A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL OUTCOMES

by Michael Dale Green

This dissertation has been read and approved as fulfilling the partial requirement for the
Degree of Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Leadership.

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A Dissertation
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
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the Degree of Doctor of Education
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DEDICATION

This doctoral project is dedicated to my family, who has always been my foundation. Thank you for always supporting me during my many years in education and through my doctoral pursuit. My children, Candice and Greg, were always my biggest fans and provided the motivation to continue everything I ever tried to accomplish in my time as an educator. Although Greg is no longer with us, I know he would still be an avid supporter in my endeavors. My former wife Lisa provided an overwhelming amount of support and assistance through many of the early years. My parents never finished high school themselves but instilled the ethic of hard work and perseverance. My brother Jerry was influential in me becoming an educator, coach, and pursuing higher educational degrees. His example inspired me to be an educator and to always strive for success. Again, thanks to my family for your continued support. I love you all dearly and would not be where I am today without you.

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ABSTRACT

People have been traveling internationally for hundreds of years seeking enlightenment. There is a plethora of research to discuss how travel has impacted them. However, travel research is lacking where the educational impacts on the educational experiences of teachers are concerned. The purpose of this study was to offer empirical evidence on whether the international travel outcomes appear to be a function of traveling abroad, according to teacher perception. Eleven teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured format. They were questioned concerning the effects of international travel on their personal and professional lives. The researcher analyzed the data by transcribing the interviews and then coding them to discover common themes expressed in the interviews. The findings indicated that international travel resulted in travel outcomes to varying levels among the participants. Educational institutions and the travel industry can use these findings to further enhance the educational experiences encountered while traveling abroad. to further enhance the educational experiences encountered while traveling abroad.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

International travel involves visiting places that a majority of people are never able to see, with only 10% of students being able to have this opportunity (Goodman, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Goodman (2013) quoted the poet Robert Frost when referring to traveling abroad, saying, "I took the path less trodden, and it made all the difference (p. 1)." Goodman (2013) stated that taking this path changes lives in incredible ways, and not only affects changes within oneself, but others being visited. As a result, the world becomes a little less dangerous. Even Odysseus had many harrowing calls in many different far-away lands in Homer's Odyssey and was saved from these situations by people he met along the way (Goodman, 2013). A famous quote from St. Augustine (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012) may have summed it up when he said, "The world is like a book. He who stays at home reads only one page" (p. 22).

Teachers who traveled internationally, either as students or adults, often had experienced life-altering changes that affected their future lives culturally, personally, and cognitively (Walters, Green, Wang, & Walters, 2011). Teachers are frequently in charge of a very diverse collection of students. Profound experiences from their childhoods, schooling, or formal teaching training that enhance their teaching prove beneficial to their educative experiences (Brown, 2009). These experiences have a tremendous impact on their perceptions of what was necessary to provide a successful

education to those students for which they were responsible (Deck, Luthy, & Schrader, 2012).

Many centuries ago, students with a higher educative purpose traveled from one learning center to another, in an attempt to broaden their intellect with knowledge from places in the world that citizens of their own culture had not experienced (Angwenyi, 2014). Talburt (2009) described these early travel experiences as searches for enlightenment which could only come from visiting exotic places. Johnson (2008) explained a similar occurrence that was practiced in the Middle Ages, as students embarked on *wanderjahres* after serving apprenticeships (p. 36). They would journey from place to place for approximately a year in order to learn from other cultures, and then returned to their masters and share their experiences. These wanderjahres were some of the first examples of learning outside the standard classroom setting.

The first educational trips began in Europe in the were called the Grand Tour (Association for the Study of Higher Education [ASHE], 2012a; Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, & Benckendorff, 2011; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Young British men of nobility experienced their educational rites of passage as they traveled across Europe. By the 1800s, young aristocratic men throughout Europe were also traveling. The first group travel in the United States began in the late 19th century with a female version of the Grand Tour (ASHE, 2012a). Wealthy young women traveled to Europe to visit museums, churches, and other landmarks. They learned about the cultures and languages while abroad. The first study abroad programs in the United States included women from various eastern colleges after World War I. Study abroad participation climbed steadily until the late 1960s, when college students began to have greater access to international

travel (ASHE, 2012a; Falk et al., 2011). Many international companies began to sense

the need for more education from a global perspective. This trend continued to increase

steadily until 9/11 when many colleges and universities started promoting the need for

even more intercultural awareness and competence. Porcano (2011) included statistics

from the Institute of International Education (IIE) international travel survey that showed

there was an 8% increase in students traveling abroad from 2000 to 2007 and a 150%

increase during the last ten years. Perry, Stone, and Tarrant (2012) added that IIE data

showed study abroad growth had increased from 90,000 in 1990 to 270,000 in 2010.

Donnelly-Smith (2009) agreed that, with the economic demands from the U.S.

government and many global companies, there had been a dramatic increase in traveling

abroad with students from many diverse and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Today, the rationale for travel has shifted from educating students for cultural

purposes to educating them in order to be competitive in the global markets (ASHE,

2012b). ASHE (2012b) added that education abroad was most effective when students

were developed holistically (Howard & Gulawani, 2014) with global experiences as well

as traditional classroom experiences. Howard and Gulawani (2014) concluded that study

abroad was beneficial for students even if some research showed the gains were smaller

than portrayed by proponents of educational travel. A substantial amount of research

showed there were far more positive gains than negative gains.

According to Haynes (2011), the U.S. Senate wrote a resolution in 2006

contending that what American students did not know about world geography "exacted a

heavy toll" on our modern-day global society (p. 17). Despite the military efforts going

on in the Middle East, 87% of U.S. students could not locate Iraq on a world map, 83%

could not locate Afghanistan, 58% could not locate Japan, and 11% were unable to locate the United States on a map (Haynes, 2011).

Many people have traveled abroad every year, including many students. Stone and Petrick (2013) claimed that international learning was not just for study abroad programs. Traveling came in many varieties and ranged from family vacations to study abroad trips for teens and college students (Johnson, 2008; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). The family vacations were normally considered tourism travel, while student travel was normally considered educational travel. Pabel and Prideaux, (2012) contended that traveling abroad affected the personal and philosophical perspectives of people, all travel was educational. Researchers (Alexander, Bakir, & Wickens, 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013) stated that no other human experience had the potential to completely change one's personal perspectives like travel. Pabel and Prideaux (2012) claimed travel in the last few years was done with a more global perspective in mind. Hovland (2009) stated that educational travel was practice for the real world. Learning was used as a way to integrate a variety of perspectives while exploring other cultures, thus preparing students to acquire the skills needed to solve global problems. Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010) asserted that cultural competence was needed more than ever in a "*shrinking interdependent world*" where students would someday be expected to serve in some kind of global capacity (p. 46). Teachers were expected to employ a more modernistic and global pedagogy that will expand the skill sets of students so their chances to survive social, economic, political, and cultural situations in the future would be enhanced. Pabel and Prideaux (2012) claimed that students hoped to experience adventure while also learning, working,

and interacting with people from other cultures. As a result, the educated person developed an understanding and engagement of their travel experience that transcended every other experience in their lives (Angwenyi, 2014). Alexander et al. (2010) agreed that these life changing experiences were more likely to result from peril than from happiness.

McClellan and Hyle (2012) asserted that the aim of education should be to advance learning through kinesthetic experiences. Learning abroad involved responding to unfamiliar environments outside the normal classroom. These experiences became transformative when students interacted in situations outside of the normal parameters for their personal mindsets and adapted to the drastic differences (Ross, 2010). Walters et al. (2011) likened the visiting of new cultures to an iceberg, as so much of it is not observable.

A substantial amount of research indicated significant learning was taking place outside of formal education settings (Falk et al., 2011). Students often learned from kinesthetic, self-directed experiences such as the internet and traveling abroad, that did not require students to physically be in the classroom. Falk et al. (2011) asserted learning was a complex process composed of several different elements. First, Falk et al. (2011) contended learning was a process in which every animal engaged throughout their lives. Education involved having learning aided by other individuals. Second, learning was not just a rote recollection of facts and information but a continuous series of experiences interwoven together into unique individuals. Third, learning produced individualistic outcomes for each student. The students combined knowledge attained with personal experiences and past occurrences to form meaning from an understandably unique

perspective. Fourth, learning was the process of assembling bits of knowledge from around the brain when recollection was needed. Fifth, learning was based on the specific knowledge uniquely existing in the individual. The interpretation was dependent on the context of the situation the individual was experiencing. Sixth, learning was the accumulation of all the experiences occurring in the individual's life that gave this person their individual perspectives. Seventh, learning was a process that could be rewarding. Gaining knowledge of previously unknown information could be intrinsically motivating, especially if learning experiences were gratifying to the particular individual.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to offer empirical evidence on whether international travel outcomes appeared to be a function of traveling abroad, according to teacher perception. The researcher explored the educational impact international travel had on teacher perception in relation to cultural, cognitive, and personal outcomes. Many researchers stressed the importance of travel abroad on enhancing cultural awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development. Howard and Gulawani (2014) concluded previous research showed study abroad was a success for traveling individuals even if research showed the gains were not as large as portrayed by proponents of educational travel. Research has shown there were many positive gains as well as several negative gains.

Research Questions

The central question to be answered in this study was: To what extent was there a relationship between perceptions of travel and cultural outcomes as reported by

interviewed teachers that have traveled abroad in a rural southwestern Georgia school system? The research questions were as follows:

1. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their daily lives?

2. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their teaching?

3. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their relationships with students?

Conceptual Framework

While researching at the onset of the study, the researcher's perceptions were that international travel was most closely related to the constructivism, phenomenology, experiential, and transformational learning theories. The learning that took place during international travel most closely aligned with these theories. The travel outcomes perceived to have the largest impacts were personal growth, cognitive development, and international awareness. The types of travel and the lengths of stays were perceived as contributing factors to the travel outcome research (See Table 1 and Figure 1). When beginning the research, it was deemed that a qualitative, descriptive format with random purposeful sampling, a pilot study, and semi-structured interviews was most conducive to examining data of this nature.

Table 1

Conceptual Framework

Theoretical framework	Constructivism	Phenomenology	
Learning types	Experiential	Transformational	
Travel outcomes	International awareness	Personal growth	Cognitive development
Trip length	Short-term	Long-term	
Travel types	Family	Secondary	Collegiate
Research type	Qualitative	Descriptive	
Research Methods	Semi-structured interviews	Pilot study	
Participant selection	Random purposive sampling		
Analysis	Descriptive analysis	Coding	Bracketing
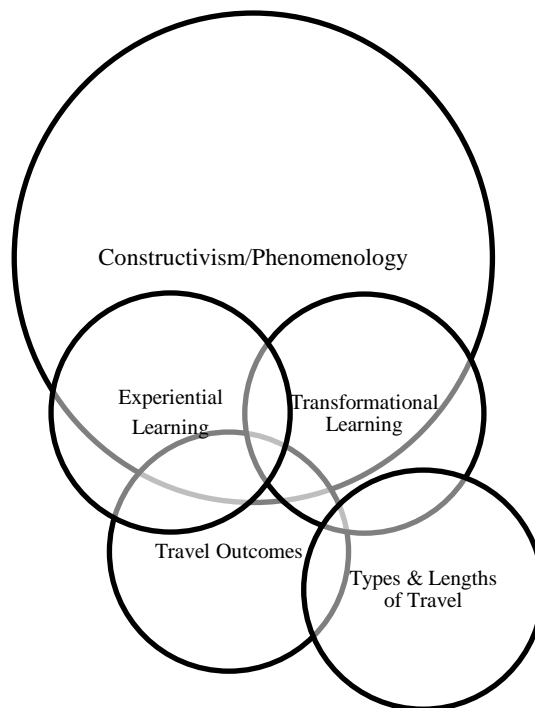
Figure 1. Conceptual framework diagram.

Types of learning often associated with travel education are experiential learning (Clabby, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Johnson, 2008; Porcano, 2011; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010) and transformational learning (Brown, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; McKeown, 2009; Mezirow, 1991; Perry et al., 2012; Ross, 2010; Saitow, 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Howard and Gulawani (2014) described experiential learning as the process of gathering information from experiences, reflecting on experiences in a generalized manner, and using that information to create future understanding through experimentation. A key aspect of experiential learning is reflection. When one reflects on an actual experience, it provides for an opportunity to create learning. When reflection is combined with concrete experiences, the chances for learning are greatly increased (Haynes, 2011; Kolb, 1984; Perry et al., 2012). Howard and Gulawani (2014) claimed that experiential learning used in study abroad programs can "bridge the gap" (p. 104) between theory and practice with international travel being more natural and less structured. Johnson (2008) added that experiential learning assisted people in their attempt to explore their abilities beyond the normal school setting. Researchers (ASHE, 2012b; McClellan & Hyle, 2012) stated that people traveling were able to explore their inner beings and learned a vast amount about others, while also using this knowledge to learn more about themselves. ASHE (2012b) asserted that experiential learning created unique and complex experiences that aroused motivation levels to the point where new approaches to new ideas could be generated. This was rarely duplicated in the classroom (ASHE, 2012b).

Mezirow (1991) advocated the transformational learning theory as a way of stressing the importance that reflection plays in learning. Mezirow (1991) avowed

learning evolved through the process of critical reflection. The transformational learning theory provided educators with more non-traditional activities to make learning more meaningful. Transformational learning was attainable by enhancing cognitive learning activities with experiential approaches, which often resulted in new educational views Mezirow (1991) calls "disorienting dilemmas". Perry et al. (2012) found that transformational learning theory advanced learning of individuals through emotional reactions to personally impactful experiences through these disorienting dilemmas (uncomfortable situations). They proposed learning was transformative when it was applied in a pragmatic, challenging manner. These experiences changed the learning process as well as how individuals interpreted the process, thus developing a more culturally competent being (McKeown, 2009).

People have developed several educational and cultural skills while traveling abroad (Falk et al., 2011). They stated traveling offered opportunities to be exposed to a vast array of sensory stimuli that, in the right scenario, promoted a learning experience. These learning opportunities could be an important and gratifying part of the study abroad experience. These educational moments were sometimes specifically designed to occur and, at other times, occurred incidentally. Travel contributed to the learning process by allowing individuals to develop practical abilities, common intelligence, and practical intelligence. Practical abilities were the skills happening incidentally as individuals proceeded through their travel experiences. Common intelligence was the spontaneous accumulation of understanding while participating in planned moments of learning. Practical intelligence was the life experiences students were exposed to as they attempted to become a better person.

Travel Outcomes

An extensive amount of travel outcomes research has been collected (Alexander et al., 2010; Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Brown, 2009; Chen & Petrick, 2013; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; DeVillar & Jiang, 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech, Fenech, & Birt, 2013; Haynes, 2011; Hovland, 2009; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Johnson, 2008; Kurt, Olitsky, & Geis, 2013; Mapp, 2012; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Perry et al., 2012; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Sherraden, Lough, & Bopp, 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Smith, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant, 2010; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012; Tucker, Gullekson, & McCambridge, 2011; Wood, 1996). There are many benefits associated with travel outcomes but are often sorted into the general categories of international awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development. Kurt et al. (2013) stated study abroad programs were designed around the premise of providing opportunities to acquire the skills necessary for global citizenship. Individuals matriculated across the world and were exposed to the combination of different cultures and languages intertwined with their previous experiences at home. This experience provided for an eclectic look at their new global perspective. Falk et al. (2011) contended the actual travel portion of the trip was only a small piece of the larger puzzle that was needed to produce learning outcomes.

International awareness. International awareness is one category of travel outcomes (Brown, 2009; Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Deck et al., 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Talburt, 2009). Study abroad promotes an

intercultural frame of mind. Engberg (2013) stated each traveler reviewed study abroad experiences in their own unique ways. They learned to comprehend and appreciate the cultures in other parts of the world and how they fit in with these particular cultures (Dwyer & Peters, 2012). They often feel camaraderie with the people they come into contact with during the trip who have assisted them in the acculturation process in the new country (Johnson, 2008). They gained a better insight into the culturally diverse ways of others, thus further cementing their international awareness.

Cultural immersion is more than just being tourists (Fenech et al., 2013; Jones, Niehaus, Rowan-Kenyon, Skendall, & Ireland, 2012). International study programs place learners into often uncomfortable situations in order to significantly increase their potential to become more globally adept (Doppen & An, 2014). Saitow (2009) averred that, as travelers learn to become more self-reliant, they begin to define and redefine their cultural awareness views. This increase in global perspectives is based on the context presented (McKeown, 2009).

Personal growth. Studying abroad has many benefits to personal growth (Alexander et al., 2010; Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Brown, 2009; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Deck et al., 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013; Gesinski, English, & Tyson, 2010; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Hovland, 2009; Mapp, 2012; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Perry et al., 2012; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Ritz, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011; Wood, 1996). Johnson (2008) asserted cultural interaction while traveling internationally increased the personal growth of learners by allowing them to reflect on

the personal and internal changes the travelers experienced with the environments (Perry et al., 2012). People traveling abroad learned to adapt to unique situations and new challenges, becoming more culturally efficient with time (Fenech et al., 2013; McKeown, 2009).

Personal interaction satisfaction from these experiences frequently led to positive feelings about their level of health attainment (Smith, 2010). Profound changes in self-discovery resulted when people were forced to question their internal experience and perception beliefs in a new environment (Alexander et al., 2010; Brown, 2009; Fenech et al., 2013; Perry et al., 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). People became more understanding of their inner selves through first-hand experience (Alexander et al., 2010; Ritz, 2011; Talburt, 2009). Travelers were frequently found to be more capable of becoming culturally competent than they thought possible (ASHE, 2012b). This competence inspired new affective understandings of international views, thus leading to a more culturally aware learning (McKeown, 2009; Saitow, 2009).

Educational travel can lead to enhanced life-skills development (Alexander et al., 2010; Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Engberg, 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Ritz, 2011; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012). Howard & Gulawani (2014) asserted that individuals traveling abroad became more accommodating towards culturally diverse people in addition to those in their immediate community (Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Chickering and Braskamp (2009) added traveling abroad led to becoming a more responsible and morally fulfilling citizen (Talburt, 2009). Traveling helped individuals to develop a more holistic

purpose in life, thus increasing the empathy towards those people encountered in diverse circumstances in their lives (Engberg, 2013).

Cognitive development. A final and obviously important category of travel outcomes to educators is cognitive development (Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Clabby, 2012; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Hovland, 2013; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Talburt, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Sherraden et al. (2013) stated the learning experienced in international travel, and not cultural citizenry, was the goal of education, sometimes altering the expected outcomes of educational travel. Stone and Petrick (2013) claimed educational travel was a necessary prerequisite for the enhancement of the educational experiences of diverse individuals. Those traveling individuals experienced a more motivated sense of cognitively enhanced activities while studying abroad, regardless of personal demographics. This experience greatly increased the cognitive and behavioral functioning toward complications faced in travel (Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013).

Howard and Gulawani (2014) purported that those studying abroad achieved more cognitively because of their travel opportunities. They were found to improve substantially in all academic areas, particularly increased knowledge, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011). Smith (2010) agreed that the cognitive learning acquired abroad would be beneficial upon returning home.

Types of Travel

There are many types of travel taken where educational benefit can be gained. There are family vacations where the intention is for the family to enjoy moments of relaxation as they learn about the culture and landmarks within the country (Chen &

Petrick, 2013; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Wood, 1996). Secondary

schools took trips that were predominantly educationally based. Secondary school

students were often prompted to learn about the cultures of the country, but the main goal

was to visit various famous monuments and learn about historical happenings. Finally,

there were trips that students took in college as part of their instructional package. The

main goal of these trips was to have students acculturate themselves into the country

visited and learn how to work in a global society.

Family trips often formed the basis for future learning as they gave the students

their first experiences in learning through traveling (McKeown, 2009). Children having

already traveled abroad with their families showed greater interdependence, cultural

awareness, and cultural sensitivity, more so than those adolescent students traveling

internationally on secondary school trips. Much research has been done on the study

abroad programs around the world, yet very little has been researched on the travel of

middle and high school aged children. The duration of secondary travel trips normally

depended on the ages of the travelers. Angwenyi (2014) posited that the older the

children, the longer the trips were and the longer the trip, the more profound the

experience was. Interacting culturally with others provided Collegiate travel normally

involved touring with accompanying instructors to an educational facility, or traveling to

a country where the students reside in the homes of citizens from that country. The goals

of this travel were cultural and global transformations that prepared students to live and

function in a global society (Blake-Campbell, 2014).

Lengths of Travel

The variations in the types of travel individuals engaged in while traveling abroad were numerous. McKeown (2009) stated that the amount of time they stayed abroad depended upon the type of trip in which they were participating. Some travel programs involved foreign language study, immersion with a foreign host and family, internships, and service learning. Other programs existed that combined particular aspects of some or all of these study types. The students resided in a variety of living conditions, ranging from student dorms, host families, or moved from place to place as they visited various historical sites. In some circumstances, travelers stayed for extended periods of time in long-term programs. These stays have long been thought of as the ideal situation with proponents of longer stays. The longer one stayed, the more one could learn (Mapp, 2012). Other trips were for shorter periods of time and were considered short-term programs. Many travelers were employed and could not stay for an extended time, while others simply could not afford a longer stay (Mapp, 2012; Porcano, 2011). For this reason, short-term travel programs are becoming an additional option in the collegiate travel programs. Regardless of the time frame, there are benefits to any amount of time spent abroad (Mapp, 2012).

Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) claimed an extensive and sustained amount of learning took place in these long-term trips and, as a result, an improved level of achievement occurred. Long-term study abroad programs improved achievement in several components that were common in travel education (Stone & Petrick, 2013). Cognitive, career, and personal growth, in addition to increases in maturity, flexibility, and adaptability were common benefits of long-term travel. Mapp (2012) concurred that

long-term study abroad produced several beneficial outcomes, including functional

knowledge, personal growth, and cultural awareness (ASHE, 2012b; Mapp, 2012).

Dwyer and Peters (2012) reported longer stays abroad could enhance academics, personal

growth, life-skills development, careers, and international awareness.

Tarrant and Lyons (2012) stated short-term programs were far less scary for

learners with no previous international travel experience, as they traveled with groups of

their peers. Students frequently learned new cultural information in these programs in the

areas of culture, history, and geography (Stone & Petrick, 2013). Short-term study

abroad programs provided the same opportunities as long-term programs, just in an

abbreviated version (Association of the Study of Higher Education, 2012c; Kurt et al.,

2013; Llanes & Munoz, 2009; McKeown, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Stone & Petrick,

2013). ASHE (2012c) added students traveling short-term were much more culturally

aware than students who remained at regular school settings. Tarrant (2010) stated some

researchers sought to dispel the strengths of short-term programs due to a lack of

academic rigor. They claimed the research also showed that the time spent abroad was

not sufficient to engage the learner in full cultural immersion. Mapp (2011) insisted that

the short stay could place more of a focus on the cultural awareness skills necessary to

learn. Individuals could be transformed through these edifying experiences and critical

reflection (Perry et al., 2012; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Tarrant

& Lyons, 2012).

McKeown (2009) stated that educational travel provided excellent opportunities

to learn while exploring the world and that challenge was necessary to enhance the

potential to acquire knowledge. McKeown (2009) contended travel abroad was the ideal

environment to issue the perfect amount of challenge. Individuals often encountered many complex, diverse, and stressful events while traveling, placing them in environments conducive to personal growth and cultural development.

Educational trips abroad have occurred in the United States since the late 19th century (ASHE, 2012a) and even much earlier in Europe and other places in the world (Angwenyi, 2014; Falk et al., 2011; Johnson, 2008; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009). The purposes of these trips were to see first-hand how people in other countries live and to make educational and personal meaning from those experiences. Major contributions from study abroad include the educational, cultural, and personal outcomes resulting from the traveling experiences (ASHE, 2012b; Falk et al., 2011; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012). The outcomes ranged from intercultural awareness to personal growth, life-skills, and cognitive growth.

Enhancing intercultural awareness skills resulted from being placed in an environment where the cultural skill set for that country was unfamiliar (Doppen & An, 2014). Due to the adversity, cultural awareness growth was inevitable. Adapting to this new setting by relating these events to prior experiences through reflection further augmented the process of cultural development (Howard & Gulawani, 2014). Increasing personal growth occurred when one was more accepting of the changes happening in this new environment and accommodated the views of others (Perry et al., 2012). The resulting changes transformed the individual's concern for self-gratification to concern for the greater society (Brown, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; McKeown, 2009). Improving life-skills transpired when one comprehended how people in other places managed

adversity and adjusted one's own problem-solving skills, especially since this included input from others who had similar experiences (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Engberg, 2013). Developing cognitive skills resulted when people used more than the knowledge acquired in a classroom to become a more intellectual being (Stone & Petrick, 2013). They combined the cognitive knowledge learned in school with the experiential experiences encountered in kinesthetic learning (ASHE, 2012c; Mapp. 2012). Educators everywhere saw the outcomes as a great benefit of learning while traveling abroad. Addressing the need for experiential activities, so prevalent in educational travel, was a major goal of educators seeking to expand the cultural potential for students (Falk et al., 2011; Kurt et al., 2013).

Methodology Overview

Qualitative descriptive research is a form of research involving collecting data with self-report instruments or by observation (Gay & Airasian, 2003). The research method is a non-statistical form of data examination where researchers derive more detailed accounts of prior experiences through stories and thoughts. These experiences contribute to the amount of information collected in that subject area without being influenced by numerical data or statistics (Patton, 2002). Descriptive research provides an outlet for summarizing these phenomena from the perspective of the participant (Sandelowski, 2010). Quantitative approaches often fail to capture the small nuances of descriptive experiences and focus more on statistical procedures using numerical data (McReynolds, Koch, & Rumrill, 2001).

Phenomenological research is a qualitative research approach where participants give their perspective of a particular activity or concept based on personal "lived

experience" (Patton, 2002). What is perceived to have occurred could be completely different depending on how various individuals' view what has occurred in their lives.

The sampling procedure chosen for this study was random purposeful sampling (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Creswell (2003) stated that randomly purposeful sampling is appropriate to study participants that already have an understanding of the issues being studied. Due to the lower than expected participation numbers, all participants that completed the travel packets and letters of informed consent for the pilot study and the research interviews were used in the study. They were selected as a result of the amount of previous international experience, as answered by a travel experience questionnaire.

