

Spring 2018

Study abroad and track II diplomacy

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Study Abroad and Track II Diplomacy

**An Honors College Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Arts and Letters
James Madison University**

by Makena Frances Rafferty-Lewis

May 2018

**Accepted by the faculty of the School of Political Science, James Madison University,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.**

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This work is accepted for presentation, in part or in full, at Political Science Department Presentation on April 17, 2018.

DEDICATION

To my mom and all of my committee members for all of their help and encouragement.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee for their constant advice and time spent assisting me in whatever way they could. Dr. Jonathan Keller for being a wonderful reader and answering my many questions, Felix Wang for being a great resource on Study Abroad and the BEVI, and Dr. Bernd Kaussler for serving as my thesis chair and working with the aspects of international security. I would like to also thank the Honors Program for providing me the opportunity to undertake this project.

ABSTRACT

Track II diplomacy, or person-to-person diplomacy is one of the most basic, but also most important types of international relations. Track II diplomacy requires not just effective legislature to be in place, but also requires individuals to have cross-cultural competency. One question that arises is how is this type of connectivity between cultures is formed. One of the most direct links can be found in students. As the political environment changes, young minds and rising experts will be the people who need to handle future international problems, that are possibly different from what we have seen in the past. How will they be prepared for this task? The purpose of this thesis paper is to look at the relationship between study abroad and track II diplomacy.

Study Abroad and Track II Diplomacy

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Track II diplomacy, or person-to-person diplomacy is one of the most basic, but also most important types of international relations. Track II diplomacy requires not just effective legislature to be in place, but also requires individuals to have cross-cultural competency. One question that arises is how is this type of connectivity between cultures is formed. One of the most direct links can be found in students. As the political environment changes, young minds and rising experts will be the people who need to handle future international problems, that are possibly different from what we have seen in the past. How will they be prepared for this task? One thing that drives students to become more culturally aware and interested in the international community is university study abroad programs. Programs that allow college students to study abroad opens up opportunities for them to learn about and be able to relate to other cultures. This research thesis will look at whether or not there is a connection between study abroad programs and track II diplomacy. There will be two angles for this thesis. First, research will be done on whether or not students studying abroad in the past have been able to improve the relationship between two countries. Then interviews will be done with James Madison University students specifically to look at whether or not a study abroad experienced changed their view of another country or increased their cultural awareness.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis paper is to look at the relationship between study abroad and track II diplomacy. This thesis will first look at the merits of track II diplomacy and what is needed to be successful in this field. It will show the importance of person-to-person diplomacy and give researched examples of how this track of diplomacy can be successful. The paper will next look at the study abroad programs at universities, and specifically at James Madison University. This will demonstrate why students choose to go abroad and what factors or characteristics are involved in this decision. In this section, the author will also discuss how going abroad changes students thoughts about cultures and experiences abroad. The research of track II diplomacy and study abroad will be combined to see if study abroad programs can improve the quality of track II diplomacy.

HYPOTHESES

This study will include two hypotheses. For both of these, the independent variable will be study abroad. The first hypothesis (H1) will look at the dependent variable of fostering bilateral relations by deepening cultural knowledge. This will look at whether or not study abroad can have a positive impact on the person-to-person relationships between nations. H1 will be focused on the international relations aspect and if study abroad can help change nations' relationships. The second hypothesis (H2) will look whether study abroad experiences can change individuals' opinions or increase cultural awareness. This hypothesis will focus on the student portion and try to discover if studying abroad can change students'

thoughts on international relationships. This will speak generally about students but also have a specific focus on James Madison University students.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology that will be used in this study is qualitative research. For H1, research will be done on established literature and past events and changes in relationships between countries. H2 will use a mix of previously established research, including the BEVI, along with new interviews done by the researcher, with students at James Madison University. IRB approval will allow the researcher to ask specified questions to JMU students who have gone abroad. Because of the nature of this research and track II diplomacy, qualitative research will be a more effective way to measure changes in cultural awareness. Because track II diplomacy is the idea of person-to-person diplomacy, getting personal opinions, stories, and accounts, accompanied by research will be the best way to investigate these hypotheses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study will look at the value of Track II diplomacy with respect to university study abroad programs specifically. For the purpose of this paper, Track II diplomacy will refer to person-to-person interactions that are considered unofficial government business, as in not between diplomats. Track II focuses on building relationships, changing perceptions and can often help find solutions when traditional diplomacy fails.¹ Study abroad in this case will refer to programs within U.S. universities that allow for students to participate in cultural exchanges while in

¹ Nathaniel Allen and Travis Sharp. 2017. "Process Peace: A New Evaluation Framework for Track II Diplomacy." *International Negotiation* 22 (1): 92.

other countries. This literature review will discuss the different ways in which study abroad and Track II diplomacy are related and how study abroad has the possibility to facilitate said diplomacy.

Track II Diplomacy

Track II diplomacy is an avenue that is often taken when traditional diplomacy, or Track I proves to be impossible. Track II offers unofficial connections between people and is based on social contracts. For track II to be effective, parties usually need to go beyond zero-sum thinking and view both problems and solutions as mutually shared.² For our research, track II diplomacy can include two key functions: events that compel parties to communications that may have previously not existed, and discreet dialogues that promote creative problem solving.

