DISCOVERING THE MARK

by

LILY ROSE DOLLARHIDE

Major: Business Marketing
Minor: Aerospace Studies and Leadership Studies

A FINAL HONORS PROJECT

submitted in accordance with the University Honors Program requirements

Marketing Department
College of Business Administration

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

May 2017

Approved by:

Swinder Janda

ABSTRACT

Cultural Intelligence development is a necessary for students entering the increasingly global work force. This study quantifies and highlights specific areas of cultural learning students who participate in a ten-day study abroad experience as compared to their peers. In this study, the independent variable is a dichotomous measure (study abroad participation versus not) and the dependent variable is cultural intelligence. In this sense, the study explores the degree of student development because of the experience. Data collection for this project was accomplished by administering an online survey to Dr. Swinder Janda's three sections of International Marketing students. Two of the sections met on campus throughout the semester, but the third only met weekly and then have a ten-day trip abroad. This project found significant increases in all four cultural intelligence categories before and after studying abroad. A short-term study abroad experience enhances a student's capability to experience cultural differences first hand, the level of appreciation for cultural differences and how to navigate these differences becomes more important for the student. It also shows that after being abroad students become more aware to the minor and major differences between various cultures. After experiencing the needed levels of consciousness to various details it heightens a student's attention during interactions. Students were also challenged to begin operating within a different culture which forced their cultural knowledge of norms, practices, and conventions knowledge to increase. Through living in another society, they develop the skills necessary to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds and gradually improve their cultural intelligence across all four categories.

INTRODUCTION

"What did you learn when you went to Germany?" one of my classmates was asked when we returned home. "Well," he replied, "we drank a lot of beer and ate a lot of food!" Over the course of six days in Munich, Germany, touring the city, exploring businesses and travelling around the countryside, did this young man actually do NO learning? Could being overseas and immersed in a new country with a new language really result in no learning? Or was the learning in a different format than is typically measured in college classes?

Hearing conversations like these made me start to consider, "What is the "magic formula" for studying abroad and experiencing learning?" Would it be length of trip, foreign language, cultural differences, diverse experiences or just a combination of these and many others? When talking with Dr. Swinder Janda, Professor of Marketing and the Robert M. Edgerly Chair in Global Business, about a need that exists for the College of Business and Study Abroad department here at Kansas State University, a need surfaced for a type of tool to measure cultural understanding after studying abroad.

Students are constantly told that studying abroad will set them apart in the job market, but how does that occur? When preparing for my study abroad trip in Germany and England, Dr. Janda had us read an article that discussed cultural intelligence (Crowne, 2008). This is what differentiates students who study abroad, with those who don't when working in a global business market. Much research has been done on cultural intelligence, but it has yet to be utilized here at Kansas State University. Kansas State faculty and students need a tool that will allow them to effectively measure the

change in their cultural intelligence (CQ) before and after studying abroad. This study will put some quantitative measure behind the experience.

It is important to study how K-State students learn and gain cultural intelligence to better prepare them for the workforce. “In an increasingly diverse business environment, managers must be able to navigate through the thicket of habits, gestures, and assumptions that define their coworkers' differences. Foreign cultures are everywhere--in other countries, certainly, but also in corporations, vocations, and regions. Interacting with individuals within them demands perceptiveness and adaptability. And the people who have those traits in abundance aren't necessarily the ones who enjoy the greatest social success in familiar settings. Cultural intelligence, or CQ, is the ability to make sense of unfamiliar contexts and then blend in.” (Earley, 2004) One of the things the College of Business prides themselves on is adequately preparing their graduates for the work force and this research shows exactly the developments that occur for students.

DEFINITIONS

Cultural Intelligence (CQ): “The ability to function effectively in culturally diverse settings.” (Ang, 2007)

Metacognitive CQ: “Cultural consciousness and awareness during interactions with those from different cultural backgrounds.” (Ang, 2007)

Cognitive CQ: “Cultural knowledge of norms, practices, and conventions in different cultural settings.” (Ang, 2007)

Motivational CQ: “Capability to direct attention and energy toward cultural differences” (Ang, 2007)

Behavioral CQ: “Capability to exhibit appropriate verbal and nonverbal actions when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. Is based on having and using a broad repertoire or range of behavior.” (Ang, 2007)

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

When delving deeper into cultural intelligence I found that much work had already been accomplished. Cultural intelligence is not a new concept, nor is it one that researchers have ignored which benefits the entire business profession. The most influential was “Cultural Intelligence: Its Measurement and Effects on Cultural Judgment and Decision Making, Cultural Adaptation and Task Performance” (Ang, 2007) because this will provide us with a tool to measure cultural intelligence. Appendix 1 shows the Cultural Intelligence Scale that was developed by the Cultural Intelligence Center in 2005 and then utilized in multiple academic research survey; the Cultural Intelligence scale will be used in this study.