A pilot study was completed as part of the research. Six elementary teachers were interviewed using the nine interview questions to be used with the high school teachers in the study. After the interviews were completed the pilot study participants were asked whether the interview questions were understandable and whether they accurately depicted their international travel experiences. This process was followed to ensure the questions were credible.

The research procedures in this study involved using semi-structured interviews with 11 high school teachers. The interviews were all recorded using two recording devices. The researcher sought to examine the perceptions of the teachers concerning the travel outcomes resulting from international travel. This type of approach allowed the researcher to ask open-ended questions then pursue further information by asking follow-up questions, if necessary.

The data from the interviews were transcribed using denaturalized transcription. This style is verbatim with the exception of deleting unintelligible noises and mutterings.

The transcripts were then coded using Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model to identify common themes existing in the interview data. Eight common themes emerged from the coding procedure and included: common experiences, effects on life and values, global perspective, effect on teaching, academic motivation, tolerance level, relationships with students, and relationships with staff.

Limitations

Limitations can have a deleterious effect on the validity and credibility of a study (Patton, 2003). The number of limitations in this study was minimal but there were some to be considered. First, the pool of potential participants for this study was much lower than desired. However, Creswell (2003) claimed that 5 to 25 participants in a descriptive qualitative study was sufficient to get an accurate and thorough representation of the participants' views. Even though the desired amount of six to eight high school teachers being interviewed was met, the low response rate led to a less heterogeneous group of participants. The researcher selected all 11 that agreed to participate. As mentioned previously, this limited the heterogeneous grouping potential as there were fewer participants from which to select. The researcher interviewed seven White females, one Hispanic female, one African American female, and two White males. The majority were White females (7 out of 11 participants). However, this sampling may be in line with what the percentages are in many educational school settings.

Second, there was a somewhat limited response for the potential international travel outcomes. The majority of the participants included many of the same outcomes as most of the other participants, although their individual versions were somewhat different. These outcomes led to the common themes that were discussed during the

findings section of this study. Also, the outcomes might not necessarily indicate that international travel is the cause for these outcomes. It is possible that they could be the result of the experience itself and not necessarily the result of being in another country.

Third, all of the interviews were conducted at the participants' school at their convenience but they were all completed in the afternoon after a normal school workday. Depending on the events that transpired that day on their jobs, the participants could very well be exhausted or simply overstressed. This experience could have resulted in less than adequate motivation to share and communicate with the researcher and possibly result in shorter, less thought out responses to the interview questions. In most cases, the interviews were conducted in the teachers' personal classroom with no interruptions. However, there were a few instances where the intercom came on with an announcement or another teacher or student, unaware of the interview, stepped into the room. These minor disruptions could have distracted them from their train of thought and resulted in less succinct responses.

Fourth, the researcher made all attempts to be as unbiased as possible by purposely not engaging in discussions on international travel experience before the interviews. However, most participants most likely understood that the researcher would probably not be doing research in this area without strong interest or previous experience with international travel. Sometimes, individuals like to share experiences that another may not have experienced or even attempt to outdo another that has previous experience in the same activity. My perceived travel experience could have influenced how they responded to the interview questions.

Fifth, the researcher made every attempt to be as complete and thorough in the transcribing and common themes coding process as possible. However, the researcher is not an experienced lifelong coding specialist and minor misinterpreting of the data is not out of the realm of possibilities.

<center>Definition of Terms</center>

Bracketing: Putting aside personal views so as not to influence the participants' recollection of the phenomena (Brooks, 2015).

Coding: Finding common themes in qualitative data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Cognitive Growth: Substantial gains academically in areas such as increased knowledge, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011).

Collegiate Travel: Travel that is taken by college students as part of the education curriculum that prepares students for future schooling and occupations in the global world (Blake-Campbell, 2014).

Connectors: Themes derived from connecting one concept to another (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Credibility: Describing data or phenomena accurately (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Cross-sectional: Collecting data once (Gay & Airasian, 2003).

Cutting and sorting: Finding themes in different texts and arranging them in common groupings (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Denaturalized transcription: Verbatim transcription where incoherent mutterings and unintelligible sounds are deleted (Bucholtz, 2000).

Educational travel: The act of learning from combining kinesthetic experiences with cognitive knowledge previously acquired through educational means, while in other countries (Stone & Petrick, 2013).

Epoche: Putting aside personal views so as not to influence the participants' recollection of the phenomena (Brooks, 2015).

Ethnocentric: Concern with self (McKeown, 2009).

Ethnorelative: Concern with others (McKeown, 2009).

Experiential Learning: The process of gathering information from experience, reflecting on experiences in a generalized manner, and using that information to create future understanding through experimentation (Howard & Gulawani, 2014).

Family Travel: Travel that is taken with other family members as a vacation or learning experience (McKeown, 2009)

Immersion: Totally involved in an experience as someone regularly involved would be (Falk, 2011).

Indigenous terms: Themes used in unfamiliar ways (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

International Awareness: An intercultural frame of mind where travelers learn to comprehend and appreciate the cultures in other parts of the world and how they fit in with these particular cultures (Dwyer & Peters, 2012).

Institutional Review Board (IRB): Board responsible for approval of any research (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Key words in context (KWIC): Particular themes that any participants may use regularly (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Learning: Life-long process where the comprehension of knowledge is combined with previous experiences to form a more enlightened and educated individual (Falk et al., 2011).

Life-Skills Development: The development of a keener sense of civic responsibility and morality that leads to the fulfillment of obligations to local and global communities (Talburt, 2009).

Long-Term Stay: Educational trips that last a semester or longer (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012).

Member checking: Participants viewing their personal research data before allowing it to be included in the survey (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Meta-coding: Examining previous themes to potentially discover new themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Pawing: When researchers comb through all research materials in order to include all relevant data (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Personal Growth: Improvement reflected by profound changes in self-discovery occurring in travelers' personal development when forced to question their internal beliefs (Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010).

Phenomenological hermeneutics: Researchers interpreting particular experiences with phenomena involving "lived experiences" (Giorgio, 2011).

Pseudonyms: Fictitious names used to conceal identities of the participants (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Qualitative descriptive research: Collecting data with self-report instrument or with observation of the experiences (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002)

Random purposeful sampling: Randomly selecting participants from a particular segment or group (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Secondary Travel: Travel that is taken as an educational endeavor and involves students in middle or high school (Angwenyi, 2014).

Self-efficacy: Ability to complete a challenge (Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013).

Semi-structured interviews: Asking questions and allowing additional questions in order to clarify responses (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Short-Term Stay: Educational trips that last for less than a semester and usually last approximately two weeks (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; McKeown, 2009).

Themes: Abstract constructs used in all forms of communication (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Tolerance: Accepting of the distinct differences between different cultures (Ritz, 2010).

Transformational Learning: Learning through a personally dynamic and independent socio-cultural process that begins with disorienting dilemma; begins a permanent change to identity constraints; and causes a continued shift in thinking and reflection due to novel experiences (Ross, 2010).

Transitions: Themes used when moving from one concept to another (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Travel Outcomes: The cognitive, personal, and cultural benefits derived as a result of international travel (Saitow, 2009).

Validity: Measuring what is actually intended to be measured (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Verbatim: Exactly as it is given (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002).

Word co-occurrence: Themes that multiple participants may use regularly (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Word repetitions: Word themes that are used multiple times (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

Summary

International travel provides opportunities for people to experience other cultures that are often drastically different from what they are accustomed to in their own countries. Traveling abroad once involved visiting the landmarks and monuments from other countries as well as sampling different cuisines and cultural experiences. Now, the emphasis has shifted somewhat to increasing global preparedness. The international travelers encounter many diverse activities and learn through reflection of these hands-on experiences which are pervasive in experiential and transformational learning. Potential outcomes resulting from learning while traveling abroad range from cultural awareness and personal growth to cognitive development and an increased motivation to succeed.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Throughout recent history, the views of learning have changed on a consistent basis. Education has progressed from the rote learning in rural one-room schoolhouses to the expansive campuses of today with their expansive curriculums. Realizing one's potential in teaching was often enhanced by having a more eclectic approach to the learning process. Saitow (2009) stated educational travel has impacted learning in a host of ways and has provided a more interactive alternative to the traditional classroom. Falk et al. (2011) added that, until recent education history, most learning did not occur in the classroom but through immersion in the larger world where their global perspectives were honed.

There was a considerable amount of dated literature. However, it added strength to this study so it was appropriate to include information from that period in a historical overview of the topic. The impetus for this study was based on the works of Kolb and Mezirow. Kolb (1984) developed the theory of experiential learning and Mezirow (1991) developed the transformational learning theory. Therefore, it was appropriate to review the literature in the domains of travel outcomes, traveler types, and length of stay. The travel outcomes subtopics examined were international awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development. The traveler types subtopics investigated were family travel,

secondary travel, and collegiate travel. The lengths of stay subtopics addressed were short-term and long-term stays.

Types of Learning

Falk et al. (2011) claimed learning was a very complex process with many parts joining together to form a final product. Education was not just a collection of facts but a never-ending process of experiences wound together to form a more enlightened, educated individual. Although all humans learned, each individual learned in their own unique way. The act of combining past experiences with present opportunities gave individuals opportunities to gain meaning from their own learning, based on the context of their unique and cumulative social, cultural, and physical plethora of experiences (McKeown, 2009; Saitow, 2009).

Saitow (2009) asserted learning was either passive or active. Passive learning involved the standard type of education where teachers provided knowledge through lectures and assessed through exams. Active learning, however, involved the learner being actively engaged in all facets of the education process emotionally, physically, and cognitively. Educational travel was a prime example of this type of active learning.

Experiential Learning

One type of learning that is much more prevalent today than many years ago is experiential learning (Clabby, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Johnson, 2008; Porcano, 2011; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Saitow (2009) explained that experiential learning is the cornerstone of educational travel, as it provides kinesthetic experiences, promoting learning through a variety of means. Howard and Gulawani (2014) stated individuals that were learning in a more active manner remembered information for longer periods of

time and were better able to synthesize this information than those that learned in a more passive manner. Being placed in an unfamiliar context created opportunities to learn outside the box in student-oriented activities.

Experiential learning was designed to acquire basic skills, to experience new knowledge, and to learn from hands-on experiences that were beyond the normal classroom reach. Kolb (1984) described this as "the process whereby knowledge was created through the transformation of experience" (p. 41). Tarrant and Lyons (2012) agreed experiential learning often transformed learners from having local-minded viewpoints to global viewpoints. Experiential learning prepared people to survive in unique environments to which they may not be accustomed (Saitow, 2009). Dewey (1938) asserted that what a person learns in one situation will aid them in future situations. Dewey added that learning institutions were overly concerned with presenting knowledge instead of developing a better understanding of student experiences.

Kolb (1984) further contributed to this idea with his theory of experiential learning. He concluded that learning resulted when perception, cognition, and behavior were combined with previous experiences. Howard and Gulawani (2014) described experiential learning as the process of gathering information from experiences, reflecting on those experiences in a generalized manner, and using that information to create future understanding through experimentation. A key aspect of experiential learning was reflection. When one reflected on an actual experience, it provided an opportunity to create learning. When reflection was combined with concrete experiences, the chances for learning were greatly increased (Haynes, 2011; Kolb, 1984; Perry et al., 2012).

Johnson (2008) added that experiential learning assisted in the exploration of abilities beyond the normal school setting.

Callihan (2009) claimed technology offered opportunities to have virtual experiences yet failed to replace learning in the actual environment. Traveling abroad made academic subjects like history and art vibrant. ASHE (2012b) and McClellan and Hyle (2012) asserted people traveling were able to explore their inner beings and learned a vast amount about others, while also using this knowledge to learn more about themselves. McClellan and Hyle (2012) concurred that experiential learning created a unique and complex experience, thus arousing motivation levels to the point where new approaches to new ideas could be generated. This was rarely duplicated in the classroom (ASHE, 2012b).

Dewey (1938) avowed education could only be enhanced by basing learning on experiences. Experiential education engaged learners with direct experiences and reflection as a means to improve cognitive and developmental skills. These previous experiences became constant sources for future learning (Perry et al., 2012). While experience was invaluable for learning, it was greatly enhanced when conjoined with critical analysis and student reflection. Dewey (1938) summed up this view stating, "The previous experiences, situations, and interactions of learners today would continually resound in their present constructions of knowledge and future reconstructions, decisions, and actions based on that knowledge" (p. 25). Dewey (1938) added, "Amid all uncertainties, there was one permanent frame of reference: namely the organic connection between education and personal experience" (p. 25). Johnson (2008)

confirmed the overwhelming stress on cognitive learning has lessened the influence of experiential learning in some modern-day educational settings.

Educational travel was a prime example of experiential learning. Fenech et al. (2013) stated participants in international trips were experiencing a completely different way of life from which they were usually accustomed. Travel allowed these individuals to take real-life experiences during sojourns and improve their personal understandings, over time, without being confined to a classroom (Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013). Callihan (2009) claimed those traveling abroad were much more able to synthesize the cultural experiences in a more profound way than those not traveling.

Learners received a substantial amount of personal gratification when traveling, instead of the external rewards doled out when succeeding in the regular classroom (Saitow, 2009). Deck et al. (2012) agreed direct experience had far more meaning than the transfer of knowledge so prevalent in the standard classroom. Porcano (2011) added children had a tendency to be more capable and self-aware in school, more understanding culturally, and were better decision makers after traveling abroad.

Experiential learning changed travelers as their newfound knowledge and experiences transformed them in a variety of ways and provided for future learning (Stone & Petrick, 2013; Perry et al., 2012). Falk et al. (2011) averred that, by continuing contact with the citizens of the host country through social networking and technology, travelers and their hosts could even further enhance their global relationships both cognitively and affectively, thus developing new cultural mindsets that were instrumental in who they became personally.

Saitow (2009) explained educational travel had greater meaning because it involved learning in an environment where experiencing the world was the norm and not a secondary option. Falk et al. (2011) claimed these travel experiences caused both personal satisfaction as well as a better quality of life. When travelers engaged their experiences in a dramatic way, they were more likely to be satisfied.

Travelers were found to better understand and retain knowledge during educational travel than in normal school settings (Johnson, 2008; Porcano, 2011). These learners saw things from a unique perspective and an improved attitude (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). They were not reading about or watching a video; they were experiencing it personally from the actual location. This translated to more informed learning as the individuals participated in a more self-directed learning environment and were more unassuming about their education environments (Saitow, 2009).

Transformational Learning

Mezirow (1991) proposed the transformational learning theory as a way of establishing the importance of the role that reflection played in learning. He averred learning involved understanding experiences through critical reflection. The transformational learning theory proposed experiencing more non-traditional activities as a means for making learning more meaningful. This transformation could be accomplished by combining cognitive learning activities with experiential learning opportunities. These experiences often resulted in new perspectives that Mezirow (1991) labeled disorienting dilemmas. Perry et al. (2012) found that the transformational learning theory examined how learning through emotional reactions to personally impactful experiences affected individuals through disorienting dilemmas (uncomfortable

situations). They added that learning had a transformative quality when it was applied in

pragmatic manner. They concluded that posing challenges to students in ways that were

not the norm would often provide opportunities for transformation. These experiences

would change how people learn, as well as how they interpreted the process, thus

allowing them to develop new views that were essential to cultural competence

(McKeown, 2009). Alexander et al. (2010) affirmed life-changing occurrences were

much more likely to occur as a result of stress rather than enjoyment. Saitow (2009)

stated culture shock was vital if cultural understanding was to take place. Brown (2009)

added that philosophical and developmental viewpoints were changed when traveling

abroad, thereby taking on a life-altering cultural transformation.

Educational travel provided the venue that could cause this dramatic change to

one's view of another's culture, often out of the necessity to relieve stress (Saitow, 2009).

Bodies reacted to this stress and adapted in order to reach harmony. Travel provided the

opportunities to acquire the skills necessary to adapt to unfamiliar environments (Stone &

Petrick, 2013). Saitow (2009) posited travel alleviated some of the negative impacts in

one's life by giving an outlet to escape or find answers during times of difficulty, thus

providing an opportunity to make a dramatic, sustainable transformation in personal

growth. This opportunity allowed travelers to interact with people who were vastly

different in a culturally sensitive way, not only enhancing global intelligence but

improving performance in the classroom

Saitow (2009) added that, as people learned to adapt better to unfamiliar settings

abroad, they were more apt to seize the opportunity to interact with culturally different

people. After their global experiences, they were more likely to seek out others who had

experienced some of the same things and assimilated back into the environments with few negative issues. This improved adaptability frequently made them less vulnerable to many of the issues that were so prevalent in many educational environments, especially from those who had not experienced the same things globally. Saitow ((2009) added that travelers often became more independent as thinkers and developed more positive relationships with their peers. They were comfortable with themselves and were less likely to succumb to negative peer pressure. Instead they were engaging in more healthy alternatives. This new, mature view of life and their educational pursuits led them toward academic improvement as they learned to take responsibility for their actions and developed a greater understanding of their places in a global society (Saitow, 2009).

Saitow (2009) asserted children not only understood that they have made substantial changes within their own personal growth but parents and teachers noticed, as well. The parents felt their children learned to have a more altruistic value system, providing them with a better chance to succeed in the future. Teachers felt the children returned more mature in all aspects of learning and behavior and were transformed to learners who concerned themselves with their impact on others and their environment. The transformations occurring were not temporary but lasted throughout life and were reflected in many educational and life choices.

Ross (2010) contended there were several factors contributing to transformative learning. Falk et al. (2011) added that, although cognitive increases were not always shown when matriculating globally, favorable improvements did occur. Travelers had their experiences rated as satisfactory if they could assimilate what they learned abroad with what was already in their cognitive memory. When this process happened, a greater

amount of educational satisfaction was likely. Individuals traveling abroad engaged in important relationships that provided cultural opportunities, had experiences that fostered their global awareness, and reflected on a global level in order to provide transformative meaning to their sojourns. Mezirow (1991) suggested the integral steps necessary in leading to learner transformation were as follows: a disorienting dilemma, self-examination, a critical assessment of assumptions, recognition that one's discontent and transformation was shared with others, exploration of options for new roles, planning of a course of action, acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing plans, provisional trying of new roles, building of competence in new roles, and re-integration into one's life of new perspectives.

Educational travel frequently led to the development of opportunities for transformational learning (Fischer, 2009; Perry et al., 2012; Porcano, 2011). Ross (2010) defined a transformation as a personally dynamic and independent socio-cultural process that began with a disorienting dilemma; began a permanent change to identity constraints; and caused a continued shift in thinking and reflection due to novel experiences. These novel experiences were normally prerequisites for bringing about transformation. Exposure to new cultures, in particular, provided opportunities for this type of transformation (Brown, 2009). Brown (2009) added a change in beliefs was often the result of facing adversity abroad. What was sufficient at home to alleviate stress would not always be sufficient in another country.

Developing a deeper understanding of personal experiences only occurred with the combining of experience with reflection and critical analysis, thereby leading to a heightened self-awareness (Perry et al., 2012; Ross, 2010). Travelers experiencing these

cultures often had their personal beliefs tested and, as a result, provided the motivation necessary to initiate their transformational experience through critical reflection (Alexander et al., 2010; Walters et al., 2011).

Saitow (2009) included at-risk children in this transformational belief system. Experiencing educational travel provided learning opportunities for all children but including at-risk children could introduce many new positive experiences into their lives. At the same time, many of the risk factors were reduced. These children were limited in their opportunities to experience travel and, as a result, failed to learn how to adapt to others socially in a more global perspective. This trend change could be responsible for impacting their ability to succeed in school in social, emotional, and cognitive ways and assisting them in showing resiliency towards prior adversity that had already occurred in their lives.

Saitow (2009) noted at-risk children frequently thrived in unfamiliar activities that provided more freedom to express themselves in an independent manner. The more times they engaged in these activities, the more they learned to adapt their behavior. These children were more likely to identify with experiential activities. They would not relate to some academic concepts because their past experiences did not relate to the concepts. Travel often affected their self-concept through relationship-building which was so prevalent in study abroad. Their self-concept improved as they built relationships with people much different than themselves in a multitude of activities. At-risk children were often accepted into a social group while traveling abroad. This camaraderie aided in the affirmation of one's self-worth and further enhanced the path toward personal growth.

Saitow (2009) asserted educational travel helped in acquiring adaptation skills through experiencing novel circumstances. When learners were placed in novel situations that were out of the ordinary, they responded to the stress and adapted (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Saitow (2009) stated these learners responded to novelties according to how they previously had reacted to similar experiences and how much novelty was present in the new experience. These individuals came out of the experience with a more open mindset and adapted to adversity in an independent and resilient manner (ASHE, 2012c). Those individuals who favored novel experiences preferred to leave the safety of their homes for the thrill of experiencing something they could not experience anywhere else. The curiosity of study abroad stimulated the brains of these people and produced dopamine that was closely aligned with the learning process (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). This combination of new experiences with previously learned knowledge led to improved learning capabilities as the brain engaged in these novel experiences. As a result, motivation increased as they better coped with the unfamiliar experience, thus improving cognitive development.

Ritz (2011) claimed that, although transformational learning validated one's reasons for holding personal beliefs, travelers were more accepting of those experiences that were more similar to their own way of thinking. However, the travelers frequently became more open-minded and accepting of differences among other cultures (Tucker et al., 2011). Deck et al. (2012) stressed the best way to accomplish this was to experience it themselves with people in cultures much different than their own (Talburt, 2009). Acculturation occurred as students had their experiences reciprocated (Alexander et al., 2010). Callihan (2009) concluded that, although traveling could not procure a depth of

knowledge that a longer stay would provide, it nonetheless gave the traveler the opportunities to experience cultural uniqueness and made connections to classroom learning.

Wood (1996) added that educational travel came in various forms and offered many experiences not available in the normal school setting. Stone and Petrick (2013) and Falk et al. (2012) stated that study abroad was educationally effective because it broadened mindsets as travelers learned through reflective experiences. Chieffo and Griffiths (2004) concurred people changed as a result of international travel. They experienced the challenge of having to communicate in another language with locals and became much more tolerant and empathetic toward others in their own country that were struggling to communicate. How they interacted interpersonally with locals was based on their constitutional makeup involving characteristics, such as attitudes, morals, values, prejudices, and skill sets (Alexander et al., 2010; ASHE, 2012c). The stereotypes and prejudices brought to the new country were lessened as people were reinforced negatively for inappropriateness and reinforced positively for appropriate encounters (Alexander et al., 2010; ASHE, 2012). Howard and Gulawani (2014) asserted that learning abroad was more natural, unconscious, and less structured than normal educational curricula.

New learning and enrichment were the foremost goals of travel abroad. Alexander et al. (2010) claimed the main goal of travel was not just to experience new cultures but to use those experiences to explore themselves (Gesinski et al., 2010). Saitow (2009) claimed educational travel could be life-changing as individuals learned more about themselves and responded to the world in a more global manner. The extraordinary experiences left them with a lasting impression that would forever mold

their beliefs and views, especially when concerned with global citizenship. Dwyer and Peters (2012) added traveling enhanced lives on a permanent basis. They claimed nothing created a more positive impact and lasted longer in a persons' mind than traveling.

In the ASHE Higher Education Report (2012c), the report stressed the more relevant study abroad goals were "promoting world understanding; spreading the good word about the United States (culture, democracy); promoting world peace and understanding; economic competitiveness; and depending on one's point of view, national security or even imperialism" (p. 15).

Another aspect of transformational learning was the development of intellectual knowledge (McKeown, 2009). The acquiring of intellectual knowledge relied on transformations derived from interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences. Baxter-Magolda (1992) described this intellectual process with his Knowledge Model. This model consisted of a four-stage process where children proceeded through the model as they became more and more comfortable with their style of knowledge attainment. The first stage of the Knowledge Model was absolute knowledge where knowledge was possessed by those in authority and a child's goal was to learn from this authority. The second stage was transitional knowledge where the children comprehended that knowledge was either certain or uncertain and that it was their goal to use reason and logic to understand their own experiences. The third stage was independent knowledge where they became more confident of their decision-making ability and failed to rely on someone in authority to decide for them. The fourth stage was contextual knowledge where learners began to think critically and find solutions based on the contexts of the situation. These stages all related heavily to international travel as people were forced

beyond their normal comfort zones and felt the need to rely more on themselves during these highly uncomfortable periods (Saitow, 2009).

<div align="center">Travel Outcomes</div>

Much research on travel outcomes or benefits have been collected and have been found to be extensive. One had to be careful when describing the results, however, as some of the results were actual outcomes while others were perceived outcomes that were totally based on respondents' views of the studies (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). The benefits could be numerous but were generally sorted by categories such as international awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development (Alexander et al., 2010; Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Brown, 2009; Chen & Petrick, 2013; Chieffo & Griffith, 2004; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; DeVillar & Jiang, 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013; Hovland, 2009; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Johnson, 2008; Mapp, 2012; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Perry et al., 2012; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Smith, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant, 2010; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011; Wood, 1996).

International Awareness

One category of travel outcomes was international awareness. Study abroad promoted an intercultural frame of mind. Engberg (2013) stated each traveler reviewed study abroad experiences in their own unique ways. They learned to comprehend and appreciate the cultures in other parts of the world and how they fit in with their own particular cultures (Dwyer & Peters, 2012). They often felt an increased closeness to the

people they had come into contact with during the trip who had helped them to acculturate into the new country (Johnson, 2008). They posited that 95% of students traveling with Institute for the Education of Students (IES) study abroad programs through 2012 confirmed it greatly affected their worldview. They better defined themselves by gaining insight into the authentic ways of living of others. The differences further cemented their personal identities. It was not until they were out of their comfort zone that they realized their vast similarities in a more complex cultural view (Brown, 2009; Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Deck et al., 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Talburt, 2009).