Joseph Montville coined the “track two” catchphrase in 1981 during his frustration over the poor communications between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. “The nature of these highly visible feuds often erected barriers to limit maneuverability of official negotiators, who did not want to appear weak in the eyes of their own public.”³ The idea behind Track II diplomacy is to find new avenues of thought and build relationships that would otherwise be blocked by traditional diplomacy. In recent years, Track II diplomacy has been thought as not only as a supplement to traditional diplomacy, but also sometimes as an alternative. One fault

² Esra Cuhadar and Bruce W. Dayton. 2012. "Oslo and its Aftermath: Lessons Learned from Track Two Diplomacy." *Negotiation Journal* 28 (2): 155-179.

³ Sarah Graham and John Robert Kelley. 2009. "U.S. Engagement in East Asia: A Case for 'Track Two' Diplomacy." *Orbis* 53, no. 1: 80-98. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 6, 2017).

in the non-traditional diplomacy however, is the fact that because its contributors are considered “intangible”, it is difficult to assess using empirical methods.⁴

One of the first notable examples of Track II diplomacy can be seen in the Cold War when President Kennedy used Norman Cousins, long-time editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, as a “citizen diplomat.” In 1959 Cousins was invited to the Soviet Union under terms of the Cultural Exchange Agreement. Cousins’s involvement began in 1962 and by 1963 he was directly influencing events between Russia and the United States. Cousins represents successful Track II diplomacy because he was able to help bridge the gap between politicians in the United States and in Russia. His only agenda was a quest for nuclear disarmament. Because Cousins was a regular citizen outside of the political scope, it allowed him to deal with these negotiations in a different way. And although he was a normal citizen, he was able to change the minds of world leaders like Kennedy and Khrushchev.⁵

Although Track II diplomacy can refer to political leaders who interact unofficially, for the purpose of this study, these instances will not be included. In relation to study abroad, Track II diplomacy will focus on the increased communication between nations and possible negotiation and peace building because of cultural exchange programs.⁶

⁴ Allen, Nathaniel, and Travis Sharp. "Process Peace: A New Evaluation Framework for Track II Diplomacy."

⁵ Allen Pietrobon,. "The Role of Norman Cousins and Track II Diplomacy in the Breakthrough to the 1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty." *Journal Of Cold War Studies* 18, no. 1 (Winter2016 2016): 60-79. *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 6, 2017).

⁶ Cuhadar and Bruce W. Dayton. "Oslo and its Aftermath: Lessons Learned from Track Two Diplomacy".

History of Research in Study Abroad

The aspects and effects of study abroad is something that was not truly researched until the late 80's in the United States. However, once it began to become an interest to scholars, the research expanded from study abroad to cross cultural experiences, international affairs, intercultural training and acculturation.⁷ The number of U.S. university students studying abroad in recent years has more than doubled, the fastest growing of the programs being short-term study abroad. "Even in a six or eight week social science or natural science program, students can experience and absorb important cultural literacy."⁸ The recent several years of significant increase in study abroad participation has "bolstered the confidence of some educators that foreign study is finally being recognized as an essential part of the four-year college experience."⁹ In addition, study abroad programs have begun to focus in certain areas such as foreign language, cultural immersion, or specialization in specific global areas; each of which have different effects and success rates.¹⁰

Along with specified area studies, study abroad programs in the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region has grown over 500% from the 2000-2001 to

⁷ M BAZGAN and R.-M. NICULESCU. 2016. " Intercultural Competence: A key competence of the Third Millennium." *Bulletin Of The Transilvania University Of Brasov. Series VII: Social Sciences. Law* 9, 41-52.

⁸ Kirk S. Bowman and Ashley Jennings. 2005. "Pura Vida: Using Study Abroad to Engage Undergraduate Students in Comparative Politics Research." *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 2005. 77.

⁹ P. Desruisseaux. 1999. "1.5% rise in American students abroad shows popularity of non-European destinations." *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 46(16), A60-A61.

¹⁰ Neriko Musha Doerr. 2016. "Themed section: "Time and the Other: politics of cultural Others, study abroad/away, and going home (eventually)"." *Journal Of Cultural Geography* 33, no. 1: 51-61. *America: History & Life*.

the 2008-2009 academic years.¹¹ This can be attributed largely to the state of the national security of the United States post 9/11. "A Pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace and produce an informed citizenry." The international mobility of students as well as collaboration between universities is being seen as a productive way to develop closer international relationships.¹²

Motivators

As the political and security landscape change around the world, the federal government may be more inclined to encourage students to go abroad to specialize in areas, languages, or cultures that are necessities at the time. To do this effectively, it is important to understand what motivates U.S. students to study abroad. One of the key aspects that pushes students to pursue intercultural education is to "acquire international knowledge and experience that will give them an advantage in their careers."¹³ Studies show that the amount of students that earn credits for work or internships abroad has increased in the past five years. Colleges are aware of the competition for jobs and the fact that study abroad and cross-cultural experiences can help set students apart.¹⁴

¹¹ Cara Lane-Toomey. 2014. "U. S. Government Factors Influencing an Expansion of Study Abroad in the Middle East/North Africa." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal Of Study Abroad* 24, 121-140.

