

PREPARING GLOBAL MINDED TEACHERS FOR U.S. AMERICAN CLASSROOMS THROUGH INTERNATIONAL CROSS-CULTURAL FIELD EXPERIENCES

Suniti Sharma*

Genevieve N. Aglazor**

Erik Malewski***

JoAnn Phillion****

ALONG with the call for globalization of teacher education across the United States of America, there is a growing emphasis for developing curricula aimed at preparing global minded teachers capable of working with diverse student groups. Keeping this in mind, this article discusses how teacher education programs in the U.S. have introduced international cross-cultural field experiences for future teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators. The article begins with a brief review of existing literature on study abroad in teacher education, provides a description of an evolving model for a study abroad program to Honduras developed by two faculty members at Purdue University, and reports on findings from four research studies on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers who participated in the Honduras study abroad program. The article concludes by calling on universities around the world to globalize teacher education programs through collaborative study abroad programs.

Key Words: *Global Education, Cross-Cultural Field Experiences, Honduras Study.*

Introduction

Along with the call for globalization of teacher education across the United States of America (U.S.), there is a growing emphasis for developing curricula aimed at preparing global minded teachers capable of working with diverse student groups (Banks, 2007a). This curricular emphasis on global minded teachers, is directly related to the growing student diversity in U.S. American classrooms (Cushner, 2009), the demand on teachers to know students' diverse cultural backgrounds (Banks and McGee, 2009; Gay, 2000), and recognition that effective teachers bring global perspectives into classroom practices (Merryfield, 1995). In addition, various nationally recognized accrediting agencies in the U.S. such as National Council of Accreditation for Teacher Education (NCATE), Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC), as well as professional organizations such as American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) that monitor the quality of education and training offered by teacher education programs maintain that if teachers are to become global minded they must be exposed to educational standards around the world and trained in international classroom settings (NCATE, 2008; Brown and Kysilka, 2002).

One step toward preparing global minded teachers is making teacher education students aware of the cultural histories, backgrounds, knowledge, languages, worldviews, values, and expectations that diverse students bring into the classroom (Nieto and Bode, 2008; Banks, 2007b). However, while the number of minority, immigrant students continues to increase, 89% of teachers come from White,

* Assistant Professor (Teaching, Learning, and Innovation), University of Texas, Brownsville, Texas, USA.

** Doctoral Student (Curriculum & Instruction), Purdue University, Indiana, USA.

*** Associate Professor (Curriculum Studies), Purdue University, Indiana, USA.

**** Professor (Curriculum and Instruction), Purdue University, Indiana, USA.

middle-class backgrounds with little knowledge of other cultures (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005). Further, while most immigrant students are bilingual speakers for whom English is a second language, most White teachers do not speak any language other than English (Banks, 2001; Sleeter, 2008). These demographic and cultural shifts in classroom dynamics brought about by the changing patterns of immigration have created a gap between White teachers' cross-cultural understandings and the academic needs of diverse students.

Bridging the gap between White teachers and culturally and linguistically diverse students is viewed as a necessary step towards preparing global minded teachers. This gap has been a cause for grave concern among teacher educators across the U.S. and teacher education programs have been pressed to address this widening gap (Ladson-Billings, 2007; Gay, 2000). Hence, colleges of education across the U.S. have begun to focus on developing multicultural courses that include cross-cultural field experiences aimed at developing global minded teachers sensitive to the educational needs of culturally diverse students (Asher, 2007). While many of the multicultural courses include cross-cultural field experiences in local and regional communities within the U.S., some colleges of education have infused the curriculum with international cross-cultural field experiences, internships, and practicum through study abroad programs (Cushner, 2007).

Study abroad is not a new phenomenon in U.S. higher education; however, in teacher education, less than 6% of teacher education students have participated in global activities (Garii, 2009). This remains the case even though research shows that enrolling in study abroad programs with international cross-cultural field experiences give invaluable training to teacher education students on how to work with students from different cultures and languages (Cushner and Brennan, 2007). Hence, teacher educators have become increasingly supportive of global educational experiences such as study abroad programs for preservice teachers, student teachers, beginning and in-service teachers. In fact, studies show that teacher educators recognize that their own participation in study abroad programs translates into professional development opportunities for globalizing teacher education curricula and becoming more global minded (Garii, 2009).

Keeping in mind the call for global minded teachers and the response of teacher educators to this call, in this article we illustrate how teacher education programs in the U.S. have introduced international cross-cultural field experiences for future teachers, in-service teachers, and teacher educators. We begin with a brief review of existing literature on study abroad in teacher education with a focus on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers, student teachers, in-service teachers and teacher educators. Next, we describe an evolving model for a study abroad program to Honduras developed by two faculty members at Purdue University with global support networks in Honduras and the U.S. Finally, recognizing that the cultural shift in classroom demographics raises complex curricula questions about teacher preparation, we report on findings from four research studies on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers participating in the Honduras study abroad program.