Johnson (2008) stated that when travelers left their daily rituals and routines, there were more opportunities to reflect and contemplate on life issues. They often engaged in reflective thought on societal perspectives concerning political, economic, artistic, and social systems (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011). These thoughts caused them to realize that their country was not the all-encompassing standard for all other countries but just a small piece of the cultural puzzle (Ross, 2010; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Talburt, 2009). The aim was to use their travel experiences to explore the most inner parts of their beings and exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy (Alexander et al., 2010; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Porcano, 2011). The more students interacted with culturally different people, the higher their level of self-efficacy gains. As a result, travelers became more accepting and tolerant of other people and their cultures (Callihan, 2009; Falk et al., 2011).

Tarrant (2010) maintained global citizenship was an overwhelming issue where international awareness was concerned. He defined global citizenship as embracing the psychological and behavioral realms in nurturing international learning by increasing world-mindedness while making a difference as they proceeded into the global world.

Saitow (2009) stated that people better assimilated themselves into global awareness. Studying abroad led to an increase in global awareness and the promotion of expanded worldviews, which was critical for contributing socially with a purpose greater than one's own self-interest (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009). Dwyer and Peters (2012) noted that 98% of respondents to the 2012 IES Survey claimed travel prohibitively increased their personal understanding of their cultural values and philosophies. In addition, they added that 82% of those respondents replied traveling abroad greatly enhanced their potential to view the world in a more profound way. The travelers continued to reap the benefits procured from their cultural experiences long after the trip. Almost 94% reported their traveling experience still influenced their relationships with culturally different people, with approximately 90% of the travelers tending to seek out a greater cultural collection of friends. They also reported 64% of travelers were influenced to further explore other countries after their original experience.

The acquisition of global citizenship occurred as a result of learned and nurtured behaviors associated with experiential education (Saitow, 2009). This learning played a vital part in forming the values and behaviors necessary for engaging learners in real-world situations. ASHE (2012c) contended that by immersion into a foreign culture, students witnessing a different culture learned more about their own culture. Tarrant

(2010) claimed global citizens were made and not born through the nurturing

environments of educational travel (Perry et al., 2012).

Travelers studying abroad were frequently lacking global savvy at the onset of

their traveling experiences and rarely viewed social and political issues with critical

assessment (ASHE, 2012c; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Tarrant, 2010). Brown (2009)

stated that, until they became attuned to world events and became more self-directed,

they could not develop a multinational frame of reference. However, Brown (2009)

asserted that travelers failed to engage globally until they started thinking beyond their

own needs. They changed from thinking locally to thinking internationally, therefore

making a fundamental shift in their worldviews and becoming more cross-culturally

competent (ASHE, 2012c; Stone & Petrick, 2013).

Travelers studying abroad gained freedom from their own cultural and family

expectations and, as a result, gained opportunities to improve their cross-cultural

communication skills by accepting new cultural practices from diverse settings.

Exposure to these new cultures and being many miles from their familiar lives enhanced

their opportunities for the transition towards intercultural competence. The development

of profound changes allowed them to relate globally (Brown, 2009; Mapp, 2012; Pabel &

Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009; Talburt, 2009).

ASHE (2012c) defined intercultural competence as the engagement and

conjoining of two separate culturally diverse groups or individuals into a shared set of

views where a common purpose was reached. This common purpose was frequently

reached through interactions where the people from the different cultures learned to

collaborate on an equal basis. The aspirations desired for this communication was to

dispel former stereotypes in the hopes of creating more culturally intimate dialogue. These original differences could be the result of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious, or national factors (Brown, 2009; McKeown, 2009). Sherraden et al. (2013) called this culture shock "cultural disequilibrium" because it really tested previous views and caused the change process to be initiated as a way to relieve stress and anxiety. The amount of change depended upon the depth of the cultural experience and how the individuals responded to the problems encountered within diverse communities (Ross, 2010). This frequently served as a precursor for deeper reflective potential and a better understanding of themselves. Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010) added succeeding in the global realm depended on active participation in immersion activities which could not be learned as well in a standard classroom or by reading a book.

Tarrant (2010) affirmed studying abroad promoted a more international worldview, an increased global mindedness, and created an expanded interest in learning globally. Travelers amassed knowledge in several key skill areas as they matriculated through various countries. ASHE (2012) confirmed travelers became more open-minded globally, had fewer coping issues, were more independent, and more resilient to frustration. This confidence often resulted from the development of international skill sets as travelers acculturated themselves into the new surroundings (Dwyer & Peters, 2012). The understanding of the social and cultural aspects of diverse cultures often initiated the cultural competence process (Gesinski et al.,2010; Saitow, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Travel abroad also enhanced the development of generic skills including global awareness, problem solving, and resource management in addition to foreign

language acquisition, improvement of communication skills, and career development (Falk et al., 2011; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011).

Career development potential for the global marketplace was enhanced by studying abroad (Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012c; Brown, 2009; Clabby, 2012; Deck et al., 2012; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Porcano, 2011; Ross, 2010; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Talburt, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Students developed knowledge and skills that enhanced their opportunities to be successful in the future (ASHE, 2012b; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Future employers were searching for applicants that possessed interpersonal skills, cognitive resources, and students were motivated to succeed (Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Tucker et al., 2011). Dwyer and Peters (2012) asserted that 75% of study abroad travelers interviewed in the 2012 IES Survey agreed that these skills were instrumental in influencing their cultural career aspirations. Traveling abroad provided the opportunities to enhance these skills and the travelers became more globally minded, diverse, innovative, engaging, and technology driven.

Pabel and Prideaux (2012) claimed traveling skills gave an edge to individuals in their careers as they better assimilated into modern global environments (Clabby, 2012). Dwyer and Peters (2012) added educational travel often inspired individuals to pursue different career opportunities than what they once considered before traveling internationally. Their career views seemed to take on a more cultural or international tone as confirmed by 62% of those individuals questioned in the 2012 IES Survey. Porcano (2011) reported that students became more globally competent and open-minded

about their understanding of cultures, business practices, and politics. ASHE (2012c)

concluded by stating that the rationale for studying abroad had shifted from a diplomatic

philosophy to one more economic in nature and was now designed for developing

competitiveness in the global marketplace.

An attribute of the career enhancing track was functional knowledge (ASHE,

2012b; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Hovland, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Stone &

Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Functional knowledge included the strategies and

skills that were necessary to function in the normal world in another country. Stone and

Petrick (2013) asserted those studying abroad had substantial increases in the functional

knowledge realm with the exception of the lack of improvement in communication skills.

These assets triggered further interest in specific careers and allowed improvement upon

the skills needed to pursue a variety of career choices, thus improving their chances of

future employment (ASHE, 2012c; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Sutton and Rubin (2010)

offered the following as common practices in becoming functionally knowledgeable:

knew norms and taboos, how to express ideas in different ways, how to compare and

contrast cultures, how to locate information, how to buy essentials, how to use public

transportation, how to give directions, how to avoid and get out of tough situations, and

how to settle disputes (pp. 15-16). Another of the benefits resulting from becoming a

global citizen was intercultural sensitivity (Fenech et al., 2013; Howard & Gulawani,

2014; Saitow, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Exposure to other global cultures led to an

increase in tolerance and acceptance of the values and welfare of other cultures and

definitive attitudinal changes (Brown, 2009; Callihan, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et

al, 2013). Falk et al. (2011) stated these increases in tolerance often transformed

travelers into intermediaries between their cultures at home and those cultures from the visited country upon returning home and sometimes decreased world conflict to some degree, even if it was not a large amount. Thus, international education and tourism had an incredible effect on peace relations throughout the world. Sherraden et al. (2010) asserted this frequently occurred as a result of being a minority and finding out what it feels like to be a victim of prejudice, stereotyping, and marginalization in another's country. This experience, in turn, led travelers to reflect on their privileged existences at home and developed a more inclusive sense of global awareness of the travails of others in the world, where conditions are frequently much worse than their own. This awareness heightened traveling students' sense of empathy and respect for the countries visited (Brown, 2009; Callihan, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013).

Travelers studying abroad showed significantly higher ethno-relativism levels than their non-traveling counterparts due to their newly adopted cultural views of equality among different cultural groups (Mapp, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011). In addition, travelers reduced their ethnocentrism or feeling of superiority over other cultures. They became more world-minded and were more likely to consider themselves as world citizens. They frequently realized that there were more similarities with citizens from other countries than differences (Mapp, 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010).

Brown (2009) revealed sometimes, however, it failed to go smoothly when returning home. The re-entry into the home culture was often met with resistance as newer views conflicted with those not experiencing the same cultural transformation. Newer views were often seen as a threat to the establishment at home and caused distress if the traveler was not willing to re-assume old views. If facing a constant barrage of

opposing views, the travelers often reverted back to previous views in order to keep the peace.

ASHE (2012b) concluded returning travelers saw themselves as being more international than their non-traveling counterparts and had a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Americans, as well as themselves. Despite the improved understanding, Johnson (2008) concluded this cultural awareness frequently caused an even stronger identification with their individual country. Ross (2010) added they were sometimes even more critical of their own culture and now were transitioning to atypical Americans. Mapp (2012) concurred that culturally intelligent individuals should be able to recognize the structures and values inherent in various cultures, including their own, and understand how the value systems oppress and alienate as well as creating privilege for different segments of society.

Students studying abroad, with their new cultural views, even began realizing the importance of being stewards of the global environment. Tarrant (2010) explained the travelers' more culturally based belief systems expanded to the point where they would attempt to reduce their environmental impact by contributing in an altruistic manner. At the same time, they would be more likely to avoid those actions that could prove detrimental to society and other cultures. They became aware of the consequences of their actions and felt obliged to be a better global citizen. As a result, they thought beyond their present needs and desires and dwelled on the greater good. They transformed from a selfish to a pro-environmental value system where they regarded the earth's natural resources with high esteem (Tarrant & Lyons, 2012). Sherraden et al. (2013) proposed that, when developing countries were explored, privileged travelers

often treated third world countries as their "global playgrounds" (p. 403). The host countries frequently failed to benefit from the exchange and sometimes were even harmed. When host cultures had a true say in the exchange, mutual benefit occurred more regularly.

Increasing awareness about different countries and cultures was also an effect of traveling abroad (Johnson, 2008; Saitow, 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Saitow (2009) reported 79% of summer abroad and 92% of year abroad travelers increased their knowledge of visited countries. Studying abroad led to a more concentrated interest in other cultures as travelers were interacting and observing with those different than themselves (Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Individuals began to think globally, thereby increasing their cultural interests in both world occurrences and how their home country affected other places in the world (ASHE, 2012b; Fenech et al., 2013; Tucker et al. 2011). They learned culturally specific skills and adapted to new norms and rules. As a result, profound changes occurred in their personal philosophies (Brown, 2009).

The more people moved through their visited countries, the more they became globally savvy. They learned to take care of some of the things that they had originally relied on others to handle as they learned to adapt and become more culturally interdependent (Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Mapp, 2012). Sutton and Rubin (2010) asserted travelers abroad adapted and became more knowledgeable with skills necessary to function globally such as knowledge of cultural systems and geography, global interdependence, and interaction skills (Haynes, 2011). The surest way to initiate this process was immersion into the cultures of the countries visited (Fenech et al., 2013; Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013). Saitow (2009) confirmed immersion allowed

travelers to learn about other cultures by enabling them to interact daily with global citizens and being able to differentiate the nuances of each experience. In turn, travelers transformed from being ethnocentric (concerned with self) to being ethnorelative (concerned about others; McKeown, 2009).

The immersion into a new culture was seen as more important than just visiting countries and landmarks. International study programs immersed travelers into situations they were unaccustomed to and significantly increased their responsibility potential as well as their global personalities (Doppen & An, 2014; Fenech et al., 2013; Jones et al., 2012). Saitow (2009) stated as travelers developed this global self-reliance, they were more able to define and redefine their views and develop more cultural awareness. This awareness allowed them to understand the many perspectives in any given subject area and the correct answer to each, based on the context presented (McKeown, 2009).

Sherraden et al. (2013) stated the development of a more sensitive worldview made the immersion process more meaningful for learning globally rather than placing emphasis on economics or personal success. Haynes (2011) stressed immersion, by itself, would not be adequate for global learning to take place. Immersion programs often failed to account for individual identities and beliefs. This failure sometimes distorted the quantity or quality of the global learning actually occurring during some immersion study programs.

Personal Growth

Studying abroad was beneficial as far as personal growth was concerned (Alexander et al., 2010; Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Brown, 2009; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Deck et al., 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Falk et

al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013; Gesinski et al., 2010; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Hovland, 2009; Mapp, 2012; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Perry et al., 2012; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Ritz, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011; Wood, 1996). Johnson (2008) asserted that personal growth occurred because of the personal experiences travelers had with cultural interaction. Personal growth could be reflected by personal and internal changes occurring between the travelers and the environments while traveling internationally (Perry et al., 2012). Those traveling abroad were encouraged to adapt to new situations and take on new challenges, becoming more efficient globally as time passed (Fenech et al., 2013; McKeown, 2009).

These experiences frequently led to an increase in life satisfaction and positive feelings toward their perceptions of health attainment (Smith, 2010). Profound changes in self-discovery occurred in personal development when individuals were forced to question their internal beliefs in a new culture (Brown, 2009; Fenech et al., 2013; Perry et al., 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Any long-lasting changes, however, were the result of a compilation of many factors such as experience, perception, and environment (Alexander et al., 2010). People expanded their thought processes as they personally cultivated their self through first-hand experience (Alexander et al., 2010; Ritz, 2011; Talburt, 2009). They often realized they were more capable of achieving cultural competence than they originally thought (ASHE, 2012b). This realization served as a catalyst for creating new international and personal views as a more complete understanding was developed, thus leading to a more global learning (McKeown, 2009; Saitow, 2009).

Travelers learned more than what they would have through traditional studies due to the experiential nature of educational travel (Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Porcano, 2011). The activities that were most deeply and personally engaging were most likely to have the greatest influence and the memories would long outlive other non-engaging experiences (Porcano, 2011). Travelers also learned incidentally, sometimes when learning experiences were not even planned. Falk et al. (2011) confirmed learning was much more capable of happening while studying abroad. Learning was influenced by both previous and subsequent occurrences and not just what happened during the planned educational moments.

An outcome of personal growth often occurring with educational travel was the development of an increased interest in reflective thought (Fenech et al., 2013; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Dewey (1938) expressed reflection involved social communication that led to moral beliefs. Walters et al. (2011) added reflection was an academic pursuit and created new meaning. In turn, this new meaning created growth in making informed decisions. Reflection involved pondering experiences carefully and then deriving meaning through inferences. Reconstructing of experiences was used as a guide for making sense of the past and relating it to the present. Haynes (2011) stated the necessary components of reflection consisted of continuity, connection, challenge, and contextualization. Individuals were taught to reflect during actual experiences, connect these experiences to previous learning, think more critically, and to contextualize how it all fits together. Sherraden et al. (2013) added that strong emotions elicited critical reflection and led to a more worldly vision, thereby becoming transformed with views they would likely refer to for the rest of their lives.

Ritz (2010) asserted transformation required individuals to have their beliefs and views validated in order to enhance the meaning behind their decisions and be more accepting of the distinct differences between different cultures. Reflection heightened the affective senses to a level where it promoted cognitive learning (Falk et al., 2011; Perry et al. 2012). Reflective learners used diverse perspectives from a variety of sources to develop better strategies for synthesizing experiences dealing with values and moral choices (Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Talburt, 2009).

Another outcome of personal growth directly related to educational travel was personal awareness (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Engberg, 2013; Johnson, 2008; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009). One aspect of personal awareness was self-confidence (Clabby, 2012; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Fenech et al., 2013; Haynes, 2011; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Tucker et al., 2011). On the 2012 IES Survey, 96% of the respondents claimed they increased their self-confidence as a result of educational travel and this allowed them to face stressful and intolerable encounters in other cultures, thus creating a lasting effect on their global mindset. When people were self-confident, they had a tendency to exhibit autonomy and aspired to become more interdependent (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009).

Developing independence was important for learners as this development was often the first time someone else has not controlled their every decision (Brown, 2009). This development was often stressful at the onset as they were trying to manipulate unforeseen circumstances experienced while isolated in a new culture, often without the assistance of their normal support system. This self-reliance became empowering and frequently developed an even greater sense of self-confidence and academic focus

(Fenech et al., 2013; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Porcano, 2011; Sherraden et al., 2013; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Learners often struggled with this new-found freedom at the onset of their trips but, as time elapsed, learned to develop more self-efficacy which led to coping better with stressful situations in the future. Brown (2009) added the difference between a threatening experience and a strengthening experience was very minute and ultimately depended on the travelers' level of resiliency. Autonomy, stress, and resiliency were intrinsically related and, although stress seemed to be undesirable, confronting stress effectively led to internal strength.

Chickering and Braskamp (2009) stressed it was important to be autonomous but the real challenge was to become interdependent. Global students learned to emotionally empathize with citizens from other countries, making a commitment to their welfare. They were willing to sacrifice and compromise for others culturally and socially even though many of their views were drastically different from those they encountered. Becoming interdependent was a critical part of leading a more productive and satisfying life where personal growth was concerned. When students became more interdependent, they exerted more control over their emotions (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009). Saitow (2009) stated that, when traveling abroad, individuals began to feel that they should act more responsibly. This acknowledgement was important to peacefully co-exist in diverse communities throughout the world and be transformed globally (Jones et al., 2012).

Another aspect of personal growth enhanced by educational travel was the development of maturity and flexibility (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Clabby, 2012; DeVillar & Jiang, 2012; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Jones et al., 2012; McKeown, 2009; Saitow, 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Jones et al. (2012) stated travel

abroad led to being more open and flexible. Clabby (2012) added travelers abroad experienced many difficult scenarios as they maneuvered through the complex social world of educational travel. When they communicated well culturally, they made adaptations when unforeseen issues arose. On the 2012 IES Survey, 97% of the respondents asserted travel experience was responsible for improved personal growth associated with increased maturity levels.

Self-efficacy was a vital outcome of the personal growth category (Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Doppen & An, 2014). They defined self-efficacy as how one defined their ability to successfully complete any challenge and was a noted predictor of academic success in acquiring foreign language skills. Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) claimed travelers acquired higher levels of self-efficacy perceptions in all foreign language sub-skills than non-travelers, regardless of the length of the stay abroad. The perceptions varied with the amount of cultural contact with those in the host country. Those individuals with high levels of self-efficacy were persistently more likely to take risks when facing adversity, gave greater effort, and were more strategic when it came to striving academically.

Bandura (1977) proposed the main components of his Theory of Self-Efficacy were past behaviors, environmental factors, and personal/cognitive factors. He claimed past performances were critical for academic success and experiencing success in those endeavors led to positive self-perceptions of mastery. Performance flaws were not detrimental as long as the inadequacy can be attributed to lack of training.

It was also important for learners to see the vicarious experiences of others in order to realize that achievement was possible and could be repeated (Cubillos & Ilvento,

2013). Encouragement and evaluations from others were the final components in determining their sense of self-efficacy. Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) contended educational travel was suited for self-efficacy as learners applied cultural skills learned in their new environment, watched others perform these same skills, and then received feedback from culturally different people witnessing these efforts.

Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) asserted studying abroad could also be detrimental to self-efficacy when communication problems existed with host citizens, when repeating global performances seemed implausible, and when host citizens appeared to not empathize with the plight of the struggling traveler. Studying abroad enhanced self-efficacy among foreign language learners in all language sub-skills. The largest gains were associated with longer stays, although there were substantial gains even in short-term stays even with the limited time and limited language capabilities. Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) added the rule of language acquisition was "comprehension precedes production" (p. 505).

Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) stated motivation was the desire to learn and was another key outcome of personal growth. Motivation could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation involved being rewarded inwardly while extrinsic motivation involved being rewarded outwardly. Motivation was necessary in order to achieve academically or socially as a means to an end. They added educational travelers displayed high levels of motivation and achieved more. These culturally motivated learners often pushed themselves relentlessly until acculturation occurred while those more motivated by personal gain gave substantially less effort (Sherraden et al., 2013).

Enhanced life-skills development was another personal growth outcome that often occurred as a result of educational travel (Alexander et al., 2010; Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Engberg, 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Ritz, 2011; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012). Howard and Gulawani (2014) asserted those traveling became more accommodating towards people different from themselves and those that were in their immediate community (Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Chickering and Braskamp (2009) added traveling abroad developed a keener sense of civic responsibility and morality leading to the fulfillment of obligations to local and global communities (Talburt, 2009). This increased morality helped to develop a purpose in life involving personal and career aspirations and the holistic commitment to those involved in their lives (Engberg, 2013). This holistic commitment involved increases in empathy toward those they came in contact with in various diverse circumstances.

Thinking holistically during travel abroad aided in the building of emotional bonds between the students and others they encountered including teachers, family, and citizens from the countries visited (Ritz, 2011). Building these bonds were often much easier to accomplish in a foreign land than at home or in a standard school setting. This nurturing mindset was potentially more sustainable after students had the opportunity to experience world travel (Tarrant & Lyons, 2012).

Cognitive Development

A final category of travel outcomes and maybe the one many educational researchers consider to be the most important was cognitive development (Asgari & Borzooei, 2013; ASHE, 2012b; Clabby, 2012; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013;

Hovland, 2013; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Porcano, 2011; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton

& Rubin, 2010; Talburt, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Sherraden et al. (2013) stated

learning was the goal of all education endeavors and international travel programs leaned

more to learning than service to the cultural citizenry. Some programs' lack of focus on

service significantly diminished the anticipated outcomes of educational travel.

Stone and Petrick (2013) stated educational travel improved academic

achievement while abroad and travel was a necessary prerequisite for the educational

experiences of learners. Travelers experienced an increased sense of excitement with

cognitively enhanced achievement while studying abroad, regardless of age or maturity.

This experience greatly impacted the cognitive functioning and behavioral responses to

adversity faced in travel (Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013).

Howard and Gulawani (2014) confirmed students traveling abroad were more

able to achieve cognitively because of their global opportunities and made substantial

gains academically in areas such as increased knowledge, problem-solving, and critical

thinking (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Tucker et al., 2011). Smith (2010) concurred what

they learn cognitively could be used when they returned home.

Educational travel provided an opportunity to improve on language acquisition

skills through meaningful engagement with citizens from other cultures as time passes

(ASHE, 2012b; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013;

Haynes, 2011; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Porcano, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Sjoberg &

Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Cubillos

and Ilvento (2013) posited research in language acquisition gains showed results varied

greatly from one study to another because there was just too little interaction with

culturally different speakers to prove any true effects. When learners participated in foreign language acquisition programs, they were normally more culturally intelligent and were more likely to continue learning the language past the initial stages of the program. Studying abroad provided the opportunity to accomplish the initial stages of fluency and sets the stage for future improvement through additional training (Sherraden et al., 2013). Saitow (2009) claimed that most language acquisition, however, came from non-academic and not academic pursuits as most travelers still spoke more English while abroad (Haynes, 2011). The amount of language acquisition research was limited in this paper as it was a skill that was fairly non-existent in anything less than long-term trips.

Educational travel often provided the opportunity to improve in many academic components (ASHE, 2012b; Clabby, 2012; Dwyer & Peters. 2012; Engberg, 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Talburt, 2009; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012; Wood, 1996). Stone and Petrick (2013) posited that study abroad had lasting effects as it caused individuals to desire to learn more about various countries and their cultural uniqueness. The individuals frequently desired to participate just for the sake of learning something new rather than just working toward receiving a good grade (ASHE, 2012c; Stone & Petrick, 2013).

Stone and Petrick (2013) indicated in a study of international travelers that 26% believed their trips were incredible experiences while 53% claimed it was the most rewarding experience they ever had in, not only their educational career, but in their lives (Fischer, 2009). Fischer (2009) showed 83% of the respondents from the University of Minnesota survey presented in 2009 at the Global Engagement Project purported traveling internationally was a big impact in their lives. McKeown (2009) added

traveling abroad was almost always a unique and unforgettable experience for learners. The learners came back home more worldly and with a renewed sense of self and focused more on the necessities of life, often foregoing the more trivial matters.

Dwyer and Peters (2012) stated educational travel often was responsible for influencing students to seek out "subsequent educational experiences" (p. 3). ASHE (2012c) stated travelers returned from abroad with a higher than average curiosity about academic improvement. Howard and Gulawani (2014) agreed these experiences had a huge impact on future educational decisions and led to more purposeful efforts in the classroom. They showed 87% of respondents on the 2012 IES Survey sought out these new experiences, 63% made changes to their educational structures, and 64% decided to prolong their college experiences. Seeking out these experiences prompted their educative interests to be expanded.

Strengthening academic interests was tantamount if one was to achieve academic success, especially in a strange environment (ASHE, 2012b: Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009). Engberg (2013) added that, once learners experienced this academic engagement, they became more committed to stay on course academically. This integrative learning from a variety of sources was combined to produce a more diverse, cognitive information transfer, thus creating more intellectual development upon returning from abroad (Clabby, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Sutton & Rubin, 2010).

Once learners had their educational interests piqued, they began to evaluate their own academic performances using knowledge-based criteria. These criteria were applied in different contexts depending on the situation at hand (Engberg, 2013). They

adamantly toiled to improve their academic skills while becoming more flexible and patient in the process (Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Academic skills such as math ciphering, problem solving, map reading, knowledge of world geography, thinking skills, homework skills, and information management were improved as a result of the new inspiration derived from learning while traveling. Learners performed verbally with much more acumen than normal, non-traveling learners and were better able to acquire and improve on their language skills (Howard & Gulawani, 2014).

When questioning whether academic outcomes resulted from educational travel, researchers sought data showing improvement in quantifiable categories such as grades, grade point averages, standardized test results, graduation rates and completion times, and college acceptance rates (ASHE, 2012c; Clabby, 2012; Petrick & Huether, 2013; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton and Rubin, 2010). Petrick and Huether (2013) found international travel led to achievement increases in grades, standardized testing results, and college acceptance rates. They showed learners with international travel experience were accepted in colleges and succeeded academically at a much higher rate than non-traveling learners.

