	4.88
Pre- 2015	19		3.40	2.80	4.35	3.45
Post- 2015	15	78%	4.35	3.42	4.57	4.50
Pre- 2016	18		3.31	2.78	3.84	3.31
Post- 2016	15	83%	4.50	4.14	5.14	4.78
Pre- 2017	17		3.94	3.17	3.35	3.58
Post- 2017	14	82%	4.66	4.44	4.99	4.79
	91 (78)	85%				
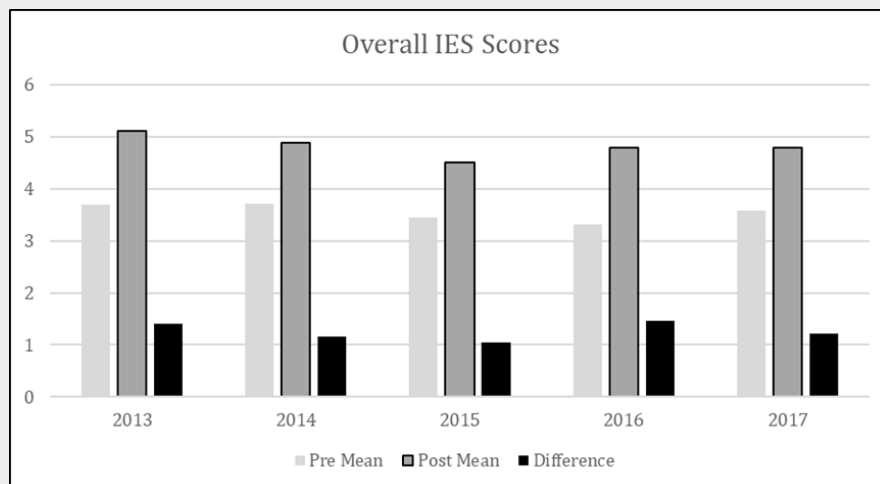
Table/Graph 2. Overall Intercultural Effectiveness Mean Score Growth

SPSS Statistics Software was used to conduct a paired sample t-tests on the total IES quantitative data to determine what statistically significant gains, if any, are made over a time period spanning from the initial February pre-test to four months following the study abroad course at the administration of the post-test. At both intervals, the data was reviewed for outliers. Standard deviations and means were then computed for each of the ten components of the IES and can be found in Table 3; overall IES as a measure of total intercultural competency, Continuous Learning (Self-Awareness, Exploration), Interpersonal Engagement (Global Mindset, Relationship Interest), and Hardiness (Positive Regard, Emotional Resilience) (Mendenhall et al., 2012, pp. 7-12). These means considered each pre and post interval. Paired sample t-tests

(significance at the p = 0.05 level) and Cohen effect sizes were used for post-hoc analysis comparing pre to post and can be found in Table 4.

Table 3.
Mean Scores for IES dimensions over Time

	Pre	Post
Overall IES Score	**3.43**	**4.88**
Continuous Learning	**3.39**	**4.79**
Self-awareness	3.82	5.13
Exploration	3.26	4.11
Interpersonal Engagement	**2.85**	**4.28**
Global Mindset	3.12	4.25
Relationship Interest	3.45	4.59
Hardiness	**4.02**	**4.84**
Positive Regard	4.47	4.97
Emotional Resilience	3.20	3.93
	Pre	Post
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Positive Regard	4.47	4.97
Emotional Resilience	3.20	3.93

	t	p	I d I
Overall IES Score	**7.836**	**0.000**	**0.887**
Continuous Learning	**7.497**	**0.000**	**0.848**
Self-awareness	6.538	0.000	0.740
Exploration	5.335	0.000	0.604
Interpersonal Engagement	**8.064**	**0.000**	**0.913**
Global Mindset	5.685	0.000	0.639
Relationship Interest	5.957	0.000	0.674
Hardiness	**4.373**	**0.000**	**0.494**
Positive Regard	2.729	0.008	0.308
Emotional Resilience	4.215	0.000	0.477

Results

The development of students' intercultural competency and related competencies as measured by the Intercultural Effectiveness Survey (IES) are presented in total and for each of the five years assessed. Though each will be discussed further, these findings indicate measured statistically significant gains (p < 0.05) in overall intercultural competency as driven by changes in the three dimensions of intercultural competency (Continuous Learning, Interpersonal Engagement, and Hardiness) and each of the six competences (Self-Awareness, Exploration, Global Mindset, Relationship Interest, Positive Regard, and Emotional Resilience).