Review of Literature on Preparing Global Minded Teachers through Study Abroad Programs

Before we move to the next section, some definitions on commonly used terms in teacher education in the U.S. such as *preservice teachers* and *student teachers* are necessary. *Preservice teachers* are teacher education students who have declared an education major but have not completed their course work or training to be teachers; are required to complete a fixed period of time observing teachers in schools, followed by a fixed period of active participation in the schools called field experience. *Student teachers* have completed the preservice teacher requirements and are enrolled in an internship working alongside a mentor-teacher after completion of course work, but before becoming licensed as professional teachers. *In-service teachers* are fully licensed teachers working in the school system while *teacher educators* are faculty in colleges of education who teach at all levels of the teacher education program.

In this section, we position this article within literature on study abroad in teacher education, with a focus on international cross-cultural field experiences. We describe four studies in the context of study abroad in teacher education that report the benefits and challenges of international cross-cultural field experiences through study abroad programs. The first is research on the effects of a short-term international cross-cultural field experience on preservice teachers. This is followed by studies on the effects of international student teaching internship on student teachers. Next, we describe research into the experiences of in-service teachers in global classrooms followed by research on the effects of international exposure on teacher educators. We conclude by summarizing the findings from research on international cross-cultural field experiences through study abroad programs in teacher education. With reference to the previously defined categories of teachers and educators, in the next section, we review literature from teacher education to illustrate how teacher education has contributed to developing global minded teachers.

Preservice Teachers and International Cross-cultural Field Experiences

Research conducted by Willard-Holt (2001) suggests that global education has long-term personal and professional benefits for teacher education students. These findings are supported by subsequent research undertaken by Pence and Macgillivray (2008), who address the question, “What is the impact of an international field experience on preservice teachers?” The study documents a short-term international field experience for 15 pre-service teachers who were placed in classrooms in a private school in Rome, Italy, using data such as preservice teachers' reflections and comments collected from personal journals written on-site, focus group interviews, and researchers' observation notes. The data also included a post-trip questionnaire completed a year after studying abroad to assess long-term impact, the trip may have had on them once they became certified teachers. Using comparative cross-analysis to search for themes across participants, Pence and Macgillivray found that preservice teachers reported personal transformation such as increased confidence, appreciation for other cultures, respect for cultural differences, and recognition that self-reflection is key to personal growth. The study concludes by recommending on how to improve global experiences to enhance cross-cultural competencies of preservice teachers.

Other studies corroborate the above findings that pre-service teachers' perspectives about their work are significantly transformed by the culture, philosophy, practices, and structures of the schools where they complete their field experiences (Cochran-Smith, 2000; Cushner, 2007). Studies also report that preservice teachers gain a greater sense of personal change through teaching and interacting with the students, community, and the surroundings (Malewski and Phillion, 2009; Stachowski and Sparks, 2007). Clearly, pre-service teachers who complete their field experiences outside of their home countries show a greater sense of globalmindedness by embracing diversity and incorporating a wider range of pedagogical practices and perspectives in their classrooms (McCabe, 2001; Merryfield, 2002).

Student Teachers and International Cross-cultural Internships

Besides preservice teachers, researchers have begun to ask complex questions about student teachers' international cross-cultural internships, given that student teachers have completed their course work and are ready to make the transition from students in the teacher education program to teachers leading their own classrooms. Recent research notes positive results regarding the shaping of student teachers' pedagogical practices and global mindedness after international student teaching experiences (Stachowski and Sparks, 2007; Quezada, 2005; Roberts, 2007). Student teachers report a greater awareness of other cultures, adaptability with attending to student needs, appreciation for difference in and outside the classroom, a global-minded classroom approach, and deeper self-understanding (Mahon and Cushner, 2002). Other competencies reported by student teachers include increased self confidence and self-efficacy, better understanding for cross-cultural content in the curriculum, and a greater awareness of the role of teachers' cultural cross-awareness in teaching and learning.

Stachowski and Sparks (2007) report on a unique student teacher internship called the Overseas

Suniti Sharma, Genevieve N. Aglazor, Erik Malewski, and JoAnn Phillion

Student Teaching Project developed at Indiana University, Bloomington. So far, 2000 student teachers have participated in this cross-cultural practicum in 13 countries and across a thirty year span. Student teachers enrolled in the project spend a year on campus as preparation for their international cross-cultural internship abroad and complete ten weeks of in-state teaching before they engage in eight weeks of field placements in elementary or secondary schools in any one country. In the last decade, a number of reports on the overseas project, its goals, and outcomes have been published. Summarizing research conducted on the Overseas Student Teaching Project, Stachowski and Sparks describe each of the four studies and findings. The four studies examine 1) written reflections of student teachers to study their response to host cultures and values (Stachowski, Richardson, and Henderson, 2003); 2) effects of study abroad on 30 student teachers who travelled abroad compared to 30 who did their student teaching in a Navajo Reservation in the U.S. (Stachowski and Brantmeier, 2002); 3) student teachers' exploration of youth culture in elementary and secondary classrooms (Stachowski, Visconti, and Dimmett, 2000); and student teachers' response to service learning during the overseas project (Stachowski and Visconti, 1998).