¹² J Knight. 2004. Internationalization remodeled: definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8, 5-31.

¹³ Desruisseaux. "1.5% rise in American students abroad shows popularity of non-European destinations."

¹⁴ Ibid.

Along with career development, another perceived benefit of studying abroad is that students are able to develop autonomy, cross-cultural competence, and increased international knowledge.¹⁵ However, despite these obvious benefits, as of 2001, less than 3% of U.S. undergraduate students participated in study abroad programs. Many students attributed this to the “perceived risks” of going abroad.¹⁶ However the study was vague on what exactly these “risks” were. However, it is noted that students who had more experience abroad previously, perceived these risks to be much smaller. They also struggled less with adapting to new languages, currencies, and climates.¹⁷

It is important to not however that in many instances, study abroad experiences are only available for “privileged” people, while restricting those who may not have the funds to pay for the experience.¹⁸ In “International Schools: Current Issues and Future Prospects”, Mary Hayden and Jeff Thompson state that the field of study abroad has moved away from non-profit schooling and aimed

¹⁵ Manyu Li, Josephine E. Olson, and Irene Hanson Frieze. 2013. "Students' Study Abroad Plans: The Influence of Motivational and Personality Factors." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal Of Study Abroad* 23, 73-89.

¹⁶ Clint Relyea, Faye K. Cocchiara, and Nareatha L. Studdard. 2008. "The effect of perceived value in the decision to participate in study abroad programs." *Journal of Teaching in International Business* 19 (4): 346-361.

¹⁷ J. N. Martin & Rohrlich, B. (1991). The relationship between study-abroad student expectations and selected student characteristics. *Journal of College Student Development*, 32(1), 39-46.

¹⁸ Doerr. "Themed section: “Time and the Other: politics of cultural Others, study abroad/away, and going home (eventually)” ."

more largely at “the children of an elite body of globally mobile workers.” The opportunities have shifted to a more commercial enterprise.¹⁹

Despite this information about how students handle studying abroad and the benefits they receive, there is little research about what factors affect students’ intention and decision to apply and attend a study abroad program. And although university administrators “bear the responsibility for preparing students to operate in a global society, the ultimate decision to participate...is the student’s.”²⁰ Below this paper will discuss some of the greatest benefits and results of studying abroad and how they relate to U.S. security and diplomacy.

Peace Studies

As students gain intercultural competence on their study abroad programs, they are being educated on other cultures, formally and informally and therefore are promoting the idea of accepting other cultures. According to UNESCO, to achieve peace, “we not only need to tolerate ideas and views that are different than ours, but also be educated about these differences.”²¹ UNESCO also sites that dialogue, or intercultural communication, can facilitate a path towards cultural peace.” This dialogue consists of learning and listening to the other with the intention of trying to understand the other, to see the other both as connected to one and, at the same

¹⁹ Mary Hayden and Jeff Thompson. 2016. *International Schools: Current Issues and Future Prospects*. *Oxford Studies in Comparative Education*. n.p.: Symposium Books, 2016.

²⁰ Relyea, Cocchiara, and Studdard. "The effect of perceived value in the decision to participate in study abroad programs."

²¹ Lynne Bond, Sinan Koont, and Skye Stephenson. 2005. "The Power of Being There: Study Abroad in Cuba and the Promotion of a "Culture of Peace." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal Of Study Abroad* 11, 99-120.

time, as something totally different from one."²² UNESCO compares the world to a group of different musical instruments all playing in one concert: each different on its own, but all coming together to play one song and sounding more beautiful because of it²³. UNESCO considered this possible for humans and encourages global movement and education, which can both be found through students' experiences abroad.

Intercultural Competence

A major goal in study abroad, especially when relating it to U.S. security and diplomacy is intercultural competence. In a broad sense, this term can be defined as a "complex set of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately in interactions with others that linguistically and culturally are different from themselves."²⁴ Another definition relates to the idea of being able to adapt to another complex cultural structure.²⁵ When looking at intercultural competence with a broad lens, it encompasses the "Big C culture", meaning sociocultural class, sex, race, values as well as "Little c culture", meaning daily life and politeness". Accurate knowledge of many different aspects of a host country's culture can positively impact students studying abroad.²⁶

²² Bond, Koont, and Stephenson. "The Power of Being There: Study Abroad in Cuba and the Promotion of a "Culture of Peace."

²³ Ibid.100.

²⁴ A. E. Fantini, 2007. Exploring and assessing intercultural competence, Center for Social Development, Global Service Institute.

²⁵ BAZGAN and NICULESCU. "Intercultural Competence: A key competence of the Third Millennium"

²⁶ Lori Czerwionka, Tatiana Artamonova, and Mara Barbosa. 2015. "Intercultural knowledge development: Evidence from student interviews during short-term study abroad."