A very similar study was conducted by Wood and St. Peters, “Short-term cross-cultural study tours: impact on cultural intelligence”. This study proved that short term study abroad tours positively enhance three of the four factors: metacognitive CQ, cognitive CQ and motivational CQ. (Wood, 2014) The difference between the Wood study and this study is that this study didn’t have a baseline to compare to and it was all graduate level students. My research will be different because it will be directed at undergraduate students and there will be a control group to compare to. The Wood study was very beneficial because it proves that short term study abroad trips are effective for enhancing CQ, but this study surveyed a very exclusive group of only graduate level students.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the independent variable is a dichotomous measure (study abroad participation versus not) and the dependent variable is cultural intelligence. It is hypothesized that studying abroad will positively affect the level of a student's cultural intelligence. In this sense, the study explores the degree of student development as a result of the experience.

To keep independent variables to a minimum, the survey was administered the survey to Dr. Janda's three sections of International Marketing (MKTG 544) during the Spring 2017 semester. Two of the sections met twice a week and studied international marketing concepts on the Manhattan, Kansas campus. The third section only met about one time per week and took a 10-day trip during Spring Break to London, England and Munich, Germany. The responses from the two class sections that do not take the trip will be used as the baseline to compare results to. There were 18 students who will be used as the control group that are taking the on-campus class. For the variable group, there were 6 students who took the initial and follow up surveys.

Data collection was accomplished by administering an online survey to Dr. Janda's three sections of MKTG 544 the week before the trip was to depart. The survey was distributed so close to the trip because it helped focus the results on just the information that was learned from the trip and eliminate errors from cultural development from other classes or experiences. The Cultural Intelligence Scale was selected to distribute to students because it is an established measure that has been previously validated in multiple studies.

Some of the errors with this survey will be that it is a small sample size. With only 6 students taking the post study abroad trip survey the range is small. Another factor that is not addressed is student's background and previous travels out of the country. Since some students could have been born in a different country or regularly travel abroad, they are likely to have more cultural intelligence than a student who has never travelled abroad.

RESULTS

When analyzing Appendix 2, the averages of each category are compared. The biggest skills influenced were in the Motivational CQ area. To further elaborate these effects, Appendix 3 breaks down the results by question. The category with the smallest change was in Behavioral CQ which analyzed how a person changes their communication styles in cross cultural interactions. The largest decrease was for BEH3 which analyzed changing the rate of speaking by -0.04. The biggest increase for any question was related to Cognitive CQ, COG6, which specifically looks at nonverbal expression in other cultures which rose by 1.56. Appendix 4 showcases the changes from the study abroad group before and after their trip.

CONCLUSIONS

The results from this study showed that the students who participate in a 10-day study abroad trip develop more cultural intelligence in all categories, though slight in some, than a student who just takes an on-campus course. Yet, what it proves is that the experience abroad helps increase the desire and comfort with cross-cultural interactions. Since the business market is continuing to be more diverse and global, any improvement on this for students is beneficial. This study does prove that there is an improvement in cultural intelligence in all categories compared to traditional on-campus courses. These enhanced skills may also help students relate better to diverse colleagues in professional settings here in the United States.

The change in Motivational CQ is the result of students going abroad and realizing two things: they like to travel to other countries (MOT4) and it isn't as scary as they thought (MOT5). The one question that resulted in a negative change was (BEH3) that relates to speaking skills. This slight drop would be due to people overestimating their communication skills and realizing after being abroad, they aren't as proficient at communicating as they predicted.