According to Stachowski and Sparks (2007) a significant number of student teachers who participated in the overseas project commented that stepping outside their comfort zones made them more critical of their own culture and more appreciative of different cultures. The outcomes of the Overseas Student Teaching Project is supported by other studies that note overseas experiences, foster greater confidence and open-mindedness, an ability to see the local and global in context, increased sensitivity to English language learners, an awareness of cross-cultural knowledge, a greater appreciation for global issues, comfort with international travel, willingness to work with people from diverse cultures, and increase in self-reflection and self-critique (Cushner and Mahon, 2002; Mahon and Cushner, 2002; McCabe, 2001; Quezada, 2005; Roberts, 2007). All the above findings illustrate that international cross-cultural internships, community involvement outside the home country and knowledge of social, economic, and political influences around the world offered student teachers a global perspective on education.

In-service Teachers and International Cross-cultural Teaching

While research reports substantial benefits from overseas internships, recent work has begun to explore how teaching in a global setting influences in-service teachers' curricula understandings (Schlein, 2006). In a study of U.S. and Canadian teachers' decisions to begin their professional careers in a global setting, Garii (2009) explored how early career teaching experiences abroad shaped their identities as teachers to influence their pedagogical practices in the classroom. The study asks two questions: What are the impacts of early career teaching experiences at an overseas school on teachers' understandings of pedagogy and practice? How do teachers make sense of their early career experiences in a global environment? Nine teachers participated in the study and data were collected from questionnaires followed by interviews.

From the study, Garii concluded that most of the teachers learned about themselves from the experience of navigating a foreign culture. For example, teachers recognized that in order to be global minded, they needed to be flexible in their teaching practices as flexibility in planning, instruction, and classroom practices promotes professional growth. Other findings from this study indicate teachers view their international cross-cultural teaching experiences as invaluable to gaining a more in-depth understanding of the global teaching community and learning that occurs from unforeseen challenges (Cushner, 2009). The study corroborates previous findings that global exposure positions participating teachers ahead of fellow teachers in their home countries in terms of their willingness to work with diversity (Bigelow and Peterson, 2002; Wiggins et al., 2007). Thus, teaching experiences in global settings outside the home country contributes to teachers' globalmindedness through cultural awareness, and knowledge of how diverse students learn (Sharma, 2009). Equally important for teachers is to be sensitive to student needs, a wider range of pedagogical practices, and ability to understand the challenges that diverse students encounter when learning in a culture different from their own (Stachowski and Sparks, 2007). The above findings suggest that international teaching experiences contribute positively toward preparing global minded teachers.

Teacher Educators and International Cross-cultural Experiences

In an interesting study, Merryfield (2000) goes beyond school teachers to study teacher educators by investigating the question, “Why aren’t teachers being prepared to teach for diversity, equity, and global interconnectedness?” by studying the lived experiences of teacher educators. The study aimed at investigating how teacher educators bridge the gap between multicultural education and global education, and the link between their lived experiences and pedagogical practices. The study consisted of 80 participants from across the country well-known for their scholarship on curriculum development and multicultural education. Most of the participants in the study reflected on past cross-cultural experiences, experiences with various forms of discrimination, and the contradictions they felt between their cultural beliefs and real life experiences.

A significant finding from the study was that while most participants of color acquired an experiential understanding of discrimination through the binaries of white privilege or discrimination against color, white teacher educators gained experiential understanding of difference traveling outside their home country. Interactions outside the comfort zones of their home country helped teacher educators to reflect upon their beliefs and practices, appreciate other worldviews, and develop sensitivity across cultures (Cushner and Mahon, 2009). A major contribution to the literature emerged from the finding that teacher education needs to pay attention to the knowledge and experiences of teacher educators, who are responsible for preparing global minded teachers for culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Dantas, 2007).

In summary, a review of the literature on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences through study abroad in teacher education reveals four interrelated themes across participants. The first theme relates to an increase in participants’ global mindedness and awareness of the connection between local, national, global issues, and education. Much of the literature supports the finding that international cross-cultural field experiences promote globalmindedness in teacher education students by providing them with new knowledge and competencies to teach diverse students.