“The Importance of Developing the Intercultural Communication Competence for the Land Forces Cadets” recommends a few steps to improve intercultural communication. The most pertinent of these steps include “Being aware of your own culture” and “Being curious in dealing with different cultures”. This work talks about being aware of the aspect of one's own culture and how that could be different from the culture of others. Simple acts that one uses in their day-to-day lives could be misconstrued to those who are unfamiliar. In addition, curiosity in dealing with other cultures is an important aspect of study abroad and diplomacy.²⁷

Intercultural competence can then be linked to intercultural communication. If you have knowledge or education on another culture it is much easier to facilitate productive communication. The idea of intercultural communication is a big concept in the U.S. military. “The intercultural dimension of military actions has to be highlighted as being a condition of major importance in achieving their efficiency, together with the intercultural competence as a factor of success in accomplishing the missions assigned to the military structures...”²⁸ Because of the recent threats to countries belonging to NATO, military missions have expanded to peacekeeping operations and humanitarian aid. Because of this, military education has become a bigger priority and it has mainly focused on intercultural communication.

Teamwork is key in missions like this and one of the most important components of teamwork is successful communication.

²⁷ Niculesc, Brândușa-Oana, and Georgeta OBILIȘTEANU. 2015. "The Importance of Developing the Intercultural Communication Competence for the Land Force Cadets." *Revista Academiei Fortelor Terestre* 20, no. 3: 316-321.

²⁸ Ibid.

We consider that the ability to communicate is one of the most pressing difficulties affecting the efficiency and efficacy of the team. Communicating involves not only understanding and being able to use lexical and grammatical structures, but also the ability to understand attitudes, values, beliefs, norms, rituals, behaviors, points of view of one's interlocutor.²⁹

Intercultural competence is very strongly linked to cultural diplomacy, which is a way that a state can exercise soft power. In a recent report for the British Council, it is noted that demonstrating interest and knowledge of cultural practices along with successful communication can produce positive diplomacy and negotiations. This in turn can lead to actual influence over the choices of other nations.³⁰

Language

Through further research, language acquisition seemed to be one of the strongest driving factors for students to study abroad. In addition, the events of 9/11 compelled the federal government to reflect on the enterprise of its personnel and to focus attention on the need for more and better language skills. Language skills are urgently needed to address economic and diplomatic challenges that the United States faces today.³¹ English is generally used as "the world language", in that it is used in most inter-cultural encounters.³² However, relying on this is detrimental

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ David Clarke. 2016. "Theorising the role of cultural products in cultural diplomacy from a Cultural Studies perspective." *International Journal Of Cultural Policy* 22, no. 2: 147-163.

³¹ M. E. O'Connell & J. L. Norwood (Eds.). 2007. "International education and foreign languages: keys to securing America's future."

³² Darla K Deardorff, 2006. "Identification and Assessment of Intercultural Competence as a Student Outcome of Internationalization." *Journal Of Studies In International Education* 10, no. 3: 241-266.

to U.S. security and future diplomacy. And as globalization increases, the need for students to become fluent in other languages increases.³³ In 1947 there were only fourteen language programs on all U.S. campuses. However, in the years after WWI and with the rise of the Soviet Union, language studies and dialects became much more important.³⁴ Now, with the current landscape of U.S.-Middle East relations, Arabic and other languages and dialects of the region have become increasingly in demand. Arabic is considered one of the “critical-need” languages targeted by the National Security Language Initiative.³⁵ Languages within this category are targeted because they are:

Essential for engaging foreign governments and peoples, especially in critical world regions, and for promoting understanding, conveying respect for other cultures, and encouraging reform. These skills are also fundamental to the economic competitiveness and security interests of the nation.³⁶

Arabic language experts believe that since 9/11, Arabic has become one of the key languages needed by government employees. This can be comparable to when in the late 1950’s, U.S. language educators referred to growing interest in foreign

³³ Jae Cho and Michael W. Morris. 2015. "Cultural study and problem-solving gains: Effects of study abroad, openness, and choice." *Journal Of Organizational Behavior* 36, no. 7: 944-966.

³⁴ Lane-Toomey. "U. S. Government Factors Influencing an Expansion of Study Abroad in the Middle East/North Africa."

³⁵ Cara K. Lane-Toomey and Shannon R. Lane. 2013. "US students study abroad in the Middle East/North Africa: Factors influencing growing numbers." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 17 (4) 308-331.

³⁶ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education. (2008). Enhancing foreign language proficiency in the United States: Preliminary results of the National Security Language Initiative.

languages, especially Russian, as “The Sputnik Movement”.³⁷ This need for Arabic language has spurred a growth in Arabic course offerings and study abroad opportunities through U.S. universities. Enrollment in Arabic courses in general increased by 127 percent since 2002. And since many universities only offer beginner and intermediate level Arabic, many students go abroad to further their education.³⁸

In addition to an increased general need for education in the Arabic language, there has also been a higher demand specific dialects. Thus, colleges began to get more strongly behind teaching Arabic dialects along with Modern Standard Arabic (MSA).³⁹ One study talks about a group of students who traveled to an Arab country as part of a university program. They were only familiar with MSA and not with the regional dialects. “We were laughed at, not understood and stood out as foreigners. Then, when I began to pick up and use the Dialect reactions immediately changed. I was taken more seriously, I was complimented on my Arabic...”, one student said.⁴⁰ Many students commented that after they became more familiar with regional dialects, their understanding of the society became much deeper. “I was able to see that the Arab world is very diverse even though to outsiders it may seem to be a very homogenous society,” a student said.