The seventy-eight participants in the leadership study abroad program demonstrated statistically significant growth across all ten measures of intercultural competency. The mean scores for all ten IES competences fell between 2.85 and 5.13 (Table 3). On the overall Intercultural Effectiveness Scale, participants were shown to have a starting mean score of 3.43 before the five-week study abroad experience and a mean score of 4.88 afterwards.

Examining the data, it is important to understand which dimensions affected the growth within the overall IES scores. Digging further in the post-hoc, the effect size of those changes revealed where students were most influenced. Effect size of Cohen |d| was calculated for dependent t-tests; intermediate effects are seen as 0.5 < |d| < 0.8, small effects are .02 < |d| < 0.49 and no effects are considered at |d| < 0.2. The Interpersonal Engagement dimension, which assesses participants' interest in understanding other viewpoints and developing relationships, saw the most pronounced growth (t = 8.064, p = 0.00, |d| = .913). While the Hardiness dimension, an assessment of capacity to cope with stress of interacting with difference, still had statistically significant growth, it carried the lowest effect size of the three dimensions (t = 4.373, p = 0.00, |d| = .494). Within the sub-competencies, the most pronounced growth was shown in the Self-Awareness competency (t = 6.538, p = 0.00, |d| = .848) which assesses degree of awareness of strengths, weaknesses, interpersonal style and behavioral tendencies. This will be further explored in the next section as it has interesting implications for faculty designing international leadership education. Furthermore, there were small effect sizes found in the intercultural competencies of Positive Regard (t =2,729, p = .008, |d| = .308) and Emotional Resilience (t = 4.215, p = .000, |d| = .477).

This small effect can possibly be explained by some intercultural models (Deardorff & Hunter, 2006) who argue this type of strength and positivity as a part of an individual's predisposition. Still, it is important to note the significant growth measured in these two competencies that measure the degree one naturally assumes others are trustworthy, hardworking and good (Positive Regard) and the level of emotional strength and ability to cope with challenging experiences (Emotional Resilience). The growth across the intercultural dimensions and competencies has interesting implications for leadership educators, particularly given the varied results of past research examining intercultural growth. The following section will address possible theory to practice curricular lessons for faculty who desire meaningful study abroad programs that develop global leaders.

Implications for Leadership Educators

International study abroad programs from leadership studies faculty can clearly contribute to significant developmental outcomes, particularly the development of intercultural competencies. A greater understanding and practice of an intercultural global mindset and skillset are important developmental milestones for college students. The significant growth in intercultural effectiveness, as defined by the IES, confirm that international study abroad programs such as this offer one example of how leadership faculty might have an impact on student growth through deliberate encounters with diverse cultures. However, as research indicates, simply traveling with students to developing nations will not provide the type of intercultural development

observed in this study. In fact, previous studies, using a similar pre/post design assessing intercultural growth with the IES have shown moderate but not statistically significant growth (Relvea, Guari, & Fish, 2013; Richards & Doorenbos, 2016). Furthermore, previous literature has supported the idea that intercultural learning will not happen naturally, but rather requires meaningful training, preparation, and interventions (Behrnd & Porzelt, 2012; Pedersen, 2010; Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012). Specifically in short-term study abroad experiences, Dwyer (2004) suggests that growth might be a possibility with careful, well-planned curricular intentions. In this section, while acknowledging the limited generalization based on sample size, this research will offer four recommendations that stem from the significant (IES) intercultural growth observed that seem to be instrumental in creating the growth in cultural competency. For faculty, researchers, and practitioners interested in the power and potential of leadership-based international study abroad, our research suggests that intentional reflection, sustained engagement, structured pre and post learning, and engaged teaching contribute to the development of intercultural competencies.