Stone and Petrick (2013) showed there seemed to be a correlation between educational travel of secondary school learners and academic success. In a survey of youth travelers by the Student and Youth Travel Research Institute (SYTRI) in 2007, 66% of respondents received a B+ average on their grades and 82% received a B average. ASHE (2012c) added secondary school learners returning from traveling abroad had improved grades from pre-trip time period and a renewed sense of academic concern. Sutton and Rubin (2010) showed research from the Glossari Project survey in 2008 and

concluded cumulative grade point averages improved minimally after returning from abroad (3.24 to 3.30). Clabby (2012) added cumulative grade point averages improved minimally, as well, after returning from traveling abroad. He showed there was minimal improvement in both short-term and long-term programs with an edge to long-term programs.

Clabby (2012) claimed there was a reduction in time to graduate for those traveling abroad. Sutton and Rubin (2010) added there was a decrease in time spent completing graduation by those involved in educational travel. International travelers graduated in six years at an average graduation rate of 88% while non-travelers graduated at a rate of less than 50%. Travelers had an 18% higher chance to graduate in four years than non-travelers and an 11% higher chance to finish in five years. ASHE (2012c) concluded that studying abroad did not negatively affect the time needed to complete graduation requirements but the travelers had a 16% higher chance to graduate in four years than non-travelers. Stone and Petrick (2013) stated internationally traveling learners were twice as likely to graduate, almost twice as likely to have full-time jobs, and almost one-third more likely to earn higher yearly incomes than non-travelers. Lastly, Sutton and Rubin (2010) stated there was no significant difference between traveling and non-traveling learners when it came to success on standardized testing on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

Wood (1996) stated truancy and dropping out improved immensely among those children who had traveled. In the Santa Cruz "Traveling Schools" program in 1988, truancy improved from 7.1 absent days per semester to 0.9 days per semester during the following semester. The drop-out rate also improved from 35% to 5% for those children

involved in the program. The children claimed they were much better able to understand and retain educational material after participating in the traveling program.

McKeown (2009) asserted there was ample evidence regarding the presence of a "first-time effect" in international travel (p. 8). Tarrant and Lyons (2012) added educational travel abroad was frequently the first experience some individuals had ever had outside the United States. These individuals began the experience below the cognitive and cultural levels of learners having previously traveled internationally. However, (ASHE, 2012b; McKeown, 2009; Perry et al., 2012) stated that, by the end of the trip, they attained equal levels intellectually due to often intense cultural occurrences. These results showed traveling abroad for the first time is often the most important.

International travel offered unique experiences that were often challenging and stressful (McKeown, 2009). When individuals traveled internationally, everything was new and they were challenged daily with even the most mundane tasks a citizen of that country would consider trivial. Coping with challenging conditions wrought with complexity and ambiguity required special skills being acquired through personal experience and reflection. Not having enough of a challenge produced conditions not conducive to personal development. A sufficient amount of challenge provided for opportunities to develop intellectually but not to overwhelm the learner. Too much challenge produced an overabundance of stress and could lead to a variety of detrimental emotional and health effects. These hectic situations often led to a more intellectual foundation as they reflected back on their experiences and facilitated personal meaning. McKeown (2009) claimed meaning-making from complex and diverse experiences was the basis for intellectual learning.

The combination of academics and traveling abroad enhanced cultural competency and global understanding among travelers, in addition to improving other aspects of their academic experience (McKeown, 2009). Travelers learned to adapt over time and became more confident in their decisions and developed an innate sense of what was detrimental to them. They learned to avoid disruptive influences and adjusted accordingly as a means for surviving. Howard and Gulawani (2014) added that previously inexperienced travelers experienced enhanced cultural mobility as their trip progressed. These travelers moved from "unconscious incompetence" (not knowing what they do not know) to "conscious incompetence" (knowing what they do not know; p. 106).

Although research had shown there were many educational and developmental outcomes resulting from traveling abroad, Sherraden et al. (2013) stated there were potential negative outcomes. Outcomes such as threats to safety in less safe countries, cultural misunderstandings, failure to experience cultural sensitivity, and global frustration all were capable of causing distress when traveling.

<p style="text-align:center">Travel Types</p>

There were many types of travel taken by people where educational benefit was gained. There were family vacations where the intention was to enjoy moments of relaxation as they were learning something about the culture and landmarks within the country (Chen & Petrick, 2013; Durko & Petrick, 2013; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Wood, 1996). There were also trips secondary schools took that were predominantly educationally based. Students were often prompted to learn about the cultures of the country but the main goal of the trip was to visit various famous monuments and learn

about historical happenings. Finally, there were trips taken by college students as part of

their instructional package where the main goal was to acculturate themselves into the

country visited and learn how to work in a global society.

Family Travel

Family trips often formed the basis for future learning as parents gave their

children their first experiences in learning through traveling (McKeown, 2009). Children

who had already traveled abroad with their families showed greater interdependence,

cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity as compared to students without globally

mobile families. The globally mobile children were much more culturally competent

than those who had never traveled abroad or had only traveled minimal amounts.

McKeown (2009) stated these experiences and the resulting improvement in intellectual

development were normally not duplicated in non-traveling children.

Pabel and Prideaux (2012) posited more families were attempting to learn while

on vacations and trips abroad and were hoping to stimulate their brains during travel in

lieu of just relaxing. Chen and Petrick (2013) added tourists aimed to increase their

levels of life satisfaction during trips abroad by participating in activities that took their

mind off work and schools, promoted relaxation, provided challenge, and allowed

themselves control during their experiences. These experiences allowed them to recover

from their trips with an increased sense of well-being.

These trips also produced many positive effects to family dynamics. Durko and

Petrick (2013) promoted the idea of travel improving the communication within families

and strengthening their relationship bonds, improving their sense of well-being, and

lessening the chances of divorces and family break-ups. Travel was not necessarily the

panacea for all family ills but did foster and maintain a family togetherness. Leisure activities enjoyed during travel often provided for an escape from the daily grind of work and family obligations while giving opportunities to bond with family members, creating lasting memories. These memories provided meaning for future experiences and formed the basis for their future decision-making processes.

Traveling with one's family frequently enhanced family dynamics involving relationships (Durko & Petrick, 2013; Sirgy, Kruger, Lee, & Yu, 2010). There were a host of benefits associated with international family travel. Creating and enhancing family relationship building was among the most beneficial. The research by Durko and Petrick (2013) focused on the following three suppositions: family travel created strong family bonds and lifetime memories that maintained or increased overall marital well-being, strengthened marriages and reduced the likelihood of divorce, and increased total family happiness for children and extended family members (p.720).

Durko and Petrick (2013) asserted leisure activities directly influenced family well-being as they helped to reduce stress and improve satisfaction in relationship dynamics. Travel provided opportunities for families to escape the travails of their daily lives and built life cherishing memories, thus improving their quality of life and relationship satisfaction. Family travel impacted satisfaction within the family and improved their quality of life in areas such as social, physical, and psychological well-being. Alexander et al. (2010) concurred that traveling abroad impacted families at home and elsewhere as the relationships they built during vacation improved family dynamics.

Petrick and Huether (2013) asserted travel was useful in family and personal well-being by providing an avenue to make learning more vibrant. Traveling energized their

lives, reduced stress, helped to navigate the learning of culturally significant material, and strengthened family bonds which allowed them to make progress in improving health, relationships, and other educational issues.

Durko and Petrick (2013) stated many positive connections were found between travel and family togetherness and added that even preparing to travel could bring the family together. Traveling together enhanced this bond as they participated in new experiences as a group which led to improved relationships and loyalty within the family unit and led to the family members interacting better with others. This cohesion contributed to strengthening the resolve of the family as they spent quality time together.

Travel can also keep a marriage strong (Durko & Patrick, 2013). When couples shared leisure activities such as travel, they had increases in marital satisfaction. A shared vacation experience enhanced marital bliss and the over-all quality of life. Total family satisfaction was much more attainable when the parents were satisfied with their relationship.

Research showing 85% of children participating in family vacations were better behaved and had fewer stress related health problems and 60% were more relaxed with more self-confidence about life after traveling. After travel, 33% of parents felt their children were more mentally adjusted and manageable. When the children were happier, the parents became happier and, as a result, the family experienced an improved degree of family satisfaction (Durko & Patrick, 2013).

Secondary Travel

Secondary school trips normally involved high school age students but occasionally involved adolescents. Much research has been done on the study abroad

programs around the world, yet very little had been researched on secondary travel in those type programs. The duration of secondary travel trips normally depended on the ages of the travelers. Angwenyi (2014) posited the older the children, the longer the trips normally were, and the longer the trip, the more profound the experience was. Interacting culturally with others provided these meaningful experiences necessary for personal growth.

The results of Angwenyi's (2014) dissertation survey of high school summer travelers showed every participant believed something incredible occurred in their lives and they developed several cultural skills resulting from their travel experience. The skills developed include enhanced worldviews, cultural awareness, leadership skills, and college preparedness. They believed that they were much more advanced in understanding cultural diversity issues than their non-traveling counterparts and applied themselves at a higher level academically, sometimes even improving their grade point averages.

Angwenyi (2014) stated international trips provided opportunities to learn experientially outside the normal school settings, thereby increasing the levels of intercultural competence. First, traveling learners deciphered their international experiences and reflected on those experiences, then interpreted how it affected their personal lives. As a result, they had their worldviews enhanced and became more well-rounded high school graduates.

Angwenyi (2014) stated global intelligence was becoming an important part of the education process, even in secondary school. Those traveling abroad could make more sense of the realities of the real world from a local and international standpoint.

These learners encountered others that were in far worst economic shape than themselves and learned to appreciate how good they had it at home, even if they were not well off financially. This global awareness provided them with more perspective to confront the social issues of the day with more confidence than a normal high school child, thus allowing them to be much more comfortable interacting with citizens in other countries around the world. As time passes, more school systems across the country were charged with trying to find a variety of ways to educate their students globally and making it attainable by all.

Agwenyi (2014) asserted studying abroad programs better prepared people to achieve in college. These traveling experiences often provided a future view of some of the challenges occurring once entering college. Many universities and colleges appeared to be favoring these individuals as they see them being more focused, culturally aware, mature, and inquisitive about learning because of their experiences abroad. Angwenyi (2014) stressed secondary learners who have traveled abroad were less likely to engage in irresponsible behavior once in college because they were more socially mature.

There is opposition from some in the education realm who believe short-term programs were not producing significant results academically. Angwenyi (2014) averred even short-term programs reaped benefits cognitively but only long-term programs provide the deeper, more advantageous results. He added more educators were coming to accept educational travel as a beneficial experience in the lives of their students, even with short-term exposure.

Collegiate Travel

Collegiate travel normally involved travel with accompanying instructors to an educational facility or travel to a country where the students resided in the homes of citizens from that country. The goal of this travel was to encounter a cultural and global transformation in order to prepare individuals to live and function in a global society (Blake-Campbell, 2014). Tajes and Ortiz (2010) purported there were many vacancies in global companies going unfilled every year because of an absence of qualified applicants with global experience. They added that more than 65 federal agencies, such as the CIA and Peace Corps, annually have more than 34,000 positions requiring foreign language skills needing to be staffed. These positions were either unfilled or had to be filled with outside contractors.

Blake-Campbell (2014) asserted developing globalization was fundamental to ascertaining the significance of the relationships between cultures, community, and global business. Tajes and Ortiz (2010) defined globalization as the integration of skills, information, resources, and technology within a more interdependent, global environment. Traveling abroad provided opportunities to learn first-hand how to engage and adapt to multi-cultural situations, thereby enhancing intercultural knowledge. Blake-Campbell (2014) showed 66% of the international travel respondents taking the survey from New York community colleges claimed their intercultural skills were significantly improved while the remaining respondents claimed they were improved somewhat. Respondents overwhelmingly claimed they increased academic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and cultural awareness as a result of their travel experience, even if not

significantly. Blake-Campbell (2014) asserted that if one truly hoped to advance the cause of world peace, it must be done globally through education.

Studying abroad presented structure to how the individuals perceive the world. The biggest challenge for traveling learners was to focus on the important aspects of their experiences when everything around them is unclear. Tajes and Ortiz (2010) agreed the goal of traveling abroad was not to acquire a rigid set of learning objectives but to change the mindsets of travelers concerning cultural awareness. This change was achieved through their desire to acculturate and learn more about these countries and themselves. Tajes and Ortiz (2010) added international travel pushed learners toward a more critical and analytical perspective, going beyond the boundaries of the countries visited. There was a major improvement in cultural knowledge and awareness after traveling abroad.

Length of Stay

There were many variations in the types of travel students engaged in while traveling abroad. McKeown (2009) stated the amount of time travelers stayed abroad depended upon the type of trip in which they were participating. Some programs involved foreign language study, immersion with a foreign host and family, internships, service learning, and a variety of other programs combining particular aspects of some or all of these conditions. They lived in a variety of living conditions ranging from staying in student dorms, living with host families, or moving from place to place as they visit various historical sites. In some circumstances, learners stayed for extended periods of time in long-term programs. These stays had long been thought of as the ideal situation. The longer one stayed, the more one could learn (Mapp, 2012). Other trips were for shorter periods of time and were considered short-term programs. Many travelers were

employed and could not stay for an extended period of time while others simply could not afford a longer stay (Mapp, 2012). For this reason, short-term travel programs became more popular in the collegiate world. Regardless of the time frame, there were benefits any amount of time spent abroad availed (Mapp, 2012).

Long-Term Stays

For much of educational travel history, the long-term stay had been the primary route for international educational attainment. Pabel and Prideaux (2012) asserted long-term sojourns were those educational trips lasting at least a semester and sometimes lasting for up to five years (Brown, 2009). Learners stayed away from home for long periods of time and experienced drastic changes in outlook and behavior. Sherraden et al. (2013) added long-term immersion in another country frequently caused culture shock. This cultural disequilibrium greatly influenced the cultural skills and competence levels of the traveling learners, affected their belief systems, and caused changes in their global mindsets (p. 19). The independent individuals in these programs sometimes isolated themselves from the locals as they engaged more with people from their own travel group.

Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) claimed an extensive and sustained amount of learning and an improved level of achievement took place in these long-term sojourns. Long-term study abroad programs improved achievement in several components common to travel education (Stone & Petrick, 2013). Cognitive, career, and personal growth, in addition to increases in maturity, flexibility, and adaptability were common benefits of long-term travel. These outcomes were more similar to short-term travel as the shorter duration of the trips resembled tourist travel.

ASHE (2012b) stated long-term programs had greater effects in language acquisition as they were normally more immersed in the culture in functional ways, thus leading to more advanced opportunities for "native fluency" (p. 86). Long-term study abroad produced several beneficial outcomes, including functional knowledge, personal growth, and cultural awareness (ASHE, 2012b; Mapp, 2012). Dwyer and Peters (2012) reported longer stays abroad often enhanced academic, personal growth, life-skills development, career, and international awareness benefits.

Short-Term Stays

In recent times, short-term trips had become very popular (Mapp, 2012). Short-term trips were usually much shorter in length of stay and ranged from a few days to four to six weeks (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Gesinski et al., 2010; McKeown, 2009; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Tarrant and Lyons (2012) stated short-term programs were far less scary for individuals with no previous international travel experience due to traveling with groups of their peers. They frequently learned new cultural information in these programs in the areas of culture, history, and geography (Stone & Petrick, 2013).

In the Institute of International Education survey in 2011, Perry et al. (2012) averred study abroad participation was increasing rapidly with 57% engaging in short-term programs while many long-term programs were seeing major declines in participation (Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Donnelly-Smith (2009) confirmed short-term study was the most prevalent type of study abroad program in the United States. Donnelly-Smith (2009) concluded that short-term programs were slighted in the public forum because long-term programs had existed and been successful for years. Sjoberg and Shabalina (2010) claimed short-term programs needed to enhance their global

curricula and include more cultural engagement experiences instead of textbook activities and typical tourist activities. These shorter trips frequently provided unique and more flexible learning experiences that were more interdisciplinary in nature (Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). These activities often led to a more "culturally focused trip" (p. 47). Fenech et al. (2013) added learners normally were very receptive to the experience, became more responsible and, as a result, became more cognitively grounded.

Short-term programs provided many of the benefits of study abroad without the overwhelming commitment of time and resources (ASHE, 2012b; Blake-Campbell, 2014; Fischer, 2009). Fischer (2009) purported that short-term programs had huge implications for academic success when aligned with cultural learning at the core and with an emphasis on increased achievement in listening and speaking skills (Llanes & Munoz, 2009). Ritz (2011) claimed that educational travel creates transformational changes in learning, although many critics espoused that short-term educational travel cannot possibly provide for transformational learning in just a few weeks (Blake-Campbell, 2014; Fischer, 2009; Mapp, 2012; Perry et al., 2012). Fischer (2009) added that, like some long-term programs, travelers often spent more time with their American counterparts than with citizens of the host community and this gave them little opportunity to become immersed into the local culture, thus having fewer authentic cultural experiences (Gesinski et al., 2010; McKeown, 2009).

Short-term study abroad programs provided the same opportunities as long-term programs, just in an abbreviated version (ASHE, 2012c; Kurt et al., 2013; Llanes & Munoz, 2009; McKeown, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Stone & Petrick, 2013). ASHE (2012c) added learners traveling short-term were much more culturally aware than

learners who remained at regular school settings. Tarrant (2010) stated some researchers sought to dispel the strengths of short-term programs due to lack of academic rigor. They claimed the research also showed that time spent abroad is not sufficient to engage the students in full cultural immersion. Mapp (2011) insisted that there was more of a focus placed on the cultural awareness skills necessary to learn in short-term programs. Learners were transformed through these edifying experiences and critical reflection (Perry et al., 2012; Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Tarrant & Lyons, 2012).

Porcano (2011) declared research indicated the duration abroad failed to affect future global engagement (Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Fischer, 2009) and those individuals enrolled in short-term programs were just as likely to gain global competence as those enrolled in longer programs, even in countries that speak languages other than English (Mapp, 2012). Sherraden et al. (2013) stated even short-term programs increased improvement in personal, cultural, and professional growth. These programs provided immediate cultural learning opportunities, thereby increasing intercultural awareness and sensitivity (Tucker et al., 2011). A last benefit of short-term programs was the initiative to prepare for longer-term programs (Mapp, 2012). Those individuals participating in their first trip often realized they were more in tune with experiential experiences and strove to experience more of the same, in different possible settings.

Conceptual Analysis Charts

The following tables shows the alignment of studies with related literature.

Table 2

Studies Related to Experiential Learning

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Angwenyi (2014)	Travel/ experiential learning relationship Global perspective	11 public high school students in New Jersey	Qualitative case study Interpretive study Open/axial/ selective coding Descriptive analysis	Increased motivation for academics Increased development of cultural tolerance/ personal growth/global awareness
McClellan & Hyle (2012)	Travel/ experiential learning relationship	16 University of Texas at Arlington doctoral students traveling to Mexico/ Central America	Qualitative Explanatory case study Theme coding Inductive analysis	Enhanced group functioning/ Gains in reflection and self-discovery through experiential learning
Porcano (2011)	Travel/experiential learning relationship Travel outcomes Learning effect	67 Miami of Ohio University traveling to Western Europe	Pre/post comparison Control group Descriptive analysis	Increase in learning effect Short-term stays just as likely to be engaging as long-term stays
Saitow (2009)	Travel/experiential learning relationship Positive learning environment	31 traveling parents with children who have previously traveled	Qualitative grounded theory Open/Axial/selective coding Triangulation	Conducive to adolescent learning Positive effects on personal growth/self-confidence/

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
				adaptability moves travelers from ethnocentric to ethnorelative

Table 3

Studies Related to Transformational Learning

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/ Analysis	Outcomes
Brown (2009)	Travel/ transformational learning relationship Cross-cultural communication	163 English/ other nations graduate school students	Ethnographic study Thematic coding	Increase in intercultural competence/ self-understanding Enhanced cultural/ personal outlook when returning home
Jones et al. (2012)	Travel/ transformational learning relationship Cultural adaptability	37 students from four immersion programs around the world	Case study Document analysis Theme coding Constant comparative analysis Thematic analysis	Increased integration into daily lives Increased understanding of self/social issues/other cultures through transformat-ional learning
Ritz (2011)	Travel/ transformational learning relationship	16 undergraduate and graduate students traveling to Costa Rica	Qualitative study Descriptive analysis	Increase in critical thinking skills Increase in opportunities for transformat-ional learning

Table 4

Studies Related to Teacher Preparation

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
DeVillar & Jiang (2012)	Travel effects on classroom practices Pedagogical competence	10 former international teachers now teaching in United States	Qualitative study Descriptive analysis Content analysis Statistical analysis	Positive impact on instructional flexibility Enhance awareness of student diversity
Doppen & An (2014)	Travel effects on classroom practices Pedagogical competence	179 traveling student teachers at Midwestern University	Qualitative study Thematic coding Statistical significance Qualitative analysis	No significant difference in travel outcomes between former and recent student teacher travelers Enhanced job prospects/cross-cultural perspectives

Table 5

Studies Related to Travel Outcomes

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Alexander et al. (2010)	Travel outcomes Travel effects on personality traits	999 United Kingdom families from same area	Descriptive mixed-methods study Exploratory study Constant comparative analysis Triangulation	53% affected by holiday travel 56% affected changes in behavior No relation between personal traits and being impacted Longer holiday stays had least impact

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Blake-Campbell (2014)	Travel outcomes Transformative learning	15 New York urban community college students traveling with instructors	Qualitative study Pre/post tests Correlational study Narrative response analysis	66% had intercultural skills significantly improved 34% somewhat improved Increased academic knowledge/ cultural knowledge/ global awareness
Chieffo & Griffiths (2004)	Travel outcomes Student travel attitudes	827 University of Delaware students in short-term travel abroad programs	Qualitative descriptive study Multivariate statistical analysis Iterative qualitative process analysis	Increase in empathy to other cultures 30% viewed United States differently after travel No difference in knowledge of world relations
Fenech et al. (2013)	Travel outcomes short-term study abroad effects	Nine Australian students from 2009 to 2012	Qualitative descriptive study Narrative response analysis	Increase in knowledge/ global connectedness/ personal growth/ cultural tolerance
Howard & Gulawani (2014)	Travel outcomes	34 Grant MacEwan University students traveling to India	Descriptive study Comparative analysis	Increase in stated learning outcomes achievement
Kurt et al. (2013)	Travel outcomes Cross-cultural sensitivity	23 Elon University under-graduate students in STSA program	Descriptive study Variable reduction Exploratory factor analysis	Significant difference in global awareness after travel Insignificant difference in global awareness afterwards

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Sirgy et al. (2011)	Travel outcomes	264 adult South African tourists	Descriptive study Hypothesis testing Confirmatory factor analysis	Increases in life satisfaction from leisure travel Life satisfaction positively affected by both negative and positive affect
Smith (2010)	Travel outcomes Travel attitudes motivations	11 Cal Poly Institute undergraduate students	Qualitative study Theme coding Content analysis	Increased motivation to learn through social connections with others Positive effects of personal growth through freedom and learning
Sutton & Rubin (2004)	Travel outcomes	504 Georgia University System students in Glossari Project	Quantitative study Descriptive study ANOVA/t-tests Factor analysis Post-hoc analysis	No significant difference in verbal acumen/ interpersonal accommodation cultural sensitivity between travelers and non-travelers Significant difference in cultural learning and knowledge

Table 6

Studies Related to Cultural Adaptability

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Mapp (2012)	Travel/cultural adaptability relationship STSA programs	87 Pennsylvania liberal arts college student travelers	Descriptive study Pre/post design Paired sample t-tests Eta squared tests Repeated measures ANOVA Factor analysis	Increased cultural adaptability Significantly increased perceptions of emotional resilience No effect on results for trip length

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Tarrant & Lyons (2012)	Travel/cultural adaptability relationship Environmental citizenship	695 undergraduate students from 10 U.S. institutions traveling to Australia or New Zealand	Descriptive study Pre/post design Independent sample *t*-tests Levene's statistical analysis Comparative analysis	Significant difference decrease in environmental citizenship between first time and experienced travelers Increased difference between genders for females after trip on environmental citizenship
Walters et al. (2011)	Travel/cultural adaptability relationship Evolving outcomes	13 middle and high school students traveling to China	Descriptive study Emergent coding Causal comparative analysis Triangulation	Increased awareness of culture/ reflection skills Increased ability to work in diverse settings

Table 7

Studies related to language acquisition

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Cubillos & Ilvento (2013)	Travel/ language acquisition relationship	39 traveling students	Descriptive study Pre/post design *t*-tests Matched-pairs tests Cronbach's alpha Correlational analysis Uni-dimensionality analysis Comparative analysis	Enhanced self-efficacy in all language subskills Long-term stays increased self-efficacy to a higher level than short-term stays

Study	Purpose	Participants	Design/Analysis	Outcomes
Llanes & Munoz (2009)	Travel/ language acquisition relationship	24 Spanish speaking students in English speaking countries	Mixed methods study Pre/post design Kolmogorov-Smirnov test Parametric tests Multiple linear regression analysis	Increased in language acquisition skills Listening comprehension skills significantly higher after trip Lower proficiency learners progressed at higher rate than higher proficiency
Tajes & Ortiz (2010)	Travel/ language acquisition relationship STSA programs	22 William Patterson University students with little or no Spanish background traveling to Spain	Ethnographic study Theme coding Comparative analysis	Statistically significant improvement in student knowledge and cultural understanding Enhanced learning process

Summary

In summary, recent research showed an extensive amount of information on the types, length, and outcomes of international travel. The potential outcomes of travel abroad included international awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development. The outcomes were based on the type of travel engaged in, the length of stay, and the format of the travel experience. International travelers participated in both short-term and long-term stays while either traveling with family, secondary classmates, or in collegiate study programs. During these experiences, experiential and transformational learning often took place due to the hands-on, reflective nature of international travel.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

People have traveled to other countries to be educated since the beginnings of formal societies (Angwenyi, 2014). They traveled in order to learn and encounter life-changing experiences that were not possible in their own countries. Talburt (2009) described these early travel experiences as opportunities for enlightenment that could only come from visiting exotic places.

Traveling abroad is done by many people every year, including many students. Traveling experiences range from family vacations to study abroad trips for teens and college students (Johnson, 2008; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Family vacations are normally considered tourism travel while student travel is normally considered educational travel. Pabel and Prideaux (2012) contended that, since international travel broadened many people personally and philosophically, all travel is educational. No other human experience has the potential to completely change one's personal perspectives like travel (Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Pabel and Prideaux (2012) claimed modern travel was often done with purposes in mind. Hovland (2009) contended educational travel was frequently practice for the real world. Learning was integrating a variety of perspectives while exploring other cultures, thus preparing students in becoming efficient in solving global problems.