³⁷ Lane-Toomey and Lane. "US students study abroad in the Middle East/North Africa: Factors influencing growing numbers."

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Sonia Shiri. 2015. "Intercultural Communicative Competence Development During and After Language Study Abroad: Insights From Arabic." *Foreign Language Annals* 48, no. 4: 541-569.

⁴⁰ Sonia Shiri. 2013. "Learners' attitudes toward regional dialects and destination preferences in study abroad." *Foreign language annals* 46 (4): 565-587.

Creativity and Problem Solving

One of the most important aspects of diplomatic relations is the ability to problem solve and generate original creative ideas. Multicultural experiences can often help reduce students' reliance on previous knowledge and increase their creative potential. "Once individuals become receptive to new and unconventional ideas through their multicultural experiences, they may spontaneously access from memory knowledge that is normatively inaccessible in their own culture and generate creative ideas".⁴¹ In addition, openness to experience has also been linked to creative behaviors. Thus those who are more open to their abroad experience are more likely to absorb more knowledge about the host country and increase their creativity for the future.

Problem solving is another key attribute that is irreplaceable in the diplomatic and security spheres. There is a positive correlation between students who study abroad and having a strong ability to problem solve.⁴²

Non-Traditional Study Abroad

The most recent data available is stating that not only are record numbers of U.S. college students participating in study abroad programs, but more than ever, they are traveling to non-traditional destinations. This term, for the purposes of this paper, will mean destinations in Africa, Latin America, Asia, or the Middle East.⁴³

⁴¹ A. K, Leung & Chiu, C. (2008). Interactive effects of multicultural experiences and openness to experience on creative potential. *Creativity Research Journal*, 20(4), 376–382.

⁴² Cho and Morris. 2015. "Cultural study and problem-solving gains: Effects of study abroad, openness, and choice."

⁴³ Ryan Wells. 2006. "Nontraditional Study Abroad Destinations: Analysis of a Trend." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal Of Study Abroad* 13, 113-133.

Many of the countries in these area, five years ago, played host to many less American students. Countries like Morocco, South Africa, Vietnam, and Syria are not attracting hundreds of students from U.S. universities looking to study abroad.⁴⁴

Literature concerning non-traditional destinations for study abroad is limited and there is little to no research on the impacts that this new trend could have on international relations.⁴⁵ However it is clear that the need for national security drives nations as a whole, as well as educational institutions to place more importance on developing human capital or brain power in these non-traditional study abroad areas.⁴⁶ The increase need to focus diplomatic and security efforts to the MENA region for in recent years has driven a rise in students studying abroad in this non-traditional region. The federal government has supported higher education and encouraged the expansion to education in the MENA region.⁴⁷ It is suggested that student who focus on non-traditional study abroad, such as the middle east, are choosing that area because they anticipate careers in government, diplomacy, or U.S. security. Students on this track are looking to “promote a deeper understanding of this region” and are in search of a unique experience away from the normal study abroad program.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ P. Desruisseaux. “1.5% rise in American students abroad shows popularity of non-European destinations.”

⁴⁵ Wells. "Nontraditional Study Abroad Destinations: Analysis of a Trend."

⁴⁶ Knight, “Internationalization remodeled: definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education.*”

⁴⁷ Lane-Toomey. "U. S. Government Factors Influencing an Expansion of Study Abroad in the Middle East/North Africa."

⁴⁸ Shiri, "Intercultural Communicative Competence Development During and After Language Study Abroad: Insights From Arabic."

Non-traditional study abroad areas, according to history, are vital to U.S. security and diplomacy. According to Ryan Wells in “Nontraditional Study Abroad Destinations: Analysis of a Trend”, non-traditional countries “account for all the wars in which the U.S. has been engaged since World War II.”⁴⁹ Students who have academic and specialized knowledge of the Middle East or the Korean peninsula, may be able to positively affect future foreign policy and relations involving these regions.⁵⁰

Area Studies and Regional Specialization

Along with non-traditional study abroad, area and regional studies have emerged from the emerging diplomatic landscape of recent years. Prior to the 1950’s, few universities had programs in area studies outside of Western Europe. As the U.S. began to emerge as a world power however, area studies began to develop in tandem. Within the past 60 years, United States foreign policy has caused the government to give more support to regional studies in higher education. Program at universities expanded because legislators saw an increased need for area specialists.⁵¹ The benefits of specialization can be seen in the following two examples.

The first example focuses on problems that concentration in certain regions. One major problem today is climate change; however, the most severe effects of this problem can only be seen in areas that are affected most. Students that study abroad in places like the Netherlands or Venice are able to see the problem of the rising sea

⁴⁹ Wells. 2006. "Nontraditional Study Abroad Destinations: Analysis of a Trend."