A second theme indicates that one way to prepare globalminded teachers is through a well-planned multicultural curriculum inclusive of international field experiences and knowledge of educational issues around the globe (Sleeter, 2008). More exposure to different languages, ethnicities, nationalities and cultures positively impacts participants’ cross-cultural awareness and appreciation for cultural differences through first-hand experience with diversity.

A third theme that appeared across the literature was personal growth through changes in participants’ personal beliefs. Most participants showed their openness to learning from the host culture by describing events that caused them to re-think their own prejudices, assumptions, and beliefs they had held and to begin to reflect on the validity of these beliefs.

A fourth major theme was professional growth of participants in terms of ability to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students, empathy for English language learners, and confidence in teaching about diversity and difference. Many of the studies support that gaining cultural and contextual knowledge contributed to preservice, student, and in-service teachers’ understanding of curriculum planning, and instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Malewski and Phillion, 2009). These four themes provided the impetus for developing the Honduras Study Abroad Program.

The Honduras Study Abroad Program for Preservice Teachers

Background of the Program

The Honduras study abroad program was developed by two faculty members from the college of education at Purdue University in 2003. The program is designed as an international cross-cultural field experience for undergraduate students, chiefly, preservice teachers who are majoring in education and working toward a license for teaching various levels of K-12 such as early childhood, elementary, middle, and

Suniti Sharma, Genevieve N. Aglazor, Erik Malewski, and JoAnn Phillion

secondary school. Although all teacher education students must complete field experiences as part of their course work, the cross-cultural field experience in global settings is optional. The study abroad program to Honduras is also open to graduate students who wish to enhance their cross-cultural learning and gain experience as global educators. So far, the Honduras study abroad program has provided 49 preservice teachers and eight graduate students with international cross-cultural field experiences that have contributed to their personal and professional development as global minded teachers.

Goals of the Program

Since its inception in 2003, the Honduras study abroad program is organized each summer for three weeks. Guided by the goals of the college of education and the state and national requirements for future teachers, the program offers a well planned curriculum; course work on content and pedagogical knowledge; structured cross-cultural field experiences in various classroom settings; service learning projects; informal community interactions; cultural tours and opportunities for self-reflection. The long-term goal of the program is to prepare global minded teachers for teaching in diverse U.S. American classrooms.

Pre-trip Campus Preparation

Once preservice teachers are registered for the program, they attend three pre-trip on-campus meetings that help them get familiar with Honduras communities, culture, and schools. The meetings are conducted by two faculty members. As the program has a research component to it, two doctoral student researchers also accompany the students and faculty members. The meetings also give travel information, what to take for travelling such as clothes, books, stationery, and gifts, required paper work such as passport and travel documentation, their daily travel itinerary and study schedule, information on Honduras, and course work. During the meetings, preservice teachers are shown a video on Honduras, Honduran life, residence in Honduras, and some of the schools and tourist sites they will visit. In Honduras, preservice teachers, graduate student researchers, and faculty stay at a university guest house in Zamorano and commute daily to the respective school placements for their field observation. Some preservice teachers also choose to board with Spanish-speaking families to add to their cross-cultural enrichment.

Coursework

In the Honduras study abroad program, preservice teachers are enrolled in two courses of three credits each that include classroom activities, intensive field experience, and out-of-class community interactions and events. The two courses are, *Exploring Teaching as a Career and Multiculturalism and Education*. In the former course, preservice teachers explore what it means to teach, what it means to learn, the nature of schools, the objectives of schooling in American society, and the objectives of teaching and learning in a globalized world. Preservice teachers explore these issues in the context of their field placement in Honduras schools. Through class discussions, course readings, and cross-cultural field experiences preservice teachers learn what it means to teach in a global classroom. In addition, preservice teachers are encouraged to develop their educational philosophy that connects state mandated teaching standards with the demands of teaching in a more globalized environment.

In the latter course, *Multiculturalism and Education*, preservice teachers are introduced to what it means to teach in a multicultural classroom. The objective of this course is to promote a critical multicultural awareness among preservice teachers so that they engage in understanding and responding to cultural diversity and difference in their classrooms. The course emphasizes discussions on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and other differences and the impact of such differences to students and teachers' identity, politics, and educational experiences.

Once in Honduras, preservice teachers attend class twice a week; are given course reading that assist them in connecting theory to practice, and theory and practice to their cross-cultural experiences in

Honduras. Some specific issues that are discussed in the class are race, class, and gender issues that preservice teachers might have encountered in their lives, experienced in Honduras, or read about. Written assignments for the two courses consist of autobiographical reflections and journal entries in which students are encouraged to make connections between course work and experiences in the context of study abroad, reflect on their educational experiences, and write about their journey toward becoming a teacher. At the end of each day, all the preservice teachers, faculty, and graduate student researchers meet for extensive informal discussion on the day's events.