Research Questions

Central Question

The central question to be answered in this study was: To what extent was there a relationship between perceptions of travel and cultural outcomes as reported by interviewed teachers that have traveled abroad in a rural southwestern Georgia school system? The research questions were as follows:

1. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their daily lives?

2. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their teaching?

3. To what extent did the participants perceive that international travel had impacted their relationships with students?

Research Design

Descriptive Research

Qualitative descriptive research is a form of research often known as survey research (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Patton, 2002) involving collecting data with self-report instruments or by observation. The research method is a non-statistical form of data examination where researchers derive more detailed accounts of prior experiences through stories and thoughts. These experiences contribute to the amount of information collected in that subject area without being influenced by numerical data or statistics (Patton, 2002). Descriptive research provides an outlet for summarizing these phenomena from the perspective of the participant (Sandelowski, 2010). Quantitative

approaches often fail to capture the small nuances of descriptive experiences and focus more on statistical procedures using numerical data (McReynolds et al., 2001).

There are two ways to classify survey research: cross-sectional and longitudinal (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Cross-sectional surveys collect data once from selected individuals while longitudinal surveys collect data more than once in order to catalog change over time. For this study, a cross-sectional self-reporting instrument was used where all participants will be asked identical questions.

Phenomenological Research

Phenomenological research is a qualitative research approach where participants give their perspective of a particular activity or concept based on personal "lived experience" (Patton, 2002). What is perceived to have occurred could be completely different depending on how various individuals' view what has occurred in their lives. Including symbolic interaction with others further delineates how individuals find meaning in their experiences (Patton, 2002).

According to Edmund Husserl, father of phenomenology, phenomenology describes the meaning of "lived experiences" by those individuals who have had the actual experience (Giorgio, 2010; Giorgio, 2011; Pringle, Drummond, McLafferty, & Hendry, 2011; Roberts, 2013; Smith, 2004; Smith, 2011). This experience is accomplished through the process of phenomenological reduction, which involves reporting the phenomena from the participants' point of view (Chamberlain, 2011; Giorgio, 2011). After reporting the phenomenological reduction, all of the components of the lived experience, or "life world" (Brooks, 2015), is broken down into its basic elements by using free imaginative variation (Chamberlain, 2011; Giorgio, 2011). The

researcher makes sure personal views are put aside so as not to influence the participants'

recollection of their experiences with the phenomena. This is referred to by

phenomenologists as bracketing or epoche (Brooks, 2015; Chamberlain, 2011; Giorgio,

2011; Tuohy, Gullekson, & McCambridge, 2013) and is adhered to with rigorous

reflexivity standards (Darawsheh, 2014; Pringle et al., 2011; Roberts, 2013). These

standards are clearly necessary to develop self-awareness of potential researcher bias

(Darawsheh, 2014; Lub, 2015; Roberts, 2013).

Phenomenological hermeneutics is a qualitative research method introduced by

Martin Heidegger where researchers interpret particular experiences with phenomena

(Giorgio, 2011; Pringle et al., 2011; Roberts, 2013; Smith, 2011). Double

phenomenological hermeneutics involve examining how participants interpret their

experiential experiences, thus understanding its parts in a hermeneutic circle (Brooks,

2015; Chamberlain, 2011; Smith, 2011; Touhy et al., 2011).

<div align="center">Population</div>

The school district used in this study was located in a rural southwestern Georgia

city with approximately 5,200 students and over 314 teachers in grades PK-12 (Georgia

Department of Education, 2015a). There were eight schools in the district (i.e., four

elementary schools, one intermediate school, one middle school, one high school, and

one alternative school). The student racial make-up was approximately 77% White, 21%

African American, and 2% others combined, according to GADOE. Economically

disadvantaged students account for 7% of the student population. Georgia Department of

Education (2015b) indicated the teachers in this system averaged 15 years of teaching

experience. The individual teaching experience percentages are as follows: 2% for less

than one year, 29% for 1-10 years, 39% for 11-20 years, 24% for 21-30 years, and 4% for

over 30 years. Certificate levels of the teachers are as follows: 29% with bachelor's

degrees, 48% with master's degrees, 21% with specialist's degrees, 1% with doctoral

degrees, and 1% with other degrees. The gender of the teachers was 15% male and 85%

female. The racial makeup of the teachers are as follows: 7.5% African American, 89%

White, 1.5% Hispanic, and 2% multiracial. Average teacher annual salary for the county

was $55,878.98. The average household income was approximately $62,000 in this

county with a population of approximately 33,000 people and an unemployment rate of

10.40%. The median home value was $58,677 with 74% of occupied homes being

owned and 14% being rented. This county was chosen because the county has many

upwardly mobile families, as shown in the demographics, with the means to travel

internationally and therefore have experienced the phenomena to be studied.

<div align="center">Selection of Participants</div>

The sampling procedure chosen for this study was purposeful sampling (Gay &

Airasian, 2003). Creswell (2003) stated that purposeful sampling is appropriate to study

participants that already have an understanding of the issues being studied. Due to the

lower than expected participation numbers, all participants that completed the travel

packets and letters of informed consent were used in the study. They were selected as a

result of the amount of previous international experience, as answered by a travel

experience questionnaire. All 11 teachers from the high school were selected for the pool

of teachers extensively traveling internationally. No additional teachers in each

respective category were selected as reserves since all responding teachers were used.

All six teachers from the elementary schools that responded were used in the pilot study.

The pilot study was completed to ensure the interview questions were clear, concise, and understandable so as to improve the reliability and content validity of the descriptive data. Creswell (2003) determined that 5 to 25 participants were the typical amount for descriptive studies involving phenomena, or lived experiences, and that excessive sample sizes often resulted in less power. The participants in this study did not receive any gifts, tokens, or other rewards for their inclusion in these interviews.

The process of selecting the participants began with an introduction of the study through a county-wide email at the high school and at each of the elementary schools. Travel packets were then brought to each school to be placed in the teacher mailboxes. These packets consisted of a letter of consent, a travel experience survey, and a permission section for inclusion into the interview process of the study. The purpose of the study and the methods to be followed during the study were explained in the letter of consent in the email. The teachers were informed that inclusion in the study was entirely voluntary and could discontinue at any time with no questions asked. The selection process began with taking a demographic questionnaire on travel experience. After taking the questionnaire, the teachers signed an informed consent notice if they chose to continue in the study and gave approval to be interviewed. Those teachers, at each level, who had traveled extensively (twice or more) were available to be selected for interviews. There were six teachers selected from the elementary school levels for the pilot study and 11 teachers selected from the high school levels for the research interviews. There were no other teachers with extensive travel experience available at either level that could be used as alternatives in case originally selected participants chose to discontinue the study for any reason.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this qualitative study was semi-structured interviews. During these interviews, a set of ten questions were asked in a semi-structured format where questions were open-ended and possibly modified, as needed. This type of procedure enabled a novice researcher the opportunity to follow up the initial interview questions with probing questions, thus allowing the respondents to completely narrate their lived experience (Gay & Airasian, 2003). The recording of the interview data was completed using a Phillips (model #LFH0662) voice recorder and an Olympus (model #VN-5000). The Phillips recorder was used as the primary recording device and the Olympus recorder was used as a back-up recorder in case the Phillips recorder malfunctioned. The researcher developed interview questions was based on prevalent themes in the literature review and aligned with the research questions.

Approval from the IRB was granted to conduct the pilot study. The Columbus State University IRB protocol number was 18-084. The pilot study was administered before the research interviewing process began. There were 165 travel packets placed in the elementary teachers' mailboxes in the four elementary schools and six were completed and returned for a 4% response rate. In preparation for the interviews, the six responding teachers were selected from the elementary schools to participate in the interviews to identify any credibility issues that resulted from poorly written and inadequate questions. The teachers from this group identified any issues concerning the survey questions and how well they addressed the research questions. Any questions needing amending for clarity was re-written to ensure the interviews and surveys used during the actual study were valid and reliable. The interviews were recorded using

Phillips and Olympus digital recording devices. Table 8 displays the item analysis for the

interview questions.

Table 8

Item Analysis (Interview Questions)

Interview question No.	Research question No.	Research focus	Research sources
1	1	Cultural perspective	Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Engberg, 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013.
2	1	Personal growth	ASHE, 2012b; Falk et al., 2011; Johnson, 2008; McClellan & Hyle, 2012; Ritz, 2011; Saitow, 2009; Talburt, 2009
3	1	Cultural understanding	Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al., 2013; McKeown, 2009; Perry et al., 2012
4	2	Occupational improvement	ASHE, 2012b; ASHE, 2012c; Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Saitow, 2009
5	2	Occupational improvement	ASHE, 2012b; ASHE, 2012c; Donnelly-Smith, 2009; Saitow, 2009
6	2	Academic aspirations	Callihan, 2009; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011; Walters et al., 2011
7	2	Cultural tolerance	Engberg, 2013; Fenech et al., 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; McKeown, 2009; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011
8	3	Cultural perspective	Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013
9	3	Cultural perspective	Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013

Data Collection

This qualitative descriptive study was initiated by corresponding with the

superintendent of the participating county with an informational letter seeking approval

for this study to be conducted using the teachers and facilities from the respective county. The letter of informed consent was written in order to give teachers the opportunity to take the demographic questionnaire and be interviewed, although participation was completely voluntary. The initial contact with the prospective teachers was conducted through a county-wide email where information was given about the study to be conducted. This contact was followed up with travel packets being placed in the teacher mailboxes at all of the participating schools. After receiving these packets, the teachers had the chance to volunteer to participate in the study and complete an international travel experience survey. The survey was the basis for the sampling process.

The next step in the qualitative portion of this study was to collect data from a travel experience questionnaire in the travel packet to determine which teachers had extensively traveled internationally and which teachers had not traveled internationally, at all. There were 165 travel packets placed in the elementary teachers' mailboxes in the four elementary schools and six were completed and returned for a 4% response rate. Six elementary teachers were selected to participate in a pilot study to ensure the interview questions were reliable. Due to only six completing the informed consent forms, all participants completing the forms were selected.

High school teachers that had traveled internationally at least twice were allowed the opportunity to be interviewed in individual sessions to determine their perceptions of the importance of traveling experiences. Travel packets were placed in 155 teacher mailboxes at the high school, and eleven completed the travel packets for a response rate of 7%. Those teachers agreeing to be interviewed were placed in a pool according to their international travel experience. From these groups, 11 teachers from the high

school were selected for the group that had traveled internationally extensively. Only 11 high school teachers completed the informed consent forms so all of those teachers were selected to participate in the study. There were no remaining teachers from each travel experience category to be placed on a reserve list in case previous commitments chose to discontinue in the interview portion of the study.

Next, the teachers selected were notified as to their status in the study. These interview participants' sets came from the demographic questionnaire list of teachers who had granted permission to be interviewed. The teachers selected were notified of their inclusion in the interview process and interview appointments were scheduled at the teachers' convenience at their respective schools. Each interview lasted approximately 30-45 minutes using a semi-structured interview format. The interviews were recorded using a Phillips (model #LFH0662) voice recorder and an Olympus (model #VN-5000). The Phillips recorder was used as the primary recording device and the Olympus recorder was used as a back-up recorder in case the Phillips recorder malfunctioned.

The interviews were taped and transcribed using a denaturalized transcription format (Bucholtz, 2000). Denaturalized transcription uses written text to represent spoken language and removes incomplete sentences and incoherent mutterings in order to provide a more complete thought. These transcribed accounts were returned to the interviewed teachers for final critique (member checking) and approval in order to combat the possibility of researcher bias due to possibly differing views and opinions of the researcher (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Analysis of the teachers in the same travel experience subsets further assisted in the control of possible observer bias or observer

effect (Gay and Airasian, 2003). The teachers in the interviews transcribed were given pseudonyms in order to maintain confidentiality.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure that this study was conducted in an ethical manner, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed the research for their approval. This was to show that all actions occurring during this study was conducted in a transparent manner and any actions that could be deemed as harmful were considered. The Columbus State University IRB protocol number was 18-804. Finally, the IRB approval ensured that participation in the study was completely voluntary.

According to Patton (2002), there are some ethical factors that need to be considered when performing a research study. First, explain the purpose and methods of the study thoroughly and accurately to enlighten them as to what is to be accomplished. Second, promises made when soliciting participants and the assurance of no reciprocity for information given during the observations should be kept. Third, explain all potential risks created by participating in the study. Fourth, inform how confidentiality will be kept to ensure confidence in study protocol. Fifth, receive an informed consent on every participant to ensure IRB protocol has been followed. Sixth, explain the processes for all data access and ownership. Seventh, explain how any other issue involved in the study such as researcher advice, data collection boundaries, effects of interviews on researcher, and any other ethical issues will affect the participants and researcher.

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the researcher needs to possess an integral knowledge of the subject matter in order to guide the study through the necessary phases. At the same time, they need to have the ability to bracket their personal views in order to be less biased and more observant of the personal perceptions of the participants (Leavy, 2014). Researchers normally fall somewhere along the continuum between researcher and participant and that complete removal of all subjectivity is not either likely or desired. Being an empathetic listener while being objective is the goal but was seldom possible

Data Analysis

The type of statistical analysis used in this study was descriptive analysis. The interviews were transcribed verbatim from the recorded information. The transcribed interviews were then coded using the content analysis approach to discover common themes and categories of responses (Berg, 2004). The coded information was then analyzed to seek explanations of the perspectives of the participants' experiences.

The type of descriptive analysis used was Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model. Ryan and Bernard (2003) described themes as abstract constructs found in all aspects of communication, whether it be written, heard, or seen. The themes were derived from current or past studies on the subject at hand.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) identified six essential steps to formulating themes from qualitative analysis of descriptive research. These techniques explored several dimensions and disciplines and were both observational and manipulative. These dimensions consist of (1) determination of criteria for data types, (2) work required, (3)

knowledge required, (4) various stages of analysis, (5) amount and types of themes generated, and (6) reliability and validity issues.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) stated that analyzing text involves discovering themes, narrowing the themes down to a manageable few, building hierarchies of themes, and linking these themes into theoretical models. Ryan's six-step model discovered themes by using: (1) word repetitions, (2) indigenous terms, (3) metaphors and analogies, (4) transitions, (5) comparing and contrasting, and (6) connectors. Step 1 involves identifying themes that occur with regularity. Step 2 concerns identifying themes used in unfamiliar ways. Step 3 involves discovering themes used in metaphors and analogies. Step 4 concerns documenting themes found when transitioning from one subject to another. Step 5 involves using contrast and comparison as a means of locating themes. Step 6 concerns finding themes resulting from the use of language connectors.

Ryan and Bernard (2003) asserted that the processing techniques necessary for progressing through Ryan's six-step model are pawing, cutting and sorting, using key words in context (KWIC), using word co-occurrence, and meta-coding. Pawing is completed when researchers combed through all text thoroughly in order to include all relevant data. Cutting and sorting involves finding themes in different texts and arranging them into common groupings. Using KWIC identifies particular themes that any individual participant may use regularly while using word co-occurrence helps discover themes multiple participants may use regularly. Last, meta-coding examines previous themes to potentially discover new themes and possible meta-themes. without the researcher willingly addressing the inner biases (Leavy, 2014).

Researcher as an Instrument

To understand the researcher as an instrument of the study, characteristics involving personal and professional aspects of the researcher was disclosed. At the current time of the study, the researcher has been in the education field for 32 years as a teacher at two different schools in two different counties, 25 years as a coach, and 2 years as an athletic director. The researcher is a White male with degrees from Columbus College and West Georgia College, both in Physical Education. The researcher also has educational certifications in Educational Leadership and Reading. The researcher is very knowledgeable concerning travel due to extensive travel in the United States and other parts of the world. He has traveled to all 50 states in the United States and has traveled to 27 countries in five different continents.

Credibility

Credibility is defined as accurately describing data or phenomena in descriptive research (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Gay and Airasian (2003) stated three deterrents from credibly reporting participant experiences were observer bias, the halo effect, and the observer effect. Observer bias is limited by understanding the perspectives that the researcher brings into the study and to work diligently to bracket those views. Building trust with the participants is key to limiting the bias in the study. The halo effect is letting subsequent observations be affected by the first impression, positive or negative, that the researcher has about the participant. This effect is limited by making a conscience effort to come in and be as impartial as possible and earning the participants' trust early in the process and to ask neutral and unbiased questions when interviewing (Patton, 2003). Using the pilot study with question modifications limited the question

bias in the study. Observer effect is the impact of the observer's participation on the setting or participants. This effect is limited by being as unassuming and nonthreatening as possible when first encountering the participants and then gradually becoming more involved as the participants get acclimated to the researcher. Using the participants' place of work benefitted this procedure. To be credible the data collected needs to be based on actual observations from reliable sources and not hearsay, not influenced by outside factors, can be corroborated with others in the study, and be transferable or generalized to other contexts.

Validity

Validity is defined as measuring what is actually intended to be measured (Gay & Airasian, 2003). There are several strategies proposed by Gay and Airasian (2003) that were used to validate the study. First, attaining trust of the participants in order to receive a more honest reporting of their perspectives was necessary for the study. Second, recognizing researcher biases and being more aware of how it can affect the study results so as to limit observer bias was acknowledged. Third, narrative accuracy member checking of the interviews were allowed to corroborate the accuracy of their statements (Carlson, 2010). Fourth, verbatim accounts of all recordings of interviews were used so as not to question the authenticity of the accounts.

Confirmability

The level of fairness and equitability in this study equated to a desired level of confirmability (Creswell, 2003). Confirmability was demonstrated in the study by obtaining trust with the participants by having confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms and allowing member checking after the denaturalized transcriptions were

completed. The researcher demonstrated transparency by thoroughly explaining the various details in the initial phases of the study with county-wide emails as well as informational and informed consent letters. In addition, the participants were reminded in the original letters and email before the interviews that they could remove themselves from the interviews at any time without the possibility of harm or reprisal.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

In summary, a descriptive study was conducted using teacher interviews. Teachers were interviewed to share their travel experiences. Purposeful sampling was chosen as the sampling method for this study. Due to lower than expected participation numbers, all participants were selected to continue in the study. There was an initial pilot study for the questionnaires and interviews to increase the reliability and validity of the survey and interview questions. Finally, the data were transcribed and coded then analyzed using descriptive analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

Despite the plethora of research on the effects of international travel on those that

travel, little has been done with the perceptions of teachers concerning how international

travel has affected them culturally, personally, cognitively, and professionally. The

purpose of this qualitative descriptive study was to explore how international travel has

affected teacher perception in relation to cultural, cognitive, and personal outcomes. The

research study was based on the central question: To what extent was there a relationship

between perceptions of travel and cultural outcomes as reported by interviewed teachers

that have traveled abroad in a rural southwestern Georgia school system? The research

methodology included a pilot study where the interview questions were examined to

ensure their reliability. Six participants volunteered for the pilot study portion of the

study. After each interview, the participants were asked whether the interview questions

were clear and understandable and whether their interviews accurately portrayed their

travel experiences. Any input during this time was noted by the researcher. The

interviews were conducted at the participants' home school for 30 to 45 minutes after

their normal work day was completed using a semi-structured format where the

researcher could ask further questions to possibly clarify any misunderstanding that

might occur (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Nine questions were asked concerning international

travel outcomes. The questions for the study interviews were derived and necessary

modifications were made after the pilot study interviews. There was a dialogue with the

participants in the pilot study in order to ensure clarity and credibility with the questions.

The researcher then repeated the process and sent these packets to the high school to

recruit participants for the study interviews. Eleven participants volunteered for the

interview portion of the study, and all 11 were chosen to participate. After two weeks,

the researcher collected the forms from all of the schools and set up interviews for all 11

participants that completed a form. Eleven participants volunteered for the interview

portion of the study and all 11 were chosen to participate. The interviews were

conducted at the participants' school in a location of their choice. The participants were

notified, once again, that they could stop the interview at any time they wished to without

any consequences or reprisals. They were also assured that they could review their

transcripts (member checking) prior to their usage in the study. The interviews were then

transcribed by the researcher using denaturalized transcription which uses all content

spoken with the exception of mutterings and unintelligible sounds (Bucholtz, 2000).

After using Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model data analysis process

(Ryan & Bernard, 2003), themes were identified and coded, which reflected the teacher

perspectives of the study's 11 research participants. The research findings were

extrapolated from the coding of the common themes.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The recruitment of the participants for the research study began in August 2018

with a county-wide teacher email seeking those that were interested in participating.

Following this email, packets were delivered to all of the elementary schools to be placed

in the teacher mailboxes. This packet included a survey to determine how many times

they had traveled internationally as well as an informed consent form if they chose to

participate in the pilot study portion of the study. After two weeks, the researcher

collected the forms from all of the schools and set up interviews for all six participants

that completed a form. The interviews were conducted at the participants' school in a

location of their choice. The participants were notified, once again, that they could stop

the interview at any time they wished to without any consequences or reprisals. After

completing the interviews, they were asked about the clarity and understanding of the

questions to ensure the questions used in the actual study were reliable. After ensuring

the interview questions were clear and understandable, the researcher used the same

procedure for the interviews for the study, except there was no discussion about the

questions. The researcher sent out the email to the high school in November 2018 and

delivered the packets to the school to be place in the teacher boxes one week later. The

researcher went back to the school to collect any completed forms in December 2018 and

immediately arranged and completed the interviews for all 11 participants that completed

a form. This data collection was completed in three weeks in December 2018. All 11 of

the participants that completed an informed consent form participated in the study. There

was no attrition of any of the participants. Eleven high school teachers were interviewed

as to their perceptions of the effects of international travel on their personal and

professional lives. Participants' demographics are listed in Table 9.

Table 9

Participants' Demographics

Pseudonym	Race	Gender	Age	Educational level	Years taught	Subject taught	Countries traveled
Anna	Hispanic	Female	61	Master's	34	Spanish	5
Barbara	White	Female	58	Master's	28	Special Education	9
Christine	White	Female	57	Master's	19	Business Education	7
Debra	White	Female	60	Master's	33	Special Education	3
Eloise	White	Female	37	Bachelor's	13	Drama	6
Fran	White	Female	54	Master's	20	Visual Arts	6
Gina	African American	Female	51	Master's	20	Social Studies	12
Holly	White	Female	52	Master's	24	Chorus	11
Ingrid	White	Female	34	Specialist's	12	Science	11
John	White	Male	65	Master's	15	Construction	15
Kenneth	White	Male	33	Master's	11	History	2

Anna

Anna is 61 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Spanish, and has taught for 34 years. She has traveled internationally five times and has visited five countries, including Canada, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, and the Dominican Republic.

Barbara

Barbara is 58 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Special Education, and has taught for 28 years. She has traveled internationally four times and has visited nine countries, including the Bahamas, Canada, Austria, England, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

Christine

Christine is 57 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Business Education, and has taught for 19 years. She has traveled internationally four times and has visited seven

countries, including the Bahamas, Canada, Mexico, England, France, Ireland, and Scotland.

Debra

Debra is 60 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Special Education, and has taught for 33 years. She has traveled internationally three times and has three countries, including Italy, Morocco, and Spain.

Eloise

Eloise is 37 years of age, holds a Bachelor's degree in Drama, and has taught for 13 years. She has traveled internationally six times and has visited six countries, including England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, and Spain.

Fran

Fran is 54 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Visual Arts, and has taught for 20 years. She has traveled internationally six times and has visited six countries, including Canada, China, Japan, England, France, and Italy.

Gina

Gina is 51 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Social Studies, and has taught for 20 years. She has traveled internationally seven times and has visited 12 countries, including Canada, China, Austria, the Czechoslovakia Republic, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Monaco, Spain, and Turkey.

Holly

Holly is 52 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Chorus, and has taught for 24 years. She has traveled internationally seven times and has visited 11 countries,

including Canada, Brazil, Austria, England, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, and Switzerland.

Ingrid

Ingrid is 34 years of age, holds a Specialist's degree in Science, and has taught for 15 years. She has traveled internationally 11 times and has visited 11 countries, including the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, the Honduras, Mexico, Australia, Austria, France, Germany, Lichtenstein, and Switzerland.

John

John is 65 years of age, holds a Master's degree in Construction, and has taught for 15 years. He has traveled internationally 10 times and has visited 15 countries, including Canada, the Bahamas, Belize, Mexico, Ecuador, Belgium, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, Sweden, Switzerland, and Wales.

Kenneth

Kenneth is 33 years of age, holds a Master's degree in History, and has taught for eleven years. He has traveled internationally two times and has visited two countries, including the Bahamas and Ireland.

<div align="center">Findings</div>

This qualitative descriptive study was based on one central question: To what extent is there a relationship between perceptions of travel and cultural outcomes as reported by interviewed teachers that have traveled abroad in a rural southwestern Georgia school system? The rationale used with this question was to explore the perceptions of teachers who had traveled abroad as to what extent the teachers reported

significant learning and cultural experiences based on cognitive, personal, and cultural outcomes occurring during international travel.

The researcher asked the same nine interview questions to all research participants in order to obtain data to answer the central research question. The researcher followed up with an expanded question, when necessary, to clarify the original question or when the participant got off topic when answering the question. All of the teachers were enthusiastic and forthright in expressing their perceptions of their experiences during the interviews. All of the interviews were transcribed using denaturalized transcription (Bucholtz, 2000). No thoughts or ideas were omitted, just the removal of any incomplete thoughts or incoherent sounds. Otherwise, the transcription was completely verbatim. The researcher listened to the interviews and read the transcribed interviews on numerous occasions to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the participants' experiences.

As stated in Chapter III, the researcher utilized Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) during the interviews in order to identify common themes and codes. Table 10 displays the common themes and categories encountered while coding the transcribed interviews. Eight themes emerged from the data and the researcher utilized the transcribed interviews to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the participants.