Reflection in Action

First, a clear implication from this study was the power of deep intentional reflection with students. A key outcome of this study was the measured development of the Self-Awareness competency within the IES. High scorers on this assessment "evaluate their personal growth and reflect on what they can learn from their experiences" (Mendenhall et al., 2012, p. 6). The Self-Awareness competency measures the degree of awareness concerning strengths and weaknesses, personal worldviews, and the impact of past experiences and relationships with others. Many leadership theories and models focus on the importance of self-awareness within leadership development (Lowney, 2003; Northouse, 2018; Tekleab, Sims, Yun, Tesluk, & Cox, 2008). The researchers believe one critical influence in the development of self-awareness was due to intentional

reflection throughout the leadership studies course and immersion experience.

Students enroll in study abroad experiences for a variety of reasons, particularly unique student abroad program hosted in developing nations. Students bring aspirations to help others, seek a transformational experience, or a curiosity about different cultures. The outcome of the experience, however, may not fulfill students' presuppositions. Leadership faculty need to be sensitive to the complex emotions and outcomes that international education activates. The student learning which occurs in study abroad is enhanced through a careful attempt to process cultural experiences (Harvey & Jenkins, 2014). In this program, students and faculty met daily to reflect, to share perspectives that enriched the sense-making learning. Students were required to maintain and write in personal journals, which encouraged written reflection and meaning making. The students contributed to a group journal each evening which summarized the day's events while reflecting upon particularly transformational moments. Students were asked to write a thoughtful reflection examining a poignant learning moment described in a blog posting which opened a cyber-dialogue with students in this experience and members within the university community. In this way, students had to synthesize their thinking within this intercultural encounter, and the nature of their making meaning. This deep reflection provides opportunities to engage in new understanding of self-awareness and gets to the heart of the university's Ignatian pedagogy, as Korth (2008) writes, "coming to an understanding of who I am . . . and who I might be in relation to others" (p. 282). Finally, faculty-led nightly reflections were instrumental in integrating the deep intercultural learning of IES's scaffold of continuous learning, interpersonal engagement and hardiness. These reflections were framed by assigned readings and intentional debriefing of experiences encountered on a daily basis. The creative tension between action and responsibility came out of deep intentional reflection and this new emergent understanding did not result in giving easy answers to complex

questions, but likely contributed to the development of self-awareness in student participants.

Sustained Engagement

Second, it was clear that sustained engagement with those from diverse cultures was important for student leadership and intercultural development. The positive growth in the Interpersonal Engagement dimension, which assesses participants' interest in understanding other viewpoints and developing relationships, of the IES reinforces that interpersonal relations is essential for effective performance in an intercultural environment. While this study abroad course would be characterized as a short-term program, it utilized sustained engagement with a community for over three weeks. The format of the program, specifically grounding the learning in one community, allowed for support of the cultural immersion experience to utilize students' service-learning projects as a vehicle for establishing deep cultural relationships. Students were encouraged to practice accompaniment and operate at eye-level with this community (Ausland, 2005; Armstrong & Spears, 2018) in opposition to the "white savior complex" of many short-term international service tours (Bandyopadhyay, 2019). The complexity of intercultural growth within this program provided many opportunities for students to contend with their positionality. In this way, students who embodied this notion of mutually indebted service had tools to reconcile the inherent power differential between the more "privileged" students and the local Zambian people. The ethic of accompaniment is a practice oriented into each student as a means to walk in solidity with Zambians as they move to greater levels of community self-sufficiency and personal empowerment. As Armstrong and Spears (2018) note, "by utilizing characteristics from servant-leadership and the practice of accompaniment, leadership can facilitate true change" rooted in relationship and interpersonal engagement (p. 24). In this way, students are encouraged to challenge themselves to be served where they are serving. This distinct relationship encourages the type of sustained

engagement necessary for developing intercultural competencies in new emerging leaders.