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Lane-Toomey. "U. S. Government Factors Influencing an Expansion of Study Abroad in the Middle East/North Africa."

level first hand. This could better equip them in the future to handle environmental negotiations on a global scale.⁵²

Another example of the benefits of regional specialization can be seen in the China example. More and more U.S. students are taking an interest in specializing and studying abroad in China. Through this, the U.S. and China have increased their diplomatic relations through educational means. Students that study there are more informed and aware of the culture than those who have just studied China while still in the U.S.⁵³

Area studies and regional specialization can positively affect U.S. diplomacy because they allow students to become increasingly informed on a given area or culture. Often, the desire or continuation of regional studies can stem out of a Study Abroad experience.

Educational Diplomacy

In this paper, the term educational diplomacy will refer to connectivity of universities around the globe. The theory is that when universities in the U.S. foster relationships with universities in other countries, like China for example, the diplomatic relationship will grow in a positive manner as a result. This is one of the major ideas behind major government funding for study abroad programs at universities.

To state the obvious, governments invest in programs and projects

⁵² Andrea M. W. Dvorak, Lars D. Christiansen, Nancy L. Fischer, and Joseph B. Underhill. 2011. "A Necessary Partnership: Study Abroad and Sustainability in Higher Education." *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal Of Study Abroad* 21, 143-166.

⁵³ James Paradise. 2012. "International Education: Diplomacy in China." *Brown Journal Of World Affairs* 19, no. 1: 195-205.

designed to make things happen. In democratic societies, that means a very wide range of programs with diverse ends and often competing priorities, but programs which are just as likely as not to be disposed towards ends such as those stated in the Public Diplomacy Strategy.⁵⁴

This is why the government invests in study abroad and encourages new programs because students are able to gain valuable specialization and much needed knowledge. Intellectuals take a big part in shaping U.S. diplomacy and foreign relations. The Obama administration relied heavily on the academics to help advise on U.S. dealings with other nations. "What unites these leaders is a belief that American diplomacy requires a guiding hand not just from the quick-witted and the pragmatic, but from the PhD-educated and the theoretical."⁵⁵

⁵⁴ David Carter. 2015. "Living with instrumentalism: the academic commitment to cultural diplomacy." *International Journal Of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4: 478-493.

⁵⁵ David Milne,. 2010. "America's 'intellectual' diplomacy." *International Affairs* 86, no. 1: 49-68.

Study Abroad and Track II Diplomacy

Chapter 2

INTRODUCTION

In many situations, cross-cultural cooperation can be difficult, and often hampered by vast political, religious, or ideological differences. These differences can often lead to the failure of government channels in problem solving and mediation. When this occurs, the next best option is usually what is referred to as track II diplomacy, or often times, person to person diplomacy. This includes “all other potential non-state actors and stakeholders with an interest in the conflict setting.”⁵⁶ The role of unofficial actors in diplomacy has interested sociologists and political scientists for quite a while in research of conflict resolution.⁵⁷ This type of relationship revolves around the idea of forming bonds based on non-governmental and unofficial contact between private citizens. “Such forms of diplomacy allow for exchanges of people and ideas to build confidence between the two sides. Ideally, the modest gains in trust from Track II diplomacy will translate into a broader opening for political rapprochement.”⁵⁸ This section of the study will look at H1, or the hypothesis that study abroad experiences can have a positive impact on track II diplomacy.

Track II diplomacy strives to find social commonalities between people who might otherwise disagree on political issues. This chapter will discuss the benefits of

⁵⁶ Michael Thomas Kuchinsky. 2007. “Peace from Below: Recent Steps Taken along the Track-Two Diplomacy Path”. *University Press*. 10.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 9.

⁵⁸ Daniel F. Runde and Amasia Zargarian. 2014. “Building Networks of Diplomatic Cooperation: Opportunities for U.S.-Venezuela Science Cooperation” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. 1.

track II diplomacy, examples of successful attempts of this track, as well as the capacity in which it can be most beneficial. In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the avenues of science and think tanks as forms of track II diplomacy, how these possibly have the same elements as study abroad and how this might prove that study abroad programs also can be beneficial for unofficial forms of diplomacy. Science and think tanks in track II diplomacy will be discussed because of the lack of research done on study abroad and its relation to track II diplomacy. Because science and think tank research is similar to the academic field, the researcher is assuming that positive progress in track II diplomacy in these fields would translate to similar possible progress in study abroad and track II diplomacy. This is because these sectors are all using educated individuals collaborative effort to further education and information and bring people from different nations and cultures closer together.