International Cross-cultural Field Experiences

Preservice teachers interested in elementary school are placed in an elementary school in Zamorano while the others are placed in a secondary school in Tegucigalpa. The aim of this school placement is field observation although preservice teachers are encouraged to observe as well as participate actively in class activities and interact with students, staff, and children in the classroom. The aim of their field observation is to give preservice teachers as many opportunities to interact with culturally and linguistically diverse students, observe how teachers in Honduras attend to student needs, what teaching strategies and approaches are used by the teacher, and become attentive to the needs of diverse student groups. Besides their field observation in the local school system, preservice teachers visit three rural schools where they participate in project learning activities. By visiting multiple school sites preservice teachers can compare and contrast school systems, and get a more comprehensive view of cultural diversity and learning differences in the classroom.

As part of the course work preservice teachers are asked to create school, teacher, and community portraits out of their classroom and community interactions in Honduras. A school portrait entails crafting a description of the school and the specific classroom where they are placed for their field experience. Preservice teachers write about their impressions of the Honduran school within the broader context of global education. The teacher portrait is based on one Honduran teacher's educational background, pedagogical practices, approach to teaching and learning, and how the teacher responded to race, class, and gender issues. In writing the community portrait students write about their out-of-class experiences and cross-cultural interactions.

Cultural Tours

During the weekends, preservice teachers visit historical and archaeological sites in Tegucigalpa and Copan, as well as modern day nature reserves such as Macaw Mountain Bird Park and Nature Reserve. These tours are organized as part of the study abroad experience to give preservice teachers a more in-depth understanding of Honduras' multi-ethnic history and culture. In the ancient city of Copán Ruinas, in western Honduras near the Guatemalan border, preservice teachers attend an extensive tour of the Mayan city and temples with carved inscriptions to witness a flourishing ancient kingdom that existed from the 5th century to the early 9th century.

Touring historical and archaeological sites gives preservice teachers real-life exposure to the changing cultural influences of Honduras that range from the advanced Mayan civilization and Spanish conquest of Honduras in the 16th century to present day Honduras with American Plazas, and fast-food chains like McDonalds. The tours give preservice teachers opportunities for witnessing the interplay of Spanish, American, and indigenous cultures that contribute to their understanding of the changing face of diversity and difference in a globalized world. While the positive outcomes of international cross-cultural field experiences for teacher education students are numerous, the experiences themselves create new challenges for teacher educators, introducing complex questions about preparing globalminded teachers, developing global curricula, and fostering global perspectives for classroom teaching.

For example, some of the following questions remain to be explored in more detail: What kind of cultural, social, and political knowledge do diverse students bring into the classroom? What knowledge and competencies do future teachers need to teach diverse students? How do future teachers engage in

Suniti Sharma, Genevieve N. Aglazor, Erik Malewski, and JoAnn Phillion

race, class, gender, and other differences? How should future teachers be prepared in order to teach in a globalized and competitive environment? What new knowledge and skills do teacher educators need to develop globalminded teachers? As the questions suggest, currently there is an even greater emphasis on teacher educators to conduct research into curricula issues aimed at preparing global minded teachers. Therefore, the Honduras study abroad program has a research component for studying various dimensions of the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers.

Research on the Effects of International Cross-cultural Field Experiences on Preservice Teachers who Participated in the Honduras Study Abroad Program

In the last eight years, a number of studies have been conducted on the effects of cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers while in Honduras, resulting in several published articles. With topics that range from examining race, class, and gender issues to exploring cultural knowledge of preservice teachers, the studies report that international cross-cultural field experiences have implications for classroom practice in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. A brief summary of four studies on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers participating in the Honduras study abroad program are presented in the next section.

In keeping with the university's protocol for conducting research on human subjects, a pool of data has been collected for independent research projects. This pool of data has been collected in three phases. In the first phase of the data collection a demographic chart was drawn for each year's participants listing names, subject major, years in the teacher education program, international travel experience, age, race, gender, and languages spoken. During this phase, an hour long pre-trip interview was conducted on campus in which each preservice teacher was asked questions following a protocol that consists of questions such as why they wish to experience studying abroad, what they know about Honduran culture, what they expect Honduras to be like, what challenges they anticipate, what experiences they look forward to, what they hope to learn from their international cross-cultural field experience.

In the second phase of the data collection, individual and group on-site interviews were held. In the individual one-on-one interview, preservice teachers were asked questions such as how their study abroad field experiences were going, what unusual experiences they had in their field placement or outside the classroom, how they were negotiating a different culture and language, how they were interacting with preservice teachers in the classroom, what pedagogical practices they were learning and experiencing, and their reflections on cross-cultural field experiences. The on-site focus interviews were held each week and were aimed at letting preservice teachers share experiences and discuss their unique perspectives with the entire group.