Table 10

Data Analysis Categories and Themes

Categories	Common categories	Themes
Kindness	Kindness	Common experiences
Food	Food	
Lifestyle	Culture	
Traditions		
People-watching		
Diversity		
Art		
Work-life balance		
Architecture	Architecture	
Landmarks		
Memories	Memories	
Novel experiences		
Nostalgia		
Travel identity		
Animals	Nature	
Ecosystems		
Perspective	Perspective	
Communication	Communication	
Tolerance	Tolerance	Effects on Life and Values
Acceptance		
Empathy		
Understanding		
Appreciation		
Open-minded		
Supported values	Supported values	
Confirmation of values		
Faith in humanity		
Value adjustment		
Passion		
Family focus	Life focus	
Educational focus		
Holistic focus		
Environmental consciousness		
Growth		
Comfort zone		
Perspective	Perspective	
Culture	Culture	
Cultural advantages		
Communication		
International knowledge	International awareness	Global perspective

Categories	Common categories	Themes
Economy		
Ecology		
Politics		
Religion		
Governmental		
understanding		
Culture	Culture	
Racial understanding		
Cultural ignorance		
Gender roles		
Hospitality		
Family		
Perspective	Perspective	
Hard work		
Acceptance		
Understanding		
Landmarks	Landmarks	
Use of experiences	Use of experiences	Influence on teaching
Exposure		
Enrichment		
Enthusiasm		
Connections		
Tolerance	Tolerance	
Understanding		
Appreciation		
Open-minded		
Sensitivity		
Educational emphasis	Educational emphasis	
Career pathways		
Life-long learning		
Self-directed		
Work ethics		
Professional development		
Perspective	Perspective	
Comfort zone		
Diversity		
Culture	Culture	
Communication		
Curiosity	Curiosity	Academic motivation
Thirst for learning		
Life-long learner		
Motivation		
Perspective	Perspective	
Value		
Growth		

Categories	Common categories	Themes
International learning	International learning	
International reading		
Diverse reading		
Exposure		
Tolerance	Tolerance	Tolerance level
Acceptance		
Understanding		
Open-minded		
Less judgmental		
Compassion		
Respect		
Patience		
Humanity		
Cultural immersion	Cultural immersion	
Diversity		
Awareness		
Communication		
Perspective	Perspective	
Differentiation	Differentiation	
Tolerance	Tolerance	Relationship with students
Understanding		
Appreciation		
Relationship	Relationship	
Bonding		
Connections		
Closeness		
Communication		
Use of experiences	Use of experiences	
Enhancement of experiences		
Shared experiences		
Shared memories		
Differentiation		
Cultural knowledge	Cultural knowledge	
Holistic understanding		
Thirst for learning	Thirst for learning	
Motivation		
Inspiration		
Contagiousness		
Collegial experiences	Collegial experiences	Relationship with staff
Collegial interaction		
Shared experiences		
Enrichment		
Excitement		
Relationship building	Relationship building	

Categories	Common categories	Themes
Socialization		
Bonding		
Family environment		
Friendliness		
Communication		
Shared outlooks	Shared outlooks	
Common ground		
Mutual interests		
Perspective		
Diversity	Diversity	
Acceptance		
Patience		

Eight themes emerged naturally from the data and were explained later in this

chapter. The researcher used exact words in order to represent the actual participants'

perceptions, with the questions, to the readers.

Theme 1: Common Experiences

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions of common

experiences encountered during international travel and the kind of memories elicited as a

result of their travel. One of the common experiences was the variety and uniqueness of

the food experienced during their travel. Anna (2018) stated, "One thing that comes to

mind during international travel is the food and just the experience itself and how it

stands out, comparing and contrasting so widely to my experiences and where I live"

(p.1). Gina (2018) claimed, "The food has always been one of the best parts of

travel"(p.1). Kenneth (2018) agreed:

> I love food. I mean, I can't live without it but it's getting to try the different
>
> cuisines in their home land. It really is an eye-opening experience. To me, the
>
> food is the fuel of the trip and the vacation because, if you've got good food,
>
> you're going to have a really good time and be on a food high. If you're eating

normal, 'plain-Jane' food that you can get anywhere else, you're not as fueled and you're not as enthused. (p. 1)

Seeing landmarks and the various architectural designs is another common thing often experienced during international travel. Anna (2018) disclosed, "Architecture is another traveling experience that compares and contrasts widely to the experiences where you live" (p. 1). Barbara (2018) noted:

I remember the museums I visited and try to comprehend just how old things are over there. You think about America being around a couple of hundred years and change and they've got things over there that are hundreds and hundreds of years old. That impressed me. There are parts of the world I've been to that are so beautiful and there's just nothing negative about it. (p. 1)

Christine (2018) related, "I love the experiences of seeing different places and how beautiful it is with the different architecture in different areas" (p. 1). Holly (2018) added, "What I remember most is the anticipation of seeing specific places, doing some research before I went, and what is was going to feel like when I saw it in person" (p. 1).

Art is another highlight often experienced during international travel. Debra (2018) described:

I remember the richness of the artistic experience. Everywhere you turn, there is something tremendous that has been done over the centuries. It just makes you amazed at what man has been able to accomplish without the things we have today. (p. 1)

Ingrid (2018) enjoyed her experiences with animals within the different ecosystems. She recalled:

I love the beach and the tropics so most of the places that I have been to have all

been centralized around them. Most of my memories involve diving and

snorkeling. It has a lot to do with different ecosystems and animal encounters.

I've seen koalas and kangaroos in the wild, got to feed rock wallabies in

Australia, and got to pet a shark in the Great Barrier Reef. (p. 1)

One of the most notable memories derived from traveling internationally involved

seeing people from other countries behave in culturally different ways than we do in the

United States. Things were often quite different in other places, whether it be lifestyle

differences or just cultural beliefs or traditions. Anna (2018) expressed:

People are just universally good. You have a lot of good things to offer. People

are willing and open to share their experiences and to provide information to any

outsider that asks questions concerning their cultures. I just feel that people all

want the same thing. They want to be happy, they are hard-working, and they

generally are good people. (p.1)

Christine (2018) concurred, "I remember how different everything was, how

different the cultures were, and how nice everyone was everywhere we went. I like

meeting all the different people" (p. 1).

Eloise (2018) articulated about diversity and some of the origins of traditions:

The thing I remember most is how you experience diversity and culture. I think

the reason that most people travel is so that they can experience something new,

especially when you travel internationally. You see where, we in America, get

some of our traditions. You see how we morphed it into more of American

traditions. You start to see like where these things stemmed from. That's really

interesting to know that we didn't come up with these things on our own. (p. 1)

Fran (2018) disclosed her experiences with people watching:

What I remember most is people watching, how they handle themselves. I really

like to people watch and kind of analyze what their thought processes are and why

they do things. I would recommend that everyone that can travel do it. It is not

safe in all countries but you definitely want to get involved in travel. Travel will

change your life. (pp.1, 3)

Culturally, there are often distinct differences between American family life and

those elsewhere. Debra (2018) stated:

Culturally, people elsewhere are not so caught up with electronics. They spend

their lives with communication and are centered around their family and

community. The family and community are very well integrated. Even their

cities are set up so that each neighborhood has everything they need within that

neighborhood. It's a much slower pace of life and, I think, a happier pace of life.

With Americans, we still have that pioneer image and still want to succeed.

That's what compels us to be over-involved with some things and not always

focusing on the things that are really important. (p. 1)

Gina (2018) recounted how her identity sometimes changed when she traveled

internationally. "My identity is different once I leave the United States. It's always

interesting to note how that changes. I guess it's more of a difference in the world/life

balance between the United States and other countries" (p. 1).

John (2018) spoke of living abroad as a military dependent:

I have a different perspective of things because I grew up in Germany as a

teenager and traveled internationally as an adult. The things I remember most

about traveling was the experiences of what different countries were like, the

different cultures, the different people, and how we were all a little bit different

and yet the same in how we got along with each other. It opened my eyes about

how different people do it yet are still humane and have the same wants, needs,

and desires. (p. 1)

Theme 2: Effects on Life and Values

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions on how

international travel impacted their lives and values. Anna (2018) revealed how travel

affected her values:

I would like to say that, even though I am a sensitive person, it has made me even

more conscientious of what I have and made me value a lot of what many people

take for granted. When you go to other countries that are very limited, they make

their own happiness and are pleased with the little that they have. They take great

pride in appreciating life rather than material things. They know that things can

be better but still have a wonderful spirit about themselves. Americans are very

spoiled, on the other hand, and have so many things at our disposal. (p. 1)

Holly (2018) agreed, "It has shown me how different America is from the rest of

the world and how blessed and privileged we are. There are lots of freedoms we have

that are not available in other places in the world" (p.1). John (2018) added, "It's not the

same values everywhere. I had to learn to adjust my values when traveling back and forth to different cultures" (p. 2).

Christine (2018) averred concerning her cultural understanding. "I think I understand other cultures a little better and made me more accepting and understanding of other people" (p. 1). Fran (2018) agreed, "It has opened my eyes to be more accepting and understanding. I think if we just all tried a little bit of communication, we'd end up on a different side of things" (p. 1). Eloise (2018) insisted, "I am more empathetic knowing things are not the same way they were when we were growing up. I look at things a bit more holistically. When people start to look at things internationally, their world changes" (p. 1). Barbara (2018) concurred, "Through traveling, I have become more understanding of other cultures and their environments, making me more environmentally conscious" (p. 1).

Debra (2018) expressed that international travel has restored her faith in humanity:

> I think I was always open to differences in people and so, when I experienced it, I wasn't surprised by it. It reinforced the idea that people are people. There are so many similarities amongst people and the fundamental values of humanity are somewhat the same. (p. 3)

Ingrid (2018) declared:

> Travel has made me more well-rounded and has given me a different perspective. We tend to live in our own little bubble, especially in our perfect little country, our Utopia. It all boils down to what their environment is and what they're

accustomed to. It has created a lot of growth in my life and I've tried to instill

that in others. (p. 1)

Debra (2018) discussed how international travel supported her personal values:

The tolerance for different religious beliefs, family lifestyles, pace of life, and

educational focus has backed up my own personal values. As a result of

traveling, I have narrowed down what was most important to me. People in other

countries are often healthier, better educated, and more family oriented. What I

saw was a really functional, culturally rich way of life. (p. 1)

Theme 3: Global Perspective

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions concerning how

international travel has impacted their global perspective. Having a better understanding

of economies, ecologies, politics, religion, race, and world events are benefits of traveling

internationally. Barbara (2018) stated, "Because of traveling to other places, I tune in

with news concerning places I have been" (p. 1). Fran (2018) added, "It opened my eyes,

after traveling, that other countries have as much trouble as we do" (p. 1). Anna (2018)

disclosed:

I think the more one travels, the better and clearer a perspective one has on

understanding how it all works from an economic point of view to different

aspects on things such as air and water quality. After traveling abroad, you have

to have some framework to compare these things from various countries. (pp.1-2)

Ingrid (2018) expressed her views of economics from her travel abroad. She

asserted:

International travel makes you more aware, economically and politically. I don't

tend to pay much attention to either of them at home, even though it may directly

affect my pocketbook. It doesn't affect my day-to-day as much. When you

travel, you become much more aware of the impact world events may have on the

U.S. (p. 1)

Debra (2018) divulged her global views:

The economies in some countries cause different types of family configurations.

Complete families often live together in other places in the world, helping each

other. One family member with a special trade helps out other family members

and vice versa. There's a lot of interaction within the family. There's an attitude

in families there that there is room for everybody. (pp. 1-2)

Eloise (2018) discussed gaining international knowledge when traveling abroad:

Once you start traveling internationally, you're more knowledgeable. The things

that happen here and there affect one another. As much as you start to expand

your mind, you also start to realize that the world gets a little bit smaller and you

start to become more understanding of other people. (p. 1)

Gina (2018) articulated about American ignorance of global happenings, "U.S.

citizens tend to be far more ignorant of other societies and fail to realize that their citizens

are sometimes quite happy living as they are, being totally different from those in our

country" (p. 1). Holly (2018) expressed, "Traveling internationally broadened my

understanding to kind of look at things from the perspectives of other people or other

countries" (p. 1).

John (2018) described understanding global events as a military dependent living in Europe as a teenager:

Growing up American in Europe, we understand things from a totally different perspective. I was aware of what was going on in Vietnam and the military happenings in Europe because my father was involved in it. We were often referred to as "ugly Americans" because we were involved with things outside of our own country. Sometimes, when ex-patriots retire in other countries, there is some of those same feelings by some foreigners. My perspective gets skewed looking at it from both sides. (p. 3)

Kenneth (2018) discussed his views on the importance of religion internationally. Religion does play a major role in some countries, much larger than it does in the U.S. Some countries are completely shut down on religious holidays, while in the U.S., that usually is not the case" (p. 1). Christine (2018) added on religion, "In Northern Ireland, they have had some serious religious turmoil. Visiting there helped me to understand the way they see things there. They don't understand why we have racial issues and we don't understand why they have religious issues. (p. 1)

Theme 4: Influence on Teaching

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions on how international travel influenced their teaching. Use of their experiences and collected memories from international trips were a great use of this travel experience. Barbara (2018) asserted, that she could add personal experiences to her teaching. "I had the

personal experience of being there at some places I'm teaching about and have brought that into my teaching" (p.1). Christine (2018) agreed:

> I think just the fact that I know how things are done in other countries a little bit more, I make sure I bring some of that into the teaching so that the students can have more of an understanding of the way other cultures see things, not just their culture. The kids learned about international business and marketing and became more self-directed. They became responsible for their education. It's not so much us holding their hands. (pp. 1-2)

Debra (2018) also stressed the importance of using their travel experiences:

I have prints of different things I've gotten in various places so that my kids who are not exposed to various cultures can be enriched, as well. It takes a little bit to get that all together but it's something I love that can add to the classroom, enrich the lessons, and broaden their world. It's kind of given me a "less is more" attitude. I can have a rigorous curriculum that is also enriching. (p. 2)

Eloise (2018) added:

I can show the students things from the text book then I can show them pictures and artifacts of the same thing. You just have more enthusiasm when you have first-hand knowledge instead of having knowledge just passed on to you. (p. 2)

Gina (2018) recounted:

When I'm teaching class, I can show pictures of the actual places and can give them more details about the people and cultures. It allows me to go beyond the textbook in teaching things. I think I can make the unknown world a little bit more known for my students. I think the biggest change in the last few years has

been when I tried to teach my kids to look at things with a different lens or perspective. That directly results from international travel. (pp. 1-2)

Holly (2018) asserted:

I have experiences that I can share with my students but there's nothing like being there. It also enlightens the students knowing they have certain advantages being American. They are able to choose what they want to study and everything that goes along with it. (p. 1)

Ingrid (2018) concurred, "I really feel it's made me a better teacher because I'm able to bring in the experiences and share the stories and embed my pictures from my trips into my notes" (p. 1). Fran (2018) insisted, "Seeing things in the classroom from other places are valuable teaching tools but nothing is actually better than seeing it in person" (p. 1). Kenneth (2018) added:

When going to foreign countries, I want to bring back some resources that I can use in my classroom, whether its pictures or other resources. I want them to experience what I did through these resources, even if it is kind of coming in second-handed, at that point. My excitement about my lessons and resources makes them excited. (p. 1)

John (2018) stated:

I try to teach the students that we can make do with little things and can make use of what we have. We try to teach students to find something they're going to do for a living to take care of themselves. My experiences in third-world countries have caused me to be more aware of this. (p. 3)

Anna (2018) stated:

I think one of the things that make us a more well-rounded person is the vast

experiences that you have out of your comfort zone. It's wonderful to learn about

others because it makes us a more of a diverse person. I try to open the eyes of

the students to different views with many academic areas. Some of the things we

see worldwide is no different than what we see in our own nation. (p. 2)

Ingrid (2018) averred, "Communication is key in diverse classes and is sometimes

easier through the use of shared experiences. You can reach students on a personal level

when you have a connection with them" (p. 2). John (2018) concurred, "Because of my

international travel, I see the need to experience different cultures. I try to pass that along

to my students" (p. 5). Kenneth (2018) agreed:

I think international travel is very beneficial for educators at any level, to get out

and travel and see what the world really has to offer. They need to step out of

their comfort zone because, by doing so, they get to re-define, re-invent, or get to

level up a bit. I have become more culturally sensitive. I may not have full

exposure to them but traveling has made me think differently about various

cultures, how they act, and how they view outsiders coming in to visit their

country to experience their way of life. (p. 3)

Fran (2018) articulated:

Because we have exchange students in class, we have to learn how to

communicate. When you travel, you don't normally speak their language and

have to find a way to communicate. Because I had used translate.com while

traveling internationally, it has helped me to communicate better with students whose primary language is not English. (p. 2)

Gina (2018) claimed:

Traveling internationally would be the ultimate professional development. I think we can learn different strategies and techniques from other people from other countries. I really think that if we had more exchange programs between teachers in the U.S. and the rest of the world, we could really make some positive changes in our own educational system. I'm hoping they do that. (p. 3)

Theme 5: Academic Motivation

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions concerning how international travel has impacted their academic motivation. Anna (2018) explained:

I think it instills a curiosity to learn more about others, how they live and why the customs are what they are. It has influenced me a great deal and I hope that I continue to grow as a person, not only intellectually but professionally, as well. This will allow me to share with my students and colleagues when I have the opportunity. (p. 2)

Gina (2018) divulged how travel stirs the thirst for learning, "I am naturally curious and travel makes me even more curious to learn" (p. 2). Fran (2018) concurred, "It absolutely has affected my thirst for learning. When you do travel, you see things differently than if you just saw it in a book. I would definitely consider going back and learning more. You can never get too much education" (p. 2). Ingrid (2018) agreed:

International travel makes you thirstier for learning or something is wrong with you. It makes me want to go back to school and get another degree. I think it

definitely makes you want to soak up everything you can about the different

environments in which you travel or want to travel. (p. 2)

Kenneth (2018) stated:

I would definitely say that I'm a life-long learner. If I won the lottery tonight, I

would become a career college student. I really enjoy learning when going to

different museums or historical places and it motivates me to learn more. (p. 2)

John (2018) declared:

I'm one of those that wants to be a life-long learner but I don't know if it's

motivated academically. Travel didn't affect my academic motivation except for

my increased reading about the countries I visited or going to visit. As I learn

about these things, it makes me want to continue to learn. (pp. 4-5)

Barbara (2018) discussed international reading. "I haven't really wanted to go

back to school but I do enjoy reading and researching about other cultures in other

countries" (p. 1). Christine (2018) concurred:

I like to learn and want to get my Doctorate but I feel like I'm too old to do it

now. I don't know if traveling internationally did that. However, I did go back to

school and became a teacher after working in international business. (p. 2)

Debra (2018) averred:

I'm reading more now than I ever had and I've always been a big reader. Now, I

read much more about global topics concerning other places. It's made me

thirstier academically. It's made me more inquisitive about other cultures and

how things run in certain governments. Academically, it has been very

stimulating. I think it's made me study better and I continue my life-long

learning. (pp. 3-4)

Eloise (2018) expressed:

I have enthusiasm for travel and learning. It's one of those wonderful

opportunities where you get to be a learner and teacher at the same time. I get to

experience it, smell it, breathe it, and touch it as opposed to just seeing a picture

of it. (p. 2)

Gina (2018) added:

I think that was what motivated me in the first place because I was naturally

curious anyway. What makes part of my traveling so interesting is my

experiences where I get to learn and then use it as a teacher. This gives me extra

value. (p. 2)

Holly (2018) disclosed:

I always want to know more of the language of the place where I'm going. I can't

comprehend it and I definitely can't speak it. It makes me want to learn more

about that and become fluent in another language. (p. 2)

Theme 6: Tolerance Level

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions concerning how

international travel has impacted their tolerance level. Barbara (2018) explained, "I feel

like I am more tolerant of differences in people due to my traveling experiences" (p. 2).

Anna (2018) explains the importance of tolerance in teaching:

I think that tolerance is the one thing or one of the most important things that one

learns in travel. The different approaches that people have for doing things allows

you to see that there are things that are just done differently. You have to be very

open-minded in order to make the allowances without any judgments. I think that

also, as an educator, broadens your horizons when you realize that every single

individual has their own distinct experiences and bring their own particular

attributes or shortcomings to the table. I've gotten a little softer in tolerating

some things. I think that makes us more of a humane person to travel to see

things that we need to appreciate. When you see the different things, it gives you

a different perspective. (p. 3)

Christine (2018) asserted:

I've had a lot of experiences with people from a lot of different cultures and I

have a lot more tolerance for them. I'm interested and more tolerant in other

cultures, probably a lot more than when I was younger before I had those

traveling experiences. (p. 2)

Debra (2018) stated, "I think I've always been tolerant and wouldn't say it

changed significantly. It just made me more aware of what I value in terms of accepting

people where they are culturally" (p. 3). Eloise (2018) averred:

Before I really started to travel, I sometimes had that mentality of, you're in

America so you should understand English. Well, flip that around when you go to

a country where English is not the native language and you really start to see that

it is so hard to communicate with even the simplest things because we don't share

that common language. It has made me more patient and made me a better

teacher because I've become more tolerant. (pp. 2-3)

Fran (2018) declared:

I'm a very friendly person so I don't ever meet a stranger. When I meet people

from other cultures, they think I'm not going to understand them. I grow, I learn,

and I ask questions. When I return home, I have a whole new respect for students

from other places. (p. 2)

Gina (2018) claimed, "I'm more patient and less judgmental. I understand

different cultural contexts and that people have different histories and will often be

different from me. This often occurs after international travel" (p. 2). Holly (2018)

claimed, "I think I'm a pretty tolerant person, in general. I'm not sure it's affected my

tolerance level but I think it opened my understanding of others culturally" (p. 2). Ingrid

(2018) explained:

This impacts you while traveling because it opens your eyes and strips away your

perception you had going in. I think that's very important when you travel. You

should immerse yourself and not just be a tourist within a land. You should

embrace their culture as much as you possibly can and you will have more

compassion and understanding when you return home knowing they don't live the

way we do and that's acceptable. (p. 2)

John (2018) expressed:

The sixties in Europe were a little different. Europeans were far more tolerant

with other cultures than people in the U.S. were. When you see the difference in

cultures, it would make you less opinionated, more tolerant, and able to deal with

more diverse people. (p. 5)

Kenneth (2018) stated:

I'm a lot more tolerant of different cultures to a certain point. I've always been

pretty open-minded towards other cultures and that pushed me toward the subject

I'm teaching knowing there are different people out there that I want to learn

about understand better. It definitely has been a boost to my teaching. (p. 2)

Theme 7: Relationships with Students

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions concerning how

international travel has impacted their relationships with students. Anna (2018)

addressed some nuances involved in the student/teacher relationship dynamics:

Travel has helped me motivate and inspire my students. It helps with growth and

appreciation to be able to share and learn about other people. My students are

motivated to want to participate and, once they experience other cultures, it

becomes contagious. They want to share the experience with me. I get excited to

share my experiences and it makes them excited and curious enough to maybe try

it for themselves one day. (p. 3)

Barbara (2018) shared:

I've had foreign exchange students a few times and it has helped me to be more

patient. I was a little more tolerant of their inability to communicate in English.

I'm not fluent in their language but, together, we can find a way to communicate.

When I was traveling internationally, I would get frustrated. However, the people

living there were patient with me even with my inability to communicate. (p. 2)

Christine (2018) added:

I've talked to my kids about traveling and what they may want to do. I have a

good relationship with students from other countries. We communicate about the

differences in culture. My travel experiences have helped me build better

relationships with them. (p. 2)

Debra (2018) averred, "By traveling internationally, I'm better able to relate when

I have students from other countries. It has encouraged me to learn even more about

them. I have even tried to pull something of their culture into my lessons" (p. 3). Gina

(2018) stated:

I think that better relationships have been developing in the past ten years since

I've been traveling, just understanding more holistically the individuals in front of

me. You start to appreciate the fact that there are generational differences in

cultures and you need to learn where they're coming from so you can kind of

reach across time to sort of build that bond that needs to exist so you can teach

them. (p. 2)

Ingrid (2018) articulated:

My travel experiences have made me closer to my students. They listen to my

stories, see my pictures, and want to experience it. I'm passionate about my

teaching. By using my experiences, I can share with my students and create and

enrich a deeper learning experience. You can give them primary, first-hand

anecdotes of the different cultures and wonders of the world. (pp. 2-3)

John (2018) expressed:

When we get in one-on-one relationships with students, you become more tolerant

with people from different backgrounds. I try to teach them that just because we

speak a different language doesn't mean that we necessarily come from a different

place. (pp. 5-6)

Kenneth (2018) added:

I use my personal experience traveling while teaching and, of course, I get excited

about it. They will feed off of my energy and I can feed off of theirs. That will

develop a stronger relationship and make it a little more personal. (p. 2)

Eloise (2018) stated:

When kids travel with you, you are sharing family-like situations with them and

start to develop bonds that you can always go back to. You get to go back home

and share these memories. These trips are sometimes intimidating to plan but not

as arduous as it seemed a few years ago. (p. 3)

Fran (2018) added, "It absolutely affects your relationships because they get a

taste of it and now that's what they want to do" (p. 3). Holly (2018) concurred:

It changes, especially if students travel internationally with me. There are lots of

shared experiences in other countries that are different than normal U.S.

experiences. It's fun to share these experiences. I just hate that, sometimes, kids

seemed left out if they weren't able to accompany you on these trips. (p. 2)

Ingrid (2018) agreed:

It makes me closer to my students and lets me make more of a connection with

them when we travel together internationally. The students have been amazing,

especially when their eyes light up after seeing something culturally different. It is a priceless experience. (p. 2)

Theme 8: Relationships with Staff

The researcher sought to discover the participants' perceptions concerning how international travel has impacted their relationships with staff with which they work. Anna (2018) discussed collegial interactions possibly enhanced through traveling abroad:

There are a lot of colleagues that have traveled internationally a great bit at this school. They have even led trips with other teachers. I was flattered to have been asked to accompany the as a chaperone and educator. I really enjoyed the experience with them. (p. 3)

Barbara (2018) added, "It's made me more patient and able to communicate with teachers originally from other countries as my previous travel makes it easier to relate" (p. 2). Christine (2018) concurred:

I know some teachers that I never talked to and didn't know very well but, because of our mutual interest in travel, we became friendlier, talked, and had better relationships. It built better relationships because of traveling internationally over the years. (p. 2)

Debra (2018) stated:

There is some kind of bonding there with other staff who have traveled internationally because you kind of build on each other's experiences. We often throw ideas off each other about possible future destinations. The collegial interaction has been really good for me socially. It's helped me to get to know some people better that I wouldn't have gotten to know. (pp. 3-4)

Eloise (2018) added, "We have good relationships here already, but the

international travel only improves it" (p. 3). Fran (2018) concurred:

> When the staff here has traveled together, a bond is created. You build that bond
>
> when you get to see them outside the walls of the school. It's like meeting
>
> strangers you've known for years. It definitely shows a whole different side of
>
> them, often a lighter and more fun side. (p. 3)
>
> Gina (2018) disclosed:
>
> Sometimes, I get to travel with other staff and it can build bonds. It's nice when
>
> you have a co-worker that shares your outlook and can help cross relationship
>
> boundaries. It can be a bonding experience but it can also help you see their
>
> perspectives on travel. (pp. 2-3)

Holly (2018) averred, "I would say it has affected relationships with staff. Many

of them know that I travel internationally and shown the ropes to different staff who have

then opted to lead travel groups on their own" (p. 2.). Ingrid (2018) expressed:

> It allows you to create more of a family unit because can share your experiences
>
> and grow closer with friends. Being able to travel with co-workers creates more
>
> of a bond between you and it allows you to share those experiences, enriching
>
> your teaching. (p. 2)

John (2018) stated, "After traveling internationally, we compared notes and

bounced things off each other concerning our common experiences and possible future

traveling plans" (p. 6). Kenneth (2018) added:

> I started talking with more of our faculty members about traveling outside the
>
> U.S. In many cases, we have found common ground in our experiences and were

able to share our experiences, swap stories, and talk about future travel plans. (p.