SCIENCE AND FINE ARTS IN TRACK II DIPLOMACY

Although work in the scientific field and within think tanks seems very different from study abroad programs, they are in fact similar in many ways. Both concepts have a similar way of creating a partnership between two countries. Science, think tanks, and study abroad all revolve around education and the betterment of the future. They all are about things that people with different backgrounds and cultures can much more easily agree upon. Because these ideas are based in something non-political and somewhat universal, the potential benefits

from using science and think tanks as ways to bridge the gap in track II diplomacy will be quite similar to those in study abroad.⁵⁹

One of the most successful and often used tactic of track II diplomacy is the use of science as a way to bring people from different backgrounds together. The U.S. has used this science diplomacy ever since the Cold War. This is often deemed science diplomacy. The idea is that if countries or political opponents can come together on a physical affair, such as science, it is possible that they might be able to negotiate more effectively on matters of the nation or world politics. "Science diplomacy ultimately brings together actors from different countries to collaborate on issues that are apolitical and that transcend national borders."⁶⁰ Science diplomacy is so important because it allows countries to come together more easily on issues like how to deal with natural disasters, endemic diseases, and invasive species; all problems that need a global effort to combat.⁶¹

One prominent example of science diplomacy is the cooperation between the United States and Venezuela, both of with with rich and broad scientific agendas.⁶² There has been recent cooperation on seismological research and data gathering, a subject which could greatly benefit both nations. The relationship has even gone so far as sharing new tracking technology. By 2018, the U.S. will make it's USArray seismic observatory available to Venezuela for further research. This sharing of

⁵⁹ Runde and Zargarian. 2.

⁶⁰ Runde and Zargarian, 2.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

technology is a major step in U.S. Venezuela relations and although it relates to scientific research, could later lead to other, more political oriented agreements.⁶³

Think tanks are an example of track II diplomacy, that although similar to the scientific field, are different in some ways. Think tanks not only promote the joint research of multiple countries, but also provide the opportunity for ongoing interaction. In scientific research, the research itself is often done by countries separately then collaboration begins as research hits dead ends or possible conclusions. With think tanks as well as study abroad, the opportunity arises for continuous work alongside one another. Those from other countries will be working, often in the same building, fostering valuable intercultural relationships.

An example of a think tank used in track II diplomacy can be seen in the Myanmar Development Resources Institute in Yangon, Myanmar, a joint project between Myanmar and the United States.. “The goal of this informal dialogue is to establish an ongoing channel of communication between experts from both countries and to explore opportunities to advance U.S. Myanmar relations.”⁶⁴ The think tank focuses on environmental sustainability, economic development, and democracy building. Although these people are academics and not politicians, the think tank gives the opportunity for relationship building on a citizen level, which will in turn eventually benefit international diplomacy as a whole.⁶⁵

Fine arts is often a less thought of way to bridge the cultural divide, but is no less effective than the think tanks and scientific studies mentioned above. Activities

⁶³ Ibid, 8.

⁶⁴ Priscilla Clapp and Suzanne DiMaggio. 2012. “Advancing Myanmar's Transition: A Way Forward for U.S. Policy”. *Asia Society*. 2.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 6.

such as singing or painting have a way of bringing people from different cultures together because they are universal, in a similar way to the sciences. A group called “Up with People” helps gather individuals from different backgrounds. They come together to sing and perform around the world.

Up with People’s mission statement is: “In a world filled with constant change, we are often divided by fear and intolerance. Up with People is breaking down these fears by using our unique blend of music and social action to empower people across the globe to think differently about their world and understand the things that unite us as people and societies – our common humanity.”⁶⁶ The goal of the program is to use the touring cast of young adults to spark communities into understanding and action. The diverse group works with local citizens to discover real issues in communities and find a collective way to make a sustainable change. Up with People uses music to unite people and break down cultural barriers.⁶⁷

Because there is little to no research on the effects of study abroad and track II diplomacy, the success that can be seen from both scientific research, think tanks and fine arts as parts of track II diplomacy, helps to backup and show some proof of the hypothesis that study abroad positively benefits track II diplomacy. Although the routes operate somewhat different, the link to academia is a strong enough correlation that can help prove some of the beneficial aspects of study abroad and track II diplomacy.

⁶⁶ Up With People. 2017. *Up With People*.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

STUDY ABROAD AND TRACK II DIPLOMACY

Cross-Cultural Adaptation

The core concept of using study abroad in track II diplomacy is facilitating the collaboration of people from different cultures and backgrounds so that there is a base relationship between civilians when it comes time to deal with international issues of foreign policy. The root of this is cultural adaptation, or adjusting to a new environment when studying abroad. This is because when a person is able to adapt to another country's cultures, it is much easier for them to have empathy towards its people and find common connections. "Research examining the role of cross-cultural adaptation has suggested that attitudes and communication skills of the sojourner are the two important factors influencing the success of individuals who work in cultures different from their own."⁶⁸

Two aspects that make people more likely to adapt to other cultures are the ability to communicate and the ability to establish interpersonal relationships. In many study abroad programs, these are things that are focused on because they are things that make the program more beneficial to the student, but also, they in turn, allow a good environment to foster track II diplomacy. Students are often encouraged to learn a foreign language before their study abroad to help with communication. "Some studies have suggested that the sojourner's level of fluency in the language of the host country may influence his or her degree of adaptation to

⁶⁸ Masgoret, A-M., M. Bernaus, and R. C. Gardner. 2000. "A Study of Cross-Cultural Adaptation by English-Speaking Sojourners in Spain." *Foreign Language Annals* 33 (5): 4

the new culture.”⁶⁹ Students abroad are also often put in situations that forces them to interact with and establish personal relationships with those from the host country. For example, many study abroad programs are taught by professors from the host country, not the visiting university.⁷⁰ This facilitation of forming interpersonal relationships and increasing and improving communication are some ways in which study abroad could be a viable form of track II diplomacy.