Another form of data collected were documents such as preservice teachers' course assignments and reflective journals. Every student was required as part of their course work to write daily journals reflecting on their field experience, interaction with Honduran communities, and their international cross-cultural experiences. They were also encouraged to reflect upon the connection between their course work and field experiences, and to think over their own experiences navigating a foreign culture and relate such experiences to what it means to be a global minded teacher. The teacher, school, and student portraits written by preservice teachers as part of their course assignments also constituted part of the data.

In the third phase, post-trip interviews were conducted on campus with each preservice teacher. In this interview preservice teachers were asked to speak about their experiences of studying abroad, to what extent cross-cultural field experiences had given them a global perspective of the world, how a more global perspective might have prompted self-reflection, and how a global perspective might impact their pedagogical practices. In this interview preservice teachers were encouraged to bring photographs of their international cross-cultural field experiences to offset the conversation. All interviews are digitally

recorded and professionally transcribed. Once the recordings are transcribed, all data is electronically stored in a specially created data base solely for the Honduras study abroad program. The two faculty members and the researchers accompanying the preservice teachers have access to the data for future research.

In the rest of this section we describe the different kinds of research that the study abroad program to Honduras has generated that include articles published in refereed international teacher education and curriculum journals, book chapters, articles that have been submitted for publication and those that are in progress. The following are four examples of research conducted on the effects of international cross-cultural field experiences on preservice teachers who participated in the Honduras study abroad program.

Study 1: Cultural Differences Such as Race, Class, and Gender

In their phenomenological study, Malewski and Phillion (2009) investigated the ways class, gender, and race impacted the perceptions and experiences of preservice teachers during a cross-cultural field experience in Honduras. The study is based on data collected over five years through observations, group discussions, course assignments, and on-site focus group interviews and post-trip interviews. Using a cross-comparative analysis, the study explored diverse ways class, gender, and race issues shaped preservice teachers' perceptions of self, their colleagues, and host community members.

The researchers found that students from minority backgrounds described their race, class, and gender experiences as having influenced their perception of diversity in both negative and positive ways. For example, Latin American students in the U.S. found themselves at the struggling end in the U.S. while in Honduras their Latin-American background was an asset in negotiating language and culture. Other preservice teachers reported that they had a deeper understanding of themselves as they reflected on their own culture and perceptions. Negotiating cultural differences also gave them a more profound awareness of the relationship between culture and classroom practice. The study concluded with a call for international cross-cultural experiences that encourage preservice teachers to critically examine their own perspectives and positions vis-à-vis other cultures.

Study 2: Engaging with Multicultural Issues

Another study conducted by Phillion, Malewski, Sharma, and Wang (2009), used interpretive phenomenology to explore the lived experiences of preservice teachers during study abroad to Honduras, how preservice teachers interpret their personal and professional experiences in Honduras within the broader educational, social, and historical context of a globalized world, and how they see themselves as teachers in a globalized classroom. The study looked at data collected from 2003-2008 to understand how preservice teachers engaged in multicultural issues while in Honduras. The study examines 1) the lived experience of preservice teachers in an international context, 2) how do preservice teachers interpret cultural difference within the broader social, historical and educational contexts, and 3) the pedagogic implication of being a multicultural teacher. After analyzing the relevant data, the study concluded that a well-planned study abroad curriculum offers preservice teachers first-hand experience with diversity in a global context, and creates opportunities for learning to teach in a multicultural classroom. The theoretical insights gained in the classroom, combined with practical experiential learning in an international environment helped preservice teachers to become more aware of multicultural issues in a global classroom.

Study 3: Rethinking Privilege and Poverty

Wang, Malewski, Phillion, and Sharma (2010) examines White, middle-class preservice teachers' reflections on issues concerning privilege, poverty, and educational inequity that surfaced while studying abroad in Honduras. The study looked at the ways in which preservice teachers responded to low-income students and how their experiences during study abroad prompts them to think critically

about social justice issues. For example, during the service learning community projects, some of the preservice teachers commented that while working with children from underprivileged homes, assisting them with school supplies and food, made them feel positive about themselves and an awareness of different ways of reaching out to their students. This theme was represented through reflections on race and poverty as well as through an increased desire to engage in community service. Many participants described a change in beliefs through close encounters with persons living in poverty that made them reflect on their own privileges, made them aware of poverty in the U.S., the impact of poverty on students from underprivileged backgrounds, and how poverty and privilege shape educational experiences of students and teachers.