Commitment to Pre and Post Learning

Third, structured pre and post immersion seminars and other programmatic resources contributed to optimizing the student cultural immersion experience. Deardorff (2011) encourages adequate preparation for students on intercultural competency before study abroad opportunities take place so students can better understand and communicate the growth occurring during these programs (p. 71). All student participants were enrolled in a one-credit preparation course before traveling to Zambia. The learning outcomes of this course include understand and practice leadership and intercultural competence through an international experience, develop and promote an ethic of accompaniment through community development projects, and develop self-awareness and critical thinking skills through experiential education. A key element of the pre-immersion program was student participation in an overnight retreat to prepare the cohort for their study abroad experience. The desired outcome of this retreat was to develop a safe learning environment for reflection through building a cohesive community. In addition, the retreat supported and modeled the importance of relationship building for students, which could influence the positive development of the Relationship Interest competency, that measured the effort into maintaining relationships with people from other cultures. Furthermore, the retreat provided a learning space outside the classroom to explore Zambian culture and plan the community development projects. The post-immersion retreat was held approximately three months after the completion of the international study abroad course. The challenge of reentry after an intensive study abroad immersion experience is well documented (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Hermans & Pusch, 2004; Paige, 1993). To support student transition and reentry, the program has offered a retreat to assist students to intentionally make sense of their experience and discern the future implications of

that experience as a global citizen. This retreat has provided an important opportunity for consultation and support that encourages students to get the most out of their international education experience and avoid the serious manifestations of culture shock.

Engaged Teaching Matters

Finally, this study points to engaged teaching as having a significant impact on the development of intercultural competencies within this study abroad program. The growth within the Continuous Learning dimension, which assesses an individual's curiosity in learning about other cultures, was a starting point for evening faculty-led reflections structured with important pedagogical components. This unique model of teaching has demonstrated important learning in other leadership education study abroad experiences as Lowney, Porth, and Petit (2017) write, "the evening debriefs are a moment where the 'art' of teaching comes to the fore, as instructors use their judgment to decide when to let conversation flow and when to direct it toward specific questions or materials" (p. 11). Each evening began with the reading of the group journal, followed by student engagement in teaching a short lesson on something they knew or had recently learned. This encouraged student ownership of the evening reflections. Before faculty-led discussion on readings or cultural reflections, students redistributed the community tasks for the next day. These "jobs" were the responsibilities that allowed the community to function together and included cooking meals, cleaning dishes, and purifying water. The daily work of the community provided a safe holding environment for students to hold the tension of ambiguity and disequilibrium (Heifetz & Linsky, 2006). The daily tasks provided an important space for dialogue and served as a way of sustaining the cohort of students by providing a touchstone of certainty in an environment of change. The faculty found that students would look forward to the evening structured discussions and would ask about them during the day.

Limitations and Future Research

The aim of this research was to investigate the development of intercultural competence through faculty-led study abroad experiences. While this study offers important implications for leadership educators, there are several limitations and considerations for future research. The limited sample size and focus on one academic program limits the generalizability of findings. The multi-year design accounts for variance across courses of the student population, but further research should expand the participants to include various institutions with leadership study abroad programs. Furthermore, the behaviors assessed by IES are only one part of the equation, showing intercultural development and foundational skills. As a self-reporting instrument, the IES is limiting from the behavioral perspective of the participant as opposed to from cultural locals interacting with this person. While self-reporting instruments for intercultural competence are commonly used, there are concerns as to how those perceived gains will translate into intercultural behaviors (Nguyen, 2017).

Future researchers may consider extending the results of the current study to include a control group not participating in faculty-led study abroad. This may control for participant bias given the learning outcomes and uncertainties related to external validity. In addition, qualitative data derived from participant reflections could provide further depth into the understanding of learning, which may correlate with intercultural growth. Finally, further exploration of the impact of the length of time within a study abroad site could expand our understanding of the relationship of intercultural development within short term study abroad programs.

Conclusion

The results from this study give powerful examples for leadership education faculty of international study abroad programs desiring significant developmental outcomes, particularly the development of

intercultural competencies. Through the assessment of student intercultural learning this study contends that while study abroad experiences can provide insightful learning about world cultures, it can also provide significant opportunities for understanding oneself and the call to contribute as global leaders. The statistically significant growth ($p < 0.05$) in intercultural effectiveness across ten dimensions and subscales, as defined by the IES, confirm that international study abroad programs such as this offer one example of how leadership educators might have an impact on student growth through deliberate pedagogy and diverse encounters with cultures. Leadership faculty who integrate deep reflection, sustained engagement, commitment to pre and post-immersion learning, and engaged teaching can contribute to the development of intercultural effective global leaders. As the study and practice of leadership evolves in the ever-increasing context of globalization, effective leadership will be increasingly dependent on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of cultural competence. This study offers insight into some of the critical factors in the development of effective intercultural competence.

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