2)

Summary

Chapter IV included an overview of chapters one through three, as well as, the restatement of the purpose, demographic profiles, and findings. Chapter four discussed the findings of the teacher perceptions concerning international travel outcomes resulting from the denaturalized transcriptions of the semi-structured interviews. After reviewing the data from all of the interviews, eight themes emerged from Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model coding process (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Table 10 explained categories, common categories, and themes used to initiate data analysis. The eight themes that emerged from the data included: common experiences, effects on life and values, global perspectives, influence on teaching, academic motivation, tolerance level, relationships with students, and relationships with staff.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

Chapter I introduced the study and discussed the statement of purpose, the

statement of the problem, the central question, and the definition of the terms. A

conceptual framework was added to increase the clarity and structure of the study. It also

included a brief history of travel, including the introduction of educational travel in the

United States and the world. A brief synopsis of travel associated learning included

research in experiential and transformational learning. Travel outcomes were examined

and consisted of personal growth, cognitive development, and international awareness.

Types and lengths of travel were included and included secondary/collegiate and

family/personal travel on short-term and long-term trips. Chapter II included an

introduction and a literature review that served as a guide for this study. This chapter

also included types of learning, travel outcomes, types of travel, and lengths of stays. An

integral part of this chapter included the concept analysis chart that clearly delineated

what research was used in this study and how it all tied to the data gathered by the

researcher. A final inclusion in this chapter was the theoretical framework that drove the

research. Chapter III included an introduction and a purpose of the dissertation, as well

as, research questions, research designs, population, instrumentation, data collection,

methodology, procedures, ethical considerations, data analysis, and a summary. Included

in this chapter were explanations concerning the phenomenological research theories and

how it revolves around interpreting data based on the lived experiences of its'

participants. A final inclusion in the chapter was what components the researcher

implemented in the study to ensure credibility and validity. Chapter IV presented the

findings of the research question by identifying eight themes: Theme 1: Common

Experiences; Theme 2: Effects on Life and Values; Theme 3: Global Perspectives;

Theme 4: Influence on Teaching; Theme 5: Academic Motivation; Theme 6: Tolerance

Level; Theme 7: Relationships with Students; and Theme 8: Relationships with Staff.

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the findings in relation to Hiedegger's (1962)

Hermeneutic Phenomenology Theory, implications for practice, and recommendations

for future research. This chapter concluded with the researcher's view of the

participants' perceptions as to the effects of international travel on personal, cognitive,

and cultural outcomes. Chapter V included a summary, research findings, analysis of the

findings, and the relationships they have to research completed in this study. It also

includes implications, limitations, disseminations, and recommendations for future

research, in addition to the researcher's concluding thoughts. These sections examine the

procedures and methodologies occurring during the study and possible changes to

improve future studies.

<center>Analysis of the Findings</center>

Several common themes emerged as the coding process progressed in the analysis

portion of this study. These common themes reflected the international travel outcomes

that were discussed during those semi-structured interviews. The participants presented

several common experiences pertaining to food, art, music, culture, nature, architecture,

and special places. There were also many occasions where they perceived the occurrence

of life-altering events and experiences where their personal values were either changed or confirmed. The participants experienced changes in the global perspective after their experiences abroad. The teacher participants returned home after their international experiences with renewed sense of dedication to their profession and their relationships with their students and colleagues. Upon returning, they also discovered an increased level of tolerance toward others that are different from them and increased academic motivation to enhance their educational interests and training. There were numerous accounts where the participants perceived their values were either drastically changed or were, at the least, confirmed. All of the participants considered their international travel experiences as some of the more memorable experiences of their lives.

<div style="text-align:center">Research Findings</div>

Traveling can be traced back many centuries ago as students with a higher education purpose traveled from one learning center to another in an attempt to broaden their intellect with knowledge from places in the world where citizens of their own culture had not experienced (Angwenyi, 2014). Talburt (2009) described these early travel experiences as searches for enlightenment that could only come from visiting exotic places. Teachers who are able to travel internationally, either as a student or adult, have often experienced life-altering changes that affected their future lives in several ways, most notably culturally, personally, and cognitively (Walters et al., 2011). Teachers are frequently in charge of a very diverse collection of students. Any profound experiences from their childhood, schooling, or formal teaching training that might enhance their teaching prove beneficial to the educative experience (Brown, 2009). These experiential experiences throughout all phases of their lives have a tremendous

impact on their perceptions of what is necessary to provide a successful education to those for which they are responsible (Deck et al., 2012). No other human experience has the potential to completely change one's personal perspectives like travel (Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013).

Falk et al. (2011) stated a growing body of research indicated a substantial amount of learning was now taking place outside of formal education settings. With learning being a complex process, students often learned from kinesthetic, self-directed experiences such as the internet and traveling abroad that did not require students to physically be in the classroom. Travelers were more apt to understand and retain knowledge during educational travel than in normal school settings (Johnson, 2008; Porcano, 2011). Learners saw things from a unique perspective and an improved attitude (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). They were not reading about or watching a video; they were experiencing it personally from the actual location. This translated to more informed learning as the individuals participated in a more self-directed learning environment and were more unassuming about their educational environments (Saitow, 2009). Howard and Gulawani (2014) concluded that previous research showed study abroad was a success for traveling individuals even if research showed the gains were not as large as portrayed by proponents of educational travel.

In a study examining the relationship between travel and experiential learning, Angwenyi (2014) claimed there was an increased motivation for academics, cultural tolerance, personal growth, and global awareness for high school students traveling internationally. The data resulting from the researchers' semi-structured interviews in the

current study described increases in personal growth, cultural tolerance, and global awareness among the participants but not significant increases in academic motivation to engage in further educational pursuits. However, it did enhance their motivation to learn, just not to attempt further degrees. McClellan and Hyle (2012) purported there were gains in group functioning, reflection, and self-discovery through experiential learning with college students traveling to Central America. The participants in the current study expressed gains in reflection and self-discovery but failed to mention group functioning. Saitow (2009) stated international travel produced positive effects for personal growth, self-confidence, adaptability, and moving travelers from and ethnocentric to an ethnorelative frame of mind. The participants in the current study expressed that these positive changes occurred with them, as well. They also claimed to have changed and adapted to experiences in their travels as they occurred, getting more comfortable with their surroundings as their travels continued.

In a study examining the relationship between transformational learning and cross-cultural communication, Brown (2009) asserted there were increases in intercultural competence, self-understanding, and enhanced personal and cultural outlook when travelers returned home from travel abroad. The participants in the current study claimed increases in outlook and intercultural competence but failed to discuss any effects on their self-understanding. Ritz (2011) contended there were increases in critical thinking skills and increased opportunities for transformational learning involving college students traveling to Costa Rica. The participants in the current study never spoke of thinking skills but definitely referred to their experiences as transformational. Jones et al. (2012) expressed there were increases in cultural integration in their daily lives and an

understanding of cultures and social issues from college students in immersion programs around the world. The participants in the current study did express increases in their knowledge of social issues and cultures through these transformational experiences and discussed this integration in their daily lives, but mainly in their teaching.

In a study reflecting the effects of international travel on classroom preparation and pedagogical competence by former international teachers now teaching in the United States., DeVillar and Jiang (2012) found there were positive impacts on instructional flexibility and awareness of student diversity. The participants in the current study agreed there were many positive impacts resulting from their travel experiences that allowed them to understand student diversity issues. Doppen and An (2014) alleged there were no significant differences in travel outcomes and teacher preparation between teachers who had traveled internationally and those that had not traveled abroad. All of the participants in the current study contended there were positive impacts resulting from their international travels.

In a study related to travel outcomes, Blake-Campbell (2014) reported there were 66% of the college students traveling with their professor in this study that had their intercultural skills significantly improved while the other 34% improved somewhat. There was also an increase in academic knowledge, cultural knowledge, and global awareness. The participants in the current study claimed increases in cultural knowledge and global awareness but expressed that very little academic knowledge improvement had occurred. Chieffo and Griffiths (2004) averred that there were increases in empathy toward other cultures with college students traveling in short-term travel programs and there was no change in their knowledge of world relations. The participants in the

current study did express having gained more knowledge from a global perspective and greatly increased their empathy toward others from different cultures. Fenech et al. (2013) claimed there were increases in knowledge, global connectedness, personal growth, and cultural tolerance. The participants in the current study agreed there were increases in personal growth, global connectedness, and cultural tolerance but had very little dialogue concerning an increase in knowledge. Kurt et al. (2013) acknowledged there was a significant difference in global awareness immediately after traveling and returning home. There was an insignificant difference in global awareness after being home for an extended period of time. The participants in the current study asserted there was an increased global awareness, even after being home for an extended period of time.

In a study relating to cultural adaptability, Walters et al. (2011) purported there were increased cultural awareness, reflection skills, and ability to work in diverse settings with secondary students traveling to China. The participants in the current study concurred there were increases in cultural awareness and reflection skills and that their ability to work in diverse settings were enhanced with their travel experiences. Mapp (2012) explained there were increased cultural adaptability and significantly increased perceptions of emotional resilience with college students traveling internationally. The participants in the current study perceived they were more adaptable and resilient as they spent longer periods of time in that specific country, getting more comfortable with the experience as time passed.

In a study related to language acquisition, Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) claimed there was a greater self-efficacy in all language sub-skills by traveling students, especially with long-term stays. Long-term stays increased the learning level

proportionately as they stayed longer. The participants in the current study addressed very little on language acquisition on their trips although some were interested in learning another language.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

There was a substantial amount of literature that examined the outcomes of traveling abroad on the international traveler. However, little research has been completed pertaining to teacher perceptions on how traveling abroad has not only affected them personally and cognitively but professionally, as well. The goals of this study were to explore the perceptions of teachers regarding the effects of international travel on their teaching profession and to add to the current literature on travel outcomes. An extensive amount of research on the outcomes resulting from international travel have been reviewed and appeared to support the research showing there were multiple benefits involved when traveling abroad.

The research question guiding the study was: To what extent was there a relationship between perceptions of travel and cultural outcomes as reported by interviewed teachers that have traveled abroad in a rural southwestern Georgia school system? After analyzing the collected data using Ryan's Six-Step Theme Identification Scrutiny Model coding process (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) and denaturalized transcription, eight themes emerged: Theme 1: Common Experiences; Theme 2: Effects on Life and Values; Theme 3: Global Perspectives; Theme 4: Influence on Teaching; Theme 5: Academic Motivation; Theme 6: Tolerance Level; Theme 7: Relationships with Students; and Theme 8: Relationships with Staff. These themes, the literature review, and Hiedegger's (1962) Hermeneutic Phenomenology will be discussed in this chapter.

Theme 1: Common Experiences

When participants spoke of their experiences occurring during international travel, they referred to the process of experiential learning as reported in chapter II. Participants explained learning during international travel was memorable because of what they were able to experience.

Saitow (2009) explained experiential learning was the cornerstone of educational travel as it provided kinesthetic experiences promoting learning through a variety of means. Howard and Gulawani (2014) stated individuals that were learning in a more active manner remembered information for longer periods of time and were better able to synthesize this information than those that learned in a more passive manner. Being placed in an unfamiliar context allowed for opportunities to learn outside the normal school setting in student-oriented activities.

Experiential learning was designed to acquire basic skills, to experience new knowledge, and to learn from hands-on experiences that were beyond the normal classroom reach. Kolb (1984) described this type of learning as "the process whereby knowledge was created through the transformation of experience" (p. 41). Tarrant and Lyons (2012) agreed experiential learning often transformed learners from having local-minded viewpoints to global viewpoints. Experiential learning experiences prepared people to survive in unique environments to which they may not have been accustomed (Saitow, 2009).

Dewey (1938) asserted education could only truly be enhanced by basing learning on experiences. Experiential education engaged learners with direct experiences and reflection as a means to improve cognitive and developmental skills. These previous

experiences became constant sources for future learning with educational travel being a prime example (Perry et al., 2012). Fenech et al. (2013) stated participants in international trips were experiencing a completely different way of life from which they were usually accustomed. Travel allowed these individuals to take real-life experiences during sojourns and gain better personal understandings, over time, without being confined to a classroom (Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013). Callihan (2009) claimed that those traveling abroad were much more able to synthesize the experience in a profound way than those not traveling. Common experiences and the literature, herein, directly relate to Hiedegger's (1962) Hermeneutic Phenomenology Theory.

Theme 2: Effects on Life and Values

When participants spoke on the effects of international travel on their lives and values, they referred to the process of transformational learning as reported in chapter II. Participants reported learning during international travel was often transformational.

Mezirow (1991) proposed the Transformational Learning Theory as a way of establishing the importance of the role that reflection played in learning. He averred that learning involved understanding experiences through critical reflection. Transformational Learning Theory espoused experiencing more non-traditional activities as a means for making learning more meaningful. This transformation could be accomplished by combining cognitive learning activities with experiential learning opportunities. They added learning had a transformative quality when it was applied in pragmatic manner. They concluded that posing challenges in ways that were not the norm would often provide opportunities for transformation. These experiences would change how people learned as well as how they interpreted the process, thus allowing

them to develop new views that were essential to cultural competence (McKeown, 2009). Brown (2009) asserted that philosophical and developmental viewpoints were changed when traveling abroad, thereby taking on a life-altering cultural transformation.

Saitow (2009) added that, as people learned to adapt to unfamiliar settings abroad, they became more capable of seizing the opportunity to interact with culturally different people. Travelers often became more independent as thinkers and developed more positive relationships with their peers. They were comfortable with themselves and were normally engaging in more healthy alternatives. This new, mature view of life and their educational pursuits led them toward academic improvement as they learned to take responsibility for their actions and developed a greater understanding of their place in a global society (Saitow, 2009). The effects on life and values theme and the literature, herein, directly relate to Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

Theme 3: Global Perspective

When participants spoke on the effects of international travel on their global perspectives, they referred to international awareness in the travel outcomes literature reported in chapter II. Participants explained that they saw the world differently once they experienced the world through international travel.

Study abroad promoted an intercultural frame of mind. Engberg (2013) stated each traveler reviewed study abroad experiences in their own unique ways. They learned to comprehend and appreciate the cultures in other parts of the world and how they fit in with these particular cultures (Dwyer & Peters, 2012). They often felt an increased closeness to the people they had come into contact with during the trip who had helped them along the way to acculturate into the new country (Johnson, 2008). They posited

that 95% of the students traveling with Institute for the Education of Students (IES) study abroad programs through 2012 confirmed it greatly affected their worldview. They better defined themselves by gaining insight into the authentic ways of living by others. The differences further cemented their personal identities. It was not until they were out of their comfort zone that they realized their vast similarities in a more complex cultural view (Brown, 2009; Chickering & Braskamp, 2009; Deck et al., 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Saitow, 2009; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Talburt, 2009).

Johnson (2008) stated that when travelers left their daily rituals and routines, there were more opportunities to reflect and contemplate on life issues. This experience often led to reflective thought on the societal perspectives concerning political, economic, artistic, and social systems (Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011). These thoughts caused them to realize that their country was not the all-encompassing standard for all other countries, but just a small piece of the cultural puzzle (Ross, 2010; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010; Talburt, 2009). The aim was to use their travel experiences to explore the most inner parts of their beings and exhibit higher levels of self-efficacy (Alexander et al., 2010; Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013; Porcano, 2011). The more students interacted with culturally different people, the higher their level of self-efficacy progressed. As a result, travelers became more accepting and tolerant of other people and their cultures (Callihan, 2009; Falk et al., 2011).

Tarrant (2010) maintained global citizenship was an overwhelming issue where international awareness was concerned. He defined global citizenship as embracing the psychological and behavioral realms in nurturing international learning by increasing

world-mindedness while making a difference as they proceeded into the global world.

Saitow (2009) stated people better prepared to assimilate themselves into a global

awareness when traveling internationally. Global perspective and the literature, herein,

directly relate to international awareness travel outcomes and Hiedegger's (1962)

Hermeneutic Phenomenology Theory.

Theme 4: Influence on Teaching

When participants spoke on the influence of international travel on their teaching,

they referred to the process of career development in the travel outcomes literature

reported in chapter II. Participants explained that they perceived their teaching was

influenced, sometimes dramatically, after traveling internationally.

Travel abroad enhanced the development of generic skills including global

awareness, problem solving, and resource management in addition to foreign language

acquisition, improvement of communication skills, and career development (Falk et al.,

2011; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012; Sutton & Rubin, 2010; Tucker et al., 2011). Career

development potential for the global marketplace was enhanced by studying abroad

(Asgari & Borzooei, 2013). Students developed knowledge and skills that enhanced their

opportunities to be successful in the future (ASHE, 2012b; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012;

Sherraden et al., 2013; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010). Dwyer and Peters (2012) asserted

75% of study abroad travelers interviewed in the 2012 IES Survey agreed these skills

learned were instrumental in influencing their cultural career aspirations. Traveling

abroad provided the opportunities to enhance these characteristics. The travelers became

more globally minded, diverse, innovative, engaging, and technology driven. These

traveling skills gave an edge to individuals in their careers as they better assimilated into

modern global environments (Clabby, 2012; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Dwyer and Peters (2012) added educational travel often inspired individuals to pursue different career opportunities than what they once considered before traveling internationally.

An attribute of the career enhancing track was functional knowledge (ASHE, 2012b; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Hovland, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Functional knowledge included the strategies and skills that were necessary to function in the everyday world. Stone and Petrick (2013) asserted that those studying abroad had substantial increases in the functional knowledge realm with the exception of the lack of improvement in communication skills. These assets triggered further interest in specific careers and allowed improvement upon the skills needed to pursue a variety of career choices, thus improving their chances of future employment (ASHE, 2012c; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). The influence on teaching theme and the literature, herein, directly relate to career development in travel outcomes and Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

Theme 5: Academic Motivation

When participants spoke on the influence of international travel on their academic motivation, they referred to academic awareness in the travel outcomes literature reported in chapter II. Participants explained that their motivation to learn was often affected by traveling internationally.

Cubillos and Ilvento (2013) stated motivation was the desire to learn and was another key outcome of personal growth. Motivation was necessary in order to achieve academically or socially as a means to an end. They added educational travelers displayed high levels of motivation and, as a result, achieved more. These culturally

motivated learners often pushed themselves relentlessly until acculturation occurred while those more motivated by personal gain gave a substantially less effort (Sherraden et al., 2013).

Educational travel often provided the opportunity to improve in many academic components (ASHE, 2012b; Clabby, 2012; Dwyer & Peters. 2012). Stone and Petrick (2013) posited study abroad had lasting effects as it caused individuals to increase their desire to learn. They frequently desired to participate just for the sake of learning something new rather than just working toward receiving a good grade (ASHE, 2012c; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Dwyer and Peters (2012) stated educational travel often was responsible for influencing students to seek out "subsequent educational experiences" (p. 3). ASHE (2012c) stated travelers returned from abroad with a higher than average curiosity about academic improvement. Howard and Gulawani (2014) agreed these experiences had a huge impact on future educational decisions and led to more purposeful efforts in the classroom. They showed 87% of the respondents on the 2012 IES Survey sought out these new experiences, 63% made changes to their educational structures, and 64% decided to prolong their college experiences. Seeking out these experiences prompted their educational interests to be expanded.

Strengthening academic interests was tantamount if one was to achieve academic success. (ASHE, 2012b: Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Stone & Petrick, 2013; Talburt, 2009). Engberg (2013) added that, once learners experienced this academic engagement, they became more committed to stay on course academically. This integrative learning was where material from several sources was combined to produce a more diverse, cognitive information transfer, thus creating a more intellectual development upon returning from

abroad (Clabby, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). The academic motivation theme and the literature, herein, directly relate to academic awareness in the travel outcomes literature and Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

Theme 6: Tolerance Level

When participants spoke on the influence of international travel on their tolerance level, they referred to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature reported in chapter II. Participants explained that their tolerance level was sometimes affected by their international travel.

Individuals traveling abroad become more accommodating towards culturally diverse people in addition to those in their immediate community (Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Chickering and Braskamp (2009) added traveling abroad led to becoming a more responsible and morally fulfilling citizen (Talburt, 2009). This helped to develop a holistic purpose in life, thus increasing empathy involving those encountered in diverse circumstances in their lives (Engberg, 2013). Another of the benefits resulting from becoming a global citizen was intercultural sensitivity (Fenech et al., 2013; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Saitow, 2009; Tucker et al., 2011). Exposure to other global cultures led to an increase in tolerance and acceptance of the values and welfare of other cultures and caused definitive attitudinal changes (Brown, 2009; Callihan, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; Fenech et al, 2013). Falk et al. (2011) stated these increases in tolerance often transformed travelers into intermediaries between their cultures at home and those cultures from the visited country upon returning home. Thus, international education and tourism had an incredible effect on peace relations throughout

the world. Sherraden et al. (2010) asserted this tolerance frequently occurred as a result of having the experience of being a minority and finding out what it feels like to be a victim of prejudice, stereotyping, and marginalization in another's country. This led travelers to reflect on their privileged existences at home and helped develop a more inclusive sense of global awareness of the travails of other places in the world where conditions are frequently much worse than their own. This awareness heightened the traveling students' sense of empathy and respect for the countries visited (ASHE, 2012c: Haynes, 2011). The students frequently realized that there were more similarities with citizens from other countries than differences (Mapp, 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010).

ASHE (2012b) concluded returning travelers saw themselves as being more international than their non-traveling counterparts and had a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of Americans as well as themselves. Despite this, Johnson (2008) added this cultural awareness frequently caused an even stronger identification with their individual country. Ross (2010) added they were sometimes even more critical of their own culture and now were transitioning to atypical Americans. Mapp (2012) concurred culturally intelligent individuals should be able to recognize the structures and values inherent in various cultures, including their own, and understand how the value systems oppress and alienate as well as creating privilege for different segments of society. The tolerance level theme and the literature, herein, directly relate to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature and Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

Theme 7: Relationships with Students

When participants spoke on the influence of international travel on their relationships with students, they referred to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature reported in Chapter II. Participants explained that there were differences in their relationships with students after traveling internationally.

Teachers who were able to travel internationally, either as a student or adult, often have experienced life-altering changes that affected their future lives in several ways, most notably culturally, personally, and cognitively (Walters et al., 2011). Educators frequently teach a very diverse collection of students. Any profound experiences from their childhood, schooling, or formal teaching training that might enhance their teaching prove beneficial to the educational experience (Brown, 2009). These experiential experiences throughout all phases of their lives have a tremendous impact on their perceptions of what is necessary to provide a successful education to those under their guidance (Deck et al., 2012).

Developing personal growth occurred when one was more accepting of the changes occurring in this new environment and accommodated the views of others (Perry et al., 2012). The resulting changes transformed the individual from concern for self-gratification to concern for the greater society (Brown, 2009; Falk et al., 2011; McKeown, 2009). Developing life-skills occurred when one comprehended how people in other places managed adversity and adjusted one's own problem-solving skills to include input from others who had similar experiences (Engberg, 2013). Developing cognitive skills occurred when people used more than the knowledge acquired in a classroom to become a more intellectual being (Stone & Petrick, 2013). They combined

the cognitive knowledge learned in school with the experiential experiences encountered in kinesthetic learning (ASHE, 2012c; Mapp, 2012). Educators everywhere saw these potential outcomes as a great benefit of learning while traveling abroad. Addressing the need for experiential activities, so prevalent in educational travel, was a major goal of teachers seeking to expand the cultural potential for students of this generation (Falk et al., 2011; Kurt et al., 2013).

Falk et al. (2011) claimed learning was a very complex process with many parts coming together to form a final product. They stated learning was both a life-long process and a product. It is not just a collection of facts but a never-ending process of experiences wound together to form a more enlightened, educated individual. Although all humans learned, each individual learned in their own unique way. The act of combining past experiences with present opportunities gave individuals opportunities to gain meaning from their own learning based on the context of their unique and cumulative social, cultural, and physical plethora of experiences (McKeown, 2009; Saitow, 2009). The relationship with students theme and the literature, herein, directly relate to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature and Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

Theme 8: Relationships with Staff

When participants spoke on the influence of international travel on their relationships with staff, they referred to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature reported in Chapter II. Participants explained that there were differences in their relationships with staff after traveling internationally.