Another result of the survey is seeing that the metrics for before and after the study abroad trip increased. In addition to gaining knowledge over peers, study abroad students will increase their own development. The most significant impact was seen in Cognitive CQ which deals largely with just learning about a new cultural and becoming more exposed to it. This study illustrates that a short-term study abroad experience enhances a student's capability to experience cultural differences first hand, the level of appreciation for cultural differences and how to navigate these differences becomes

more important for the student. It also shows that after being abroad students become more aware to the minor and major differences between various cultures. After experiencing the needed levels of consciousness to various details it heightens a student's attention during interactions. Students were also challenged to begin operating within a different culture which forced their cultural knowledge of norms, practices, and conventions knowledge to increase. If a student wanted to quickly adapt to their surroundings they needed to be intentional about thinking through their environment and adjust actions accordingly. This study also illustrates that students may overestimate their ability to behave appropriately in a different culture. Through living in another society, they develop the skills necessary to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds and gradually improve this skill.

SUMMARY

Although the metrics did not go significantly higher, it is important to recognize that the development in students was significant and any increase in Cultural Intelligence and cultural experiences are critical to professional development.

“In order to acquire cultural intelligence you must practice, by living and working in culturally different environments, or by working with culturally different people. But in order to live and work effectively in culturally different environments, or to work successfully with culturally different people, you first need to acquire cultural intelligence.” (Thomas, 2008)

WORKS CITED

Ang, S., Dyne, L. V., Koh, C., Ng, K. Y., Templer, K. J., Tay, C., & Chandrasekar, N. A. (2007). Cultural Intelligence: Its Measurement and Effects on Cultural Judgment and Decision Making, Cultural Adaptation and Task Performance. Management and Organization Review Management Organization Review, 3(3), 335-371. doi:10.1111/j.1740-8784.2007.00082.x

Crowne, K. A. (2008). What leads to cultural intelligence? Business Horizons, 51(5), 391-399. doi:10.1016/j.bushor.2008.03.010

Earley, P. C., & Mosakowski, E. (2004). Cultural Intelligence. Harvard Business Review, 82(10), 139-146.

Evan D. Wood & Heather Y.Z. St. Peters (2014) Short-term cross-cultural study tours: impact on cultural intelligence, The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 25:4, 558-570, DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2013.796315

Thomas, Davis C., and Kerr Inkson. Developing Cultural Intelligence in an Interconnected World. Cultural Intelligence People Skills for Global Business. 3rd ed. San Francisco: Berrett Koehler, 2008. N. pag. Print.

APPENDIX 1:

The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)

Read each statement and select the response that best describes your capabilities. Select the answer that BEST describes you AS YOU REALLY ARE (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree)

CQ factor	Questionnaire items
Metacognitive CQ	
MC1	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I use when interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds
MC2	I adjust my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from a culture that is unfamiliar to me
MC3	I am conscious of the cultural knowledge I apply to cross-cultural interactions.
MC4	I check the accuracy of my cultural knowledge as I interact with people from different cultures
Cognitive CQ	
COG1	I know the legal and economic systems of other cultures.
COG2	I know the rules (e.g., vocabulary, grammar) of other languages.
COG3	I know the cultural values and religious beliefs of other cultures.
COG4	I know the marriage systems of other cultures.
COG5	I know the arts and crafts of other cultures.
COG6	I know the rules for expressing nonverbal behaviors in other cultures.
Motivational CQ	
MOT1	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
MOT2	I am confident that I can socialize with locals in a culture that is unfamiliar to me.
MOT3	I am sure I can deal with the stresses of adjusting to a culture that is new to me.
MOT4	I enjoy living in cultures that are unfamiliar to me.
MOT5	I am confident that I can get accustomed to the shopping conditions in a different culture.
Behavioral CQ	
BEH1	I change my verbal behavior (e.g., accent, tone) when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

BEH2	I use pause and silence differently to suit different cross-cultural situations.
BEH3	I vary the rate of my speaking when a cross-cultural situation requires it.
BEH4	I change my nonverbal behavior when a cross-cultural situation requires it.
BEH5	I alter my facial expressions when a cross-cultural interaction requires it.