Study 4: Engaging in Cross-cultural Knowledge

More recently, Malewski, Sharma, and Phillion (under review, 2011) conducted a six year longitudinal study of the effects of study abroad on preservice teachers. As a collective case study, this research uses data from all 49 preservice teachers from those who participated in the program to decipher common themes that emerge across the data as well as identify a typical responses. The study examines how international field experiences promote cross-cultural awareness in preservice teachers through experiential learning. More specifically, the study examines how international field experiences prepare preservice teachers to teach in diverse settings, how international contexts complicate preservice teachers' cultural knowledge, the pedagogical implication of increased cultural awareness of preservice teachers on classroom practice, and how international field experiences made preservice teachers more globalminded. For example, many preservice teachers reported that spending time in Honduran classrooms, observing teachers and students, and participating in school activities made them more aware of educational trends and issues that students and teachers encounter each day in the classroom.

Some preservice teachers claimed that their international cross-cultural field experiences had given them a deeper insight into how students and teachers interact in the social studies, science, and language classrooms. When asked, most preservice teachers said their experiences were positive with benefits ranging from increase in confidence, ability to connect with diversity, better understanding of curriculum and pedagogy, and a higher interest in teaching diverse students. The study concluded that international field experiences fostered self-reflection, prompted questioning of traditional forms of classroom knowledge and teaching practices, and promoted global mindedness in preservice teachers.

Conclusion

The Honduras study abroad program inclusive of international cross-cultural field experience represents a working model for colleges of education interested in preparing globalminded teachers. Participating teacher education faculty members, researchers, and students continue to make the program meaningful even as it continues to evolve. Based on the outcomes of the international cross-cultural field experience for preservice teachers through the Honduras study abroad program, we offer a few concluding comments:

- First, globalization of teacher education programs has become a necessity if teachers in American classrooms are to succeed in a competitive and diverse world order.
- Second, participating in well-organized and structured study abroad programs infused with international cross-cultural field experiences is one way of preparing global minded teachers for culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms.
- Third, exposure to diverse classroom knowledge, pedagogical practices, and classroom cultures around the world offers opportunities for becoming global minded teachers.
- Finally, universities and colleges around the world will benefit from partnerships and collaborations to globalize teacher education programs, facilitate study abroad programs for future teachers, in-service teachers and educators, and extend a cross-cultural understanding of diversity, difference, and culture through continued collaborative research and scholarship.

References

- Asher, N. (2007), Made in the (Multicultural) U.S.A.: Unpacking Tensions of Race, Culture, Gender, and Sexuality in Ed. *Nina Asher Educational Researcher*, Vol. 36 No. 2, pp.65-73, Published by: American Educational Research Association.
- Banks, J. (2001), Citizenship Education and Diversity: Implications for Teacher Education, *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 52, No. 5, pp.5-16.
- Banks, J.A. and McGee, C.A. (2009), *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Banks, J.A. (2007a), *Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society*, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Banks, J.A. (2007b), *Diversity and Citizenship Education: Global perspectives*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bigelow, B. and Peterson, B. (2002), *Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Rethinking Schools Ltd.
- Brown, S.C. and Kysilka, M.L. (2002), *Multicultural and Global Concepts in the Classroom and Beyond*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Cochran-Smith, M. and Zeichner, K.M. (2005), Executive summary: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education, In Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, K.M. (Eds), *Studying Teacher Education: The Report of the AERA Panel on Research and Teacher Education*, pp.1-36, Washington, D.C. and Mahwah, N.J.: American Educational Research Education and Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (2000), Blind Vision: Unlearning Racism in Teacher Education, *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp.157-190.
- Cushner, K. (2009), The Role of Study Abroad in the Preparation of Globally Responsible Teachers, In L. Ross (Ed), *Study Abroad and the Making of Global Citizens: Higher Education and the Quest for Global Citizenship*, Routledge, pp.151-169.
- Cushner, K. (2007), The Role of Experience in the Making of Internationally-Minded Teachers, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp.27-39.
- Cushner, K. and Brennan, S. (Eds.) (2007), *Intercultural Student Teaching: A Bridge to Global Competence*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Education.
- Cushner, K. and Mahon, J. (2002), Overseas Student Teaching: Affecting Personal, Professional, and Global Competencies in an Age of Globalization, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp.44-58.
- Cushner, K. and Mahon, J. (2009), Developing the Intercultural Competence of Educators and Their Students: Creating the Blueprints, In Deardorff, D. (Ed.) *Handbook of Intercultural Development*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp.304-320.
- Dantas, M.L. (2007), Building Teacher Competency to Work with Diverse Learners in the Context of International Education, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp.75-94.
- Garii, B. (2009), Interpreting the Unfamiliar Career International Teaching Experience and the Creation of Professional the Self, *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp.84-103.
- Gay, G. (2000), *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2007), Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory and Practice, In Banks, J.A. and Banks, C.A.M. (Eds.) pp.221-245, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives* (6th Ed.)
- Mahon, J. and Cushner, K. (2002), The overseas Student Teaching Experience: Creating Optimal Cultural Learning, *Multicultural Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp.9-30.
- Malewski, E. and Phillion, J. (2009), International Field Experiences: The Impact of Class, Gender and Race on the Perceptions and Experiences of Preservice Teachers, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 25, pp.52-60.
- Malewski, E., Sharma, S., and Phillion, J. (Under Review, 2011), How International Field Experiences Promote Cross-Cultural Awareness in Preservice Teachers through Experiential Learning: Findings from a Six-year Collective Case Study, Submitted to *Teachers College Record*.
- McCabe, L.T. (2001), Globalization and Internationalization: The Impact on Education Abroad Programs, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 5, No.3, pp.138-145.
- Merryfield, M.M. (1995), Institutionalizing Cross-Cultural Experiences and International Expertise in Teacher Education: The Development and Potential of a Global Education PDS Network, *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 46, pp.19-27.