Saitow (2009) added that, as people learned to adapt better to unfamiliar settings abroad, they became more capable of seizing the opportunity to interact with culturally different people. After their global experience, they tended to seek out others who had experienced some of the same things and assimilated back into the environments with few negative issues. This frequently made them less vulnerable to many of the issues that were so prevalent in many educational environments, especially from those who had not experienced the same things globally. Travelers often became more independent as thinkers and developed more positive relationships with their peers. They were comfortable with themselves and were less likely to succumb to negative interactions. Instead they were engaging in more healthy alternatives. This new, mature view of life in their educational pursuits lead them toward academic improvement as they learned to take responsibility for their actions and developed a greater understanding of their place in their own environments (Saitow, 2009).

Teachers developing a deeper understanding of personal experiences only occurred with the combining of experience with reflection and critical analysis, thereby leading to a heightened self-awareness (Perry et al., 2012; Ross, 2010). Travelers experiencing these cultures had their personal beliefs tested and provided the motivation necessary to initiate their transformational experience through critical reflection, often with their colleagues (Alexander et al., 2010; Walters et al., 2011).

Studying abroad led to an increase in global awareness and the promotion of expanded worldviews which was critical for contributing socially with a purpose greater than one's own self-interest (Chickering & Braskamp, 2009). Dwyer and Peters (2012) added that respondents of the 2012 IES Survey stated travelers continued to reap the

benefits procured from cultural travel long after their trips. Almost 94% reported their

traveling experience still influenced their relationships with culturally different people

with approximately 90% of the travelers seeking out a greater cultural collection of

friends. They also reported 64% of travelers were influenced to further explore other

countries after their original experience. The relationship with staff theme and the

literature, herein, directly relate to personal growth in the travel outcomes literature and

Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Learning Theory.

<center>Relationship to Research</center>

This study explored the perceptions of teachers concerning their personal,

cognitive, and cultural outcomes after traveling internationally at least two times. The

theoretical framework used for this study is the constructivism theory developed by Jean

Piaget (Schrader, 2015). Piaget's constructivism refers to how the brain constructs

meaning from the interactions of individuals with their environments and lived

experiences. Dewey (1933) agreed all people grow up in a social environment where

they learned based on the values and social interactions within that learning community.

More modern theories, such as experiential and transformational learning were developed

from the early research in constructivism (Schrader, 2015). Both theories were based on

lived experiences and the following reflection. These reflections, in turn, led to

transformative experiences not always found in the normal educational setting. These

experiences emerged from the various types of trips (i.e., family, secondary, or

collegiate) and occurred in both short-term and long-term stays. International travel was

a vastly different type of experience than the routine proceedings occurring in normal day

to day life. People traveling abroad were not reading about these places or watching

them on television but actually experiencing it live. This is the basis of the constructivism theory.

Vygotsky (1978) described the sociocultural perspective of constructivism as finding meaning through the distinct interaction of various traditions and practices of the particular learning environment experienced. The primary factor determining intellectual development from these interactions was culture. Constructivism was appropriate for this study because traveling abroad offered this lived experience but in a culture where people and the ways of life were often quite different from what they were accustomed.

Theme 2, Effects on Life and Values, best demonstrated a connection with Piaget's constructivism (Schrader, 2015) in that international travelers returned with changing mindsets after spending time in culturally different environments with culturally different people. Teachers who either traveled as a child or as an adult often had life-changing experiences that affected them later in life personally, cognitively, and culturally (Walters et al., 2011). Anna (2018) agreed, "I am a sensitive person but it has made me even more conscientious of what I have and made me value a lot of what many people take for granted in the U.S." (p. 1). Fran (2018) added, "It has opened my eyes to different cultures so as to be more understanding and accepting" (p. 1). Holly (2018) concurred, "It has shown how different America is than the rest of the world and how blessed and privileged we are" (p. 1). Ingrid (2018) added, "It has created a lot of growth in my life and I've tried to instill that in those that I have contact with" (p. 1).

The international travel experiences changed the original perspectives that people had before traveling due to the transformational nature of learning that was prevalent in traveling abroad. No other human experience had the potential to completely change

one's personal perspectives like travel (Alexander et al., 2010; Dwyer & Peters, 2012; Howard & Gulawani, 2014; Ross, 2010; Stone & Petrick, 2013). Because traveling abroad changed most people personally and philosophically, all travel was educational (Johnson, 2008; Pabel & Prideaux, 2012). Traveling internationally incorporated Piaget's (Scrader, 2015) constructivism and Mezirow's (1991) Transformational Theory in a meaningful manner.

Implications of the Study

International travel offers experiences that are not the norm in most educational realms. Due to the nature of the experiences, travel often affects people in ways that are unique and sometimes unexpected. Research indicates that learning while traveling abroad can be transformational. Travel is one of these experiences where travel has been shown to develop several education and cultural skills in people traveling abroad (Falk et al., 2011). They stated traveling offered opportunities to be exposed to a vast array of sensory stimuli that, in the right scenario, promoted a learning experience. These learning opportunities were considered by many travelers as an important and gratifying part of the study abroad experience. These educational moments were sometimes specifically designed to occur and, at other times, occurred incidentally.

Learning, while traveling internationally, is not restricted to any age or demographic group. It is often a life-altering experience for anyone that participates. Due to the transformational occurrences during travel abroad, it only makes good sense to incorporate this into the normal educational process. It changes the understanding, acceptance, tolerance levels, and perspectives of teachers and adults, as well as, students and children that travel abroad. When teachers experience these transformations, they

often become different teachers. They approach teaching in a more holistic and experiential way knowing that actually experiencing learning in unique settings can be more beneficial for students than the more familiar classroom settings. Travel allowed these individuals to take real-life experiences during sojourns and gain better personal understandings, over time, without being confined to a classroom (Saitow, 2009; Sherraden et al., 2013). Callihan (2009) claimed those traveling abroad were much more able to synthesize the experience in a profound way than those not traveling. Including international travel opportunities for teachers in any educational programs could greatly improve the teaching component at any educational institution.

Providing opportunities for international travel for students could greatly enhance their lives, academically and personally. Wood (1996) stated truancy and dropping out improved immensely among those children who had traveled. In the Santa Cruz Traveling Schools program in 1988, truancy improved from 7.1 absent days per semester to 0.9 days per semester during the following semester. The drop-out rate also improved from 35% to 5% for those children involved in the program. The children claimed they were much better able to understand and retain educational material after participating in the traveling program.

Traveling abroad can also be beneficial for at-risk students. Saitow (2009) noted at-risk children frequently thrived in unfamiliar activities that provided more freedom to express themselves in an independent manner. The more times they engaged in these activities, the more they learned to adapt their behavior. These children were more likely to identify with experiential activities. They would not relate to some academic concepts because their past experiences did not represent these academic concepts. Travel often

affected their self-concept through relationship-building, which was so prevalent in study

abroad. The improved self-concepts occurred as students formed relationships with

people much different than themselves in a multitude of activities. At-risk children were

often accepted into a social group while traveling abroad. This camaraderie aided in the

affirmation of one's self-worth and further enhanced their path toward personal growth.

<p style="text-align:center">Research Framework</p>

In the original conceptual framework in Chapter I, the foundation for the research

was constructivism developed by Jean Piaget (Schrader, 2015) and phenomenology

developed by Edmund Husserl (Robert, 2013). After completing the study, these theories

were still the foundation for the study. The foundation for both theories was finding

meaning from lived experiences. Experiential (Kolb, 1984) and transformational

(Mezirow, 1991) learning both have its roots in these theories and are explained in depth

throughout the research for this study. All of the travel outcomes are examined

throughout the research of literature and was expressed in all of the current study

participant semi-structured interviews. All of the participants in this study had

experiences from their travels involving personal growth, cognitive development, and

international awareness although the participants experienced cognitive development

experiences less frequently than the other outcomes. The type of travel and the lengths of

stays was well researched in the literature but was not a factor in the current study

participants' interviews. They were seldom mentioned in their recollections of their

travel experiences. In conclusion, the constructivism and phenomenology theories as

well as the experiential and transformational learning theories were frequently examined

in the literature and interviews for the study. The travel outcomes were also an integral

part of the literature and interviews. The types of travel and lengths of stays for travel

could be removed from the conceptual framework. Although they were abundant in the

literature, they were seldom mentioned in the interviews. Table 11 and Figure 2 display

the revised conceptual framework after completing the study.

Table 11

Revised Conceptual Framework after Completing the Study

| Theoretical framework	Constructivism	Phenomenology	
Learning types	Experiential	Transformational	
Travel outcomes	International awareness	Personal growth	Cognitive development
Research type	Qualitative	Descriptive	
Research Methods	Semi-structured interviews	Pilot study	
Participant selection	Random purposive sampling		
Analysis	Descriptive analysis	Coding	Bracketing
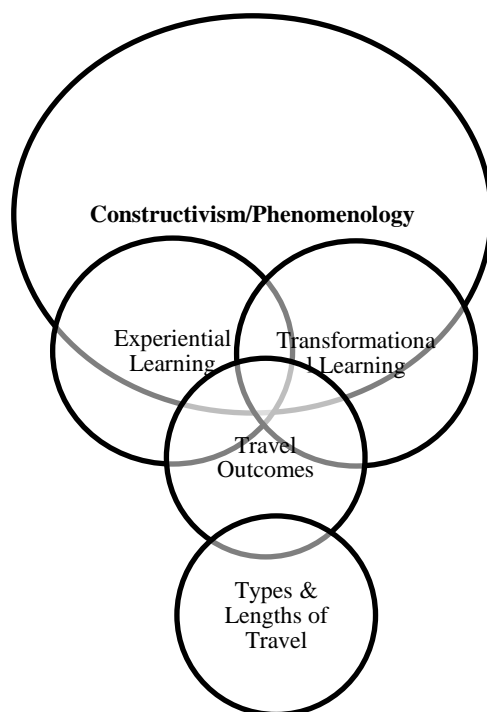
Figure 2. Revised conceptual framework diagram after completing the study.

Recommendations for Future Research

After completing this qualitative research study, the researcher has six recommendations for future research. One, it would be beneficial to understand student perceptions of how traveling internationally has affected personal, cognitive, and cultural travel outcomes in their lives. The students have different perspectives and outlooks than adult teachers and these differing perspectives could be quite enlightening. Changes in cognitive improvement, cultural sensitivity, and values can be greatly affected by traveling internationally. It would provide more recent literature on a subject that is not very extensive, at this point.

Second, it would benefit to better understand how teachers who have actually studied abroad for an extended period of time perceive the effects of personal, cognitive, and cultural travel outcomes as opposed to teachers who have only traveled internationally on short trips or only traveled as an adult. There could be a major difference with them actually adapting to living there and learning as a member of the community as opposed to only visiting that country for a short period of time.

Third, it would prove beneficial to better understand how teachers who had traveled internationally as children perceived the effects of personal, cognitive, and cultural travel outcomes as opposed to teachers who have traveled only as an adult. There could be a substantial difference in their views because of traveling abroad when they were children as opposed to when they were adults.

Fourth, it would be beneficial to understand how teachers traveling in different sections of the world affected their perceptions of the effects of personal, cognitive, and cultural travel outcomes. Traveling to the Caribbean could be different from traveling to

South America, Canada, Europe, Middle East, Asia, or South America. Traveling to vastly different places with vastly different cultures could be polar opposite ventures.

Fifth, it would be beneficial to understand how teachers traveling throughout the different sections of the United States affected their perceptions of the personal, cognitive, and cultural travel outcomes. Traveling to the different sections of the United States offer various cultural opportunities. Traveling within the United States could offer different travel outcomes than traveling internationally? Also, this study could be conducted using students, as well.

Sixth, it would be beneficial to replicate this study in both urban and suburban school districts with different socioeconomic make-ups. A consideration of completing a quantitative study with surveys might provide additional data to support or strengthen the research data already provided.

Dissemination

The researcher intends to share the pertinent information from the dissertation with several educational sources. First, the researcher expects to complete a summary of the dissertation results and get it published by at least two different publishers who show interest in the topic. Second, the researcher plans to share the research with the International Travel Department at Columbus State University. This presentation could add depth to their travel research and will originate from a student actually matriculating at Columbus State University. Third, the researcher intends to share the data with other colleges and universities that have programs based on international travel or tourism. The expectation is to send copies of the research to the various sources mentioned to gauge interest levels then work with the different entities to deliver any consulting

needed on the study. An attempt to write and submit several articles using different portions of the research data to related professional journals conclude the dissemination plan for this research study.

<center>Concluding Thoughts</center>

This purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of teachers who have traveled at least twice internationally concerning personal, cognitive, and cultural outcomes. The participants' perceptions showed that, at least in their eyes, they had experienced some changes in their perspectives of particular cultural aspects related to international travel. They were affected by the various cultures and experiences and were often transformed by the experiences. The participants discussed their perceptions in a forthright and enthusiastic way showing that, regardless of how and to what extent they were changed, their international travel experiences registered as quite unforgettable. Personally, I know how international travel has transformed my thinking personally and professionally. Ever since my first trip abroad to Italy over ten years ago, I have had the intense desire to travel abroad with regularity. I really enjoy being in a place so much different than where I reside. I love putting myself in other cultures and living temporarily as the natives do. Research has shown that there are many possible transformational benefits to traveling internationally. I believe that if more teachers, and students, had an opportunity to travel they would be transformed, as well.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

County Site Letter of Permission

Dr. James D. Martin

Superintendent

Harris County School District

Hello, my name is Michael D. Green and am actively employed as a Study Skills teacher at Harris County Carver Middle School where I have worked in the system for nine years. I am a doctoral student at Columbus State University (CSU) and in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation. I am seeking your assistance to complete my study. My dissertation study concerns teacher perceptions of how international travel affects their classroom experiences cognitively, personally, and culturally. I would like to send an email to all of your teachers in the county that contains a teacher travel experience demographic survey using the Google classroom format. The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experience and other demographic information. The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experiences and other demographic information. After taking the surveys, teachers will have the opportunity to further assist in the study by volunteering to be interviewed at their place of work after normal school hours. These interviews will be based on the teachers' international travel experiences and the perceived effects on their educational experiences. The interview process will consist of interviewing (5-7) elementary school teachers to participate in a pilot study and (5-7) high school teachers to participate in the interviews to be analyzed.

I would appreciate your consideration in allowing me to conduct this study in our school district. Please consider allowing me to give the teachers the opportunity to be surveyed and interviewed. The teacher's participation in the survey portion of this study will be completely voluntary and the results will be anonymous. The teachers who wish to participate in the interview phase of the study will also be on a volunteer basis and will select the time and location for the interview at their convenience.   Participants will be given pseudonyms in the dissertation to maintain public anonymity. Discontinuing the surveys or interviews at any time during the process is the personal right of the participant. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated as it will help me to complete my academic endeavors at the doctoral level.

Mike Green

Doctoral Student

Columbus State University

Appendix B

Superintendent Approval Letter

Harris County Board Of Education

132 Barnes Mill Road
Hamilton, Georgia 31811
706- 628-4206
Fax 706-628-5609

SUPERINTENDENT
James D. Martin, Ed.D.

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
CURRICULUM
Deborah Korytoski

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
BUSINESS SERVICES
Michael H. Ward

DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS
Dr. Betty Dunlap

February 22, 2018

Mr. Michael Green
Harris County Carver Middle School
US Highway 27
Hamilton. Georgia 31811

Dear Mr. Green,

I grant approval of your request for dissertation research in your study DESCRIPTIVE STUDY: TEACHER PERCEPTION OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL OUTCOMES. This study will include the following elementary schools in Harris County: Mulberry Creek, New Mountain Hill, Park and Pine Ridge. This dissertation will also involve interview research at Harris County High School. Please keep my office and the supporting Principals of appropriate academic protocols.

I wish you luck in your educational endeavors. If I can be of any assistance in the future to support you please let me know.

Sincerely,

James, Martin

Appendix C

Recruitment Letter of Permission for Principals

Hello, my name is Michael D. Green and am actively employed as a Study Skills teacher at Harris County Carver Middle School where I have worked in the system for nine years.   I am a doctoral student at Columbus State University (CSU) and in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation. I am seeking your assistance to complete my study. My dissertation study concerns teacher perceptions of how international travel affects their classroom experiences cognitively, personally, and culturally. I would like to send an email to all of your teachers in your school that contains a teacher travel experience demographic survey using the Google classroom format. The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experience and other demographic information.

The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experiences and other demographic information. After taking the surveys, teachers will have the opportunity to further assist in the study by volunteering to be interviewed at their place of work after normal school hours. These interviews will be based on the teachers' international travel experiences and the perceived effects on their educational experiences. The interview process will consist of interviewing (5-7) elementary school teachers to participate in a pilot study and (5-7) high school teachers to participate in the interviews to be analyzed.

I would appreciate your consideration in allowing me to conduct this study at your school. Please consider allowing me to give the teachers the opportunity to be

surveyed and interviewed. The teacher's participation in the survey portion of this study will be completely voluntary and the results will be anonymous. The teachers who wish to participate in the interview phase of the study will also be on a volunteer basis and will select the time and location for the interview at their convenience.   Participants will be given pseudonyms in the dissertation to maintain public anonymity. Discontinuing the surveys or interviews at any time during the process is the personal right of the participant. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated as it will help me to complete my academic endeavors at the doctoral level.

Mike Green

Doctoral Student

Columbus State University

Appendix D

Recruitment Letter for Participants

Hello, my name is Michael D. Green and am actively employed as a Study Skills teacher at Harris County Carver Middle School where I have worked in the system for nine years.   I am a doctoral student at Columbus State University (CSU) and in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation. I am seeking your assistance to complete my study. My dissertation study concerns teacher perceptions of how international travel affects their classroom experiences cognitively, personally, and culturally. I would like to for you to consider completing a travel experience demographic survey in order to compile a list of possible participants to be interviewed for my dissertation.

The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experiences and other demographic information. After taking the surveys, participants will have the opportunity to further assist in the study by volunteering to be interviewed at their place of work after normal school hours. These interviews will be based on the teachers' international travel experiences and the perceived effects on their educational experiences. The interview process will consist of interviewing (5-7) elementary school teachers to participate in a pilot study and (5-7) high school teachers to participate in the interviews to be analyzed. Participants will be selected from the group of those teachers who have traveled at least twice internationally.

I would appreciate your consideration in participating in being surveyed and possibly interviewed at your school. The teacher's participation in the survey portion of this study will be completely voluntary and the results will be anonymous. The teachers

who wish to participate in the interview phase of the study will also be on a volunteer basis and will select the time and location for the interview at their convenience. Participants will be given pseudonyms in the dissertation to maintain public anonymity. Discontinuing the surveys or interviews at any time during the process is the personal right of the participant. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated as it will help me to complete my academic endeavors at the doctoral level.

Mike Green

Doctoral Student

Columbus State University

Appendix E

Performance Site Letter of Permission

Hello, my name is Michael D. Green and am actively employed as a Study Skills teacher at Harris County Carver Middle School where I have worked in the system for nine years. I am a doctoral student at Columbus State University (CSU) and in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation. I am seeking your assistance to complete my study. My dissertation study concerns teacher perceptions of how international travel affects their classroom experiences cognitively, personally, and culturally. I would like to send an email to all of your teachers in your school that contains a teacher travel experience demographic survey using the Google classroom format. The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experience and other demographic information.

The survey will provide information concerning teacher travel experiences and other demographic information. After taking the surveys, teachers will have the opportunity to further assist in the study by volunteering to be interviewed at their place of work after normal school hours. These interviews will be based on the teachers' international travel experiences and the perceived effects on their educational experiences. The interview process will consist of interviewing (5-7) elementary school teachers to participate in a pilot study and (5-7) high school teachers to participate in the interviews to be analyzed.

I would appreciate your consideration in allowing me to conduct this study at your school. Please consider allowing me to give the teachers the opportunity to be

surveyed and interviewed. The teacher's participation in the survey portion of this study

will be completely voluntary and the results will be anonymous. The teachers who wish

to participate in the interview phase of the study will also be on a volunteer basis and will

select the time and location for the interview at their convenience. Participants will be

given pseudonyms in the dissertation to maintain public anonymity. Discontinuing the

surveys or interviews at any time during the process is the personal right of the

participant. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated as it will help me to complete

my academic endeavors at the doctoral level.

<div style="text-align:right">

Mike Green

Doctoral Student

Columbus State University

</div>

Appendix F

Informational Email

My name is Michael D. Green, a doctoral student at Columbus State University, and I am sending you this email to inform you of my research I am completing. I will be conducting a study on teacher perceptions of international travel outcomes in the hopes that I will discovering whether traveling internationally in the past has affected teachers in their classrooms. Soon, I will be placing a study packet in your school mailboxes that will include an informational letter as well as an informed letter of consent. If you are a certified teacher and are interested in participation in this study, please complete the informed letter of consent and bring it to your main office for safekeeping. After the forms are collected, participants will be selected to be interviewed for inclusion in the study. The interviews will last approximately 30-45 minutes each and will be completed at your school at a time that is convenient for you. The information that I gather will be extremely important for the completion of my study and I appreciate all that choose to participate. However, participation in this study is completely voluntary and you have the right to decline participation without penalty or loss of benefits.

Michael D. Green

Doctoral Student

Columbus State University

Appendix G

Informed Consent Form

You are asked to participate in a research project conducted by Michael Green, a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Columbus State University. Dr. Robert Waller, the doctoral committee chairman, will supervise the study. The researcher proposes to determine the educational impact international travel has on teacher perception in relation to cultural, cognitive, and personal outcomes. This study will attempt to offer empirical evidence from the perceptions of teachers to determine whether cultural awareness, personal growth, and cognitive development truly appear to be a function of traveling and learning abroad.

The first step in the qualitative portion of this study will be to collect data from an electronic travel experience questionnaire to determine which teachers have extensively traveled internationally, as well as, which teachers have not traveled internationally, at all. Second, 6-8 elementary teachers will be selected to participate in a pilot study to ensure that the interview questions will be valid and reliable.

The next portion of the surveys will allow teachers the opportunity to be further interviewed in individual interview sessions to determine their perceptions of the importance of traveling experiences. Those agreeing to be interviewed will be placed in pools according to their international travel experience. From these groups, six to eight teachers from both counties will be selected using random purposive sampling for the extensive internationally traveled group and the group with no international travel group. The remaining teachers from each travel experience category will be placed on a reserve

list in case previous commitments choose to discontinue in the interview portion of the mixed methods study.

Next, the teachers in each of these travel experience categories will be notified as to their status in the study (interviewees or on reserve). These interview participants' sets will come from the cultural awareness survey list of teachers who had granted permission to be interviewed. The teachers selected will be notified of their inclusion in the interview process and interview appointments will be scheduled at the teachers' convenience at their respective schools. Each interview will last approximately 30-45 minutes using a semi-structured interview format. The interviews will be taped and transcribed in a verbatim account of the interview dialogue. These transcribed accounts will be returned to the interviewed teachers for final critique (member checking) and approval in order to combat the possibility of researcher bias due to possibly differing views and opinions of the researcher. The teachers in the interviews transcribed will be given pseudonyms in order to maintain confidentiality.

The participants, schools, county and state in this study will be given pseudonyms to avoid being identified and the participants will have the freedom to discontinue the interviews at any time. The benefits of the study will be the data gathered concerning the effects of international travel on educational outcomes and its uses in determining future curriculum decisions. The participants in this study will not receive any gifts, tokens, or other rewards for their inclusion in these interviews.

All of the data from the travel experience survey and the interview audio recordings will be stored in a fire-proof safe at my residence where only I have access. This data will be stored for the duration of three years at which time it will be destroyed.

The surveys will be shredded and the audio recordings will be erased. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time, and your withdrawal will not involve penalty or loss of benefits.

For additional information, about this research project, you may contact the Principal Investigator, Michael Green, at ██████████ or green_michael1@columbusstate.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Columbus State University Institutional review Board at irb@columbusstate.edu.

Appendix H

CSU IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
Columbus State University

Date: 5/21/18
Protocol Number: 18-084
Protocol Title: Teacher Perception of International Travel Outcomes
Principal Investigator: Michael Green
Co-Principal Investigator: Robert Waller

Dear Michael Green:
The Columbus State University Institutional Review Board or representative(s) has
reviewed your research proposal identified above. It has been determined that the project
is classified as exempt under 45 CFR 46.101(b) of the federal regulations and has been
approved. You may begin your research project immediately.
Please note any changes to the protocol must be submitted in writing to the IRB before
implementing the change(s). Any adverse events, unexpected problems, and/or incidents
that involve risks to participants and/or others must be reported to the Institutional
Review Board at irb@columbusstate.edu or (706) 507-8634.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the IRB.
Sincerely,
Amber Dees, IRB Coordinator
Institutional Review Board
Columbus State University

Appendix I

Travel Experience Demographic Survey

Name: _____

School: HCHS_____   NMHES_____   PES_____   MCES_____   PRES_____

 Gender: Male_____   Female_____

Race: Caucasian____   African-American_____   Hispanic_____   Asian_____

Other____

Age: 21-25_____   26-30_____   31-35_____   36-40_____   41-45_____   46-

50_____

       Over 50_____

Years of Teaching: 0-5_____   6-10_____   11-15_____   16-20_____   21-25_____

                26-30_____   Over 30_____

Subject Taught: Math_____   ELA_____   Science_____   SS_____   P.E._____

                Music_____   Connections_____   Other_____

Degree Level: Bachelors_____   Masters_____   Specialists_____   Doctorate_____

Times Traveling Internationally: Never_____   Once_____   2-3_____   4-5_____

                More than 5_____

Appendix J

Dissertation Interview Questions

Research Question 1

1.   What are the things you remember most about your international travel

experiences?

2.   Has international travel had any long-lasting effects on your personal life and

values?

3.   Did international travel alter your understanding of issues from global

perspectives?

Research Question 2

4.   Has international travel experiences influenced the way you approach teaching?

5.   Has learning about other cultures while traveling internationally impacted your

teaching?

6.   Has traveling internationally affected your level of motivation academically?

Research Question 3

7.   Has the experiences during international travel affected your tolerance level of

others culturally different than you?

8.   Has international travel affected your relationships with the students in your

teaching?

9.   Has international travel affected your relationships with staff with which you

work?