APPENDIX 2:

Overall Cultural Intelligence Changes (Scale of 1 to 7)

	No SA Trip	SA Trip	
Meta-cognitive CQ	5.185	5.79	0.605
Cognitive CQ	3.888333333	4.693333333	0.805
Motivational CQ	5.014	5.998	0.984
Behavioral CQ	4.614	4.966	0.352

** t-value statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

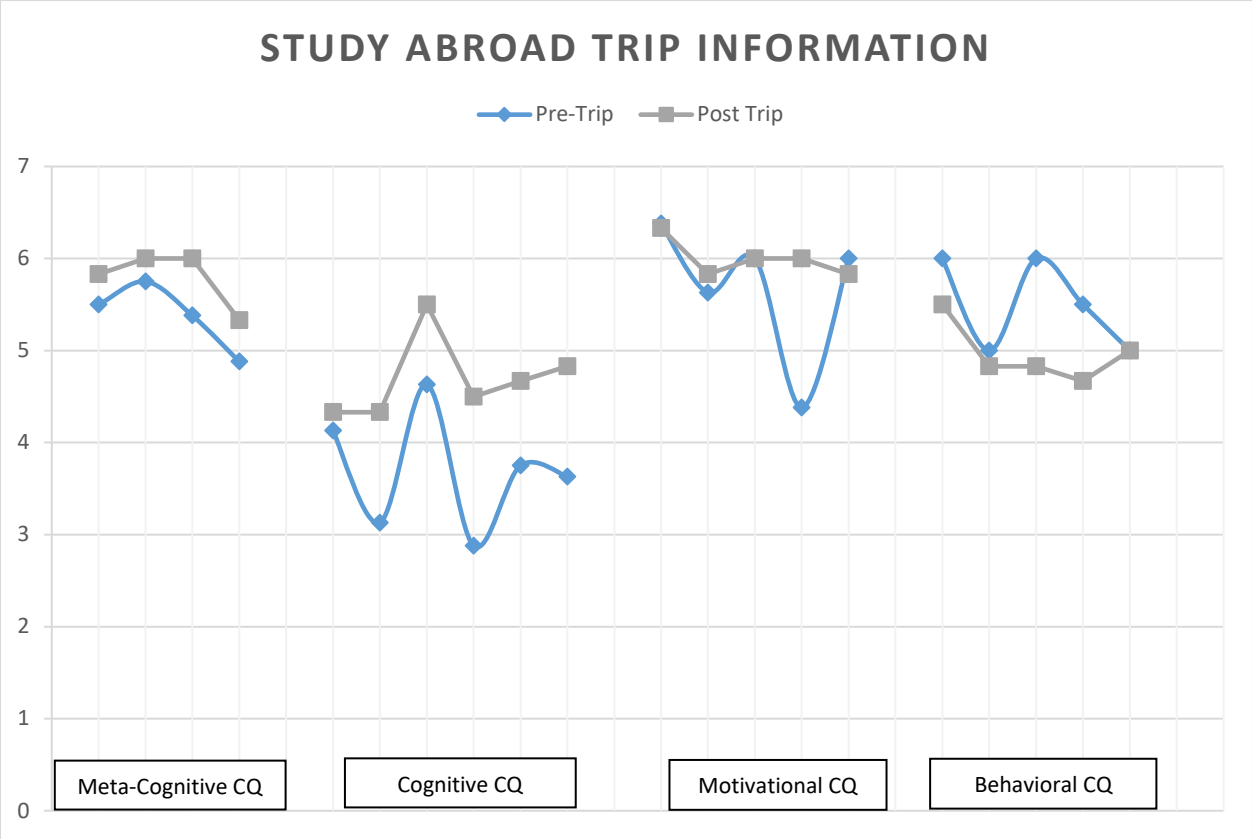
APPENDIX 3

Survey Responses by Question

	No Study Abroad Trip	Study Abroad Trip	Difference
MC1	5.47	5.83	0.36
MC2	5.47	6	0.53
MC3	5.07	6	0.93
MC4	4.73	5.33	0.6
COG1	3.87	4.33	0.46
COG2	4.33	4.33	0
COG3	4.6	5.5	0.9
COG4	3.73	4.5	0.77
COG5	3.53	4.67	1.14
COG6	3.27	4.83	1.56
MOT1	5.67	6.33	0.66
MOT2	5.27	5.83	0.56
MOT3	4.67	6	1.33
MOT4	4.53	6	1.47
MOT5	4.93	5.83	0.9
BEH1	4.8	5.5	0.7
BEH2	4.2	4.83	0.63
BEH3	4.87	4.83	-0.04
BEH4	4.6	4.67	0.07
BEH5	4.6	5	0.4

APPENDIX 4

Metrics from Before and After a 10-Day Study Abroad Trip



APPENDIX 5

Comparing 10-Day Study Abroad Students vs No Trip