Suniti Sharma, Genevieve N. Aglazor, Erik Malewski, and JoAnn Phillion

- Merryfield, M.M. (2002), The Difference a Global Educator Can Make, *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 60, No. 2, pp.18-21.
- Merryfield, M.M. (2000), Why Aren't Teachers Being Prepared to Teach for Diversity, Equity, and Global Interconnectedness? A Study of Lived Experiences in the Making of Multicultural and Global Educators, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 16 pp.429-443.
- NCATE (2008), Professional Standards for the Accreditation of Schools and Colleges and Departments of Education, Washington, DC: National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Retrieved on February 16, 2009 from: http://www.ncate.org/standard/unit_stdns_ch2_ch2.htm#std4.
- Nieto, S., and Bode, P. (2008), *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (5th ed.), Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Pence P.M. and Macgillivray, I.K. (2008), The Impact of an International Field Experience on Preservice Teachers, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 24, pp.14-25.
- Phillion, J., Malewski, E., Sharma, S., and Wang, Y. (2008), Reimagining the Curriculum in Study Abroad: Globalizing Multiculturalism to Prepare Future Teachers, *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, Vol. XVIII, pp.323-339.
- Phillion, J., Malewski, E., Sharma, S., and Wang, Y. (2009), Reimagining the Curriculum in Study Abroad: Globalizing Multiculturalism to Prepare Future Teachers, *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of study Abroad*, Vol. 18(Fall), pp.323-338.
- Quezada, R.L. (2005), "Beyond Educational Tourism": Lessons Learned While Students Teaching Abroad, *International Educational Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp.458-465.
- Roberts, A. (2007), Global Dimensions of Schooling: Implications for Internationalizing Teacher Education, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp.9-26.
- Schlein, C. (2006), The Curriculum and cultural Identity Transformation, In Pang, N.S.K. (Eds), *Globalization: Education Research, Change, and Reform*, pp.249-270, Sha Tin, New Territories, Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Sharma, S. (2009), From the Red-Dot-Woman to Jet-Set Mangoes and All the Hyphens in-between: Studying Abroad and Discovering Myself, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp.119-136.
- Sleeter, C. (2008), An Invitation to Support Diverse Students Through Teacher Education, *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 59, No. 3, pp.212-219.
- Stachowski, L.L. and Brantmeier, E.J. (2002), Understanding Self Through the Other, Changes in Student Teacher Perception of Home Culture from Immersion in Navajoland and Overseas, *International Educational*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp.5-18.
- Stachowski, L.L. and Sparks, T. (2007), Thirty Years and 2000 Student Teachers Later: An Overseas Student Teaching Project that is Popular, Successful, and Replicable, *Teacher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 34, No. 1, pp.115-132.
- Stachowski, L.L., Richardson, J.W., and Henderson, M. (2003), Student Teachers Report on the Influence of Cultural Values on their Classroom Practice and Community Involvement: Perspectives from Navajo Reservation and Abroad, *The Teacher Educator*, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp.52-63.
- Stachowski, L.L., Visconti, V.A., and Dimmett, D.L. (2000), US Student Teachers on Overseas Youth Culture: Observations, Reflections, and Implications for Teaching Practice, *International Education*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp.5-16.
- Stachowski, L.L. and Visconti, V.A. (1998), Service Learning in Overseas Nations: US Student Teachers Give, Grow, and Gain Outside the Classroom, *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 49, No. 3, pp.212-219.
- Wang, Y., Malewski, E., Phillion, J., and Sharma, S. (2010), Rethinking Poverty, Inequality and Social Injustice: Enhancing Preservice Teachers' Awareness and Perceptions through Study Abroad, *Social Justice, Equity and Teacher Education*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp.17-24.
- Willard-Holt, C. (2001), The Impact of Short-term International Experience for Preservice Teachers, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp.505-517.
- Wiggins, S.R.A., Follo, E.J., and Eberly, M.B. (2007), The Impact of a Field Immersion Program on Preservice Teachers' Attitudes Toward Teaching in Culturally Diverse Classrooms, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 23, No. 5, pp.653-663.