Study Abroad and National Security

Although there is not much research to prove that study abroad is a viable pathway for track II diplomacy, in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attack on the world trade centers, it became clear that the education sector in the United States believed that it was a major aspect of increasing future U.S. security. In 2002, the American Council on Education addressed the United States government asking it to “reverse decades of declining emphasis on international education and substantially increase the number of American students who study abroad.”⁷¹ So, despite the hard evidence of the importance of study abroad in track II diplomacy, the ACE believed that higher education should push study abroad during a time of instability in international security. Since this initial push, in recent years, study abroad programs have evolved into an educational priority⁷².

Most recently, in 2009, federal legislation has been proposed and passed by the U.S. House of Representatives that allocated over \$100 million to be put towards

⁶⁹ Ibid, 4.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Salisbury, M. H. 2011. “The Effect of Study Abroad on Intercultural Competence among Undergraduate College Students.” PhD diss., University of Iowa. 2.

⁷² Ibid, 2.

scholarships for students who wish to study abroad. This money is made to be an incentive to encourage students, who otherwise not be able to, to participate in study abroad programs.⁷³ Clearly, in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack, the U.S. government found it reasonable to invest an incredible amount of money in study abroad programs in the hopes that over time, it would help facilitate track II diplomacy and increase U.S. international security.

In recent years, government officials have started to look at study abroad programs for not only peace and relation building between states, but also for enhancing “global competency of young people - that is, the knowledge and skills necessary to be competitive in the global economy.”⁷⁴ It is suspected that this global competency will be a necessary skill for the next generation as they enter into the job market. Study abroad has become the foundation of helping students gain this necessary global competency.⁷⁵

Study Abroad in Europe

The expansion of higher education study abroad has always been one of the top priorities of the European governments. This is because of the instrumental concerns of the European Union to create a united and fluid zone. The goal was to create a “Europe of Knowledge” and raise the standard of higher education in the European Union as a whole. “Universities with their mass of intellectual resource and their functional involvement in the knowledge creation, the teaching, the

⁷³ Ibid, 4.

⁷⁴ Olberding, Julie Cencula, and Douglas J. Olberding. ““Ripple Effects” in Youth Peacebuilding and Exchange Programs: Measuring Impacts Beyond Direct Participants.” *International Studies Perspectives* 11, no. 1 (2010): 75-91.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

training in techniques of learning and research and the stimulus they can give to local and regional economies.”⁷⁶

The process of using study abroad in Europe to dissolve cultural borders really began in 1999 with the Bologna Process. This was an “intergovernmental process distinct from any EU activity on higher education.”⁷⁷ The Bologna Process included creating a system of reliable and comparable degrees. The goal was to create a “European Higher Education Area” by 2010 which would include higher education standards across all European Union countries.⁷⁸ By doing so, the European Union sought to make it more attractive for students to study abroad and therefore cause a higher sense of unity among the European Union. This, in essence is track II diplomacy. The EU promoted cross cultural exchanges by making it more attractive for students to study abroad. By 2015 the signatories of the Bologna process included all members of the participating EU states. The only states that did not adopt the process are Monaco and San Marino.⁷⁹

The second giant leap in study abroad and track II diplomacy was established in 2004 and was titled the European Union’s Erasmus Mundus programme. “It set up the means to establish consortia of EU higher education institutions that would enable mobility of staff and students and could lead to the provision of joint

⁷⁶ Anne Corbert. 2006. Higher Education as a Form of European Integration: How Novel is the Bologna Process? *UIO Arena Center for European Studies*. 3.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 5.

European Masters qualifications".⁸⁰ The goal was to create a more unified population in the European Union. In *What Should We Expect of 'Erasmus Generations* the researcher discusses how the Erasmus generation, or those who have enjoyed the benefits of Erasmus, have identified more strongly as European citizens. This meaning that it is possible that the implementation of the Erasmus programme has caused more unity in the European Union and also increased their cultural awareness of other nations. This in the long run could prove to be an important step towards track II diplomacy.⁸¹

The Erasmus programme in the EU is a good example of how study abroad can increase successful track II diplomacy. The goal of Erasmus is to bring students to different countries to study within the European Union. This not only allows a student to adapt to another culture, but also gain empathy and a better understanding for another nation and how they live. This gives civilians the chance to foster meaningful relationships between countries.⁸²

Study Abroad's Ripple Effects

It is broadly accepted that by spending time in academia abroad, one's knowledge and understanding of the host country's cultures increases. However, it has also been found that recently, that study abroad programs can have significant

⁸⁰ Allen, Nathaniel, and Travis Sharp. 2017. "Process Peace: A New Evaluation Framework for Track II Diplomacy." *International Negotiation* 22, no. 1: 92-122. *Peace Research Abstracts*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 30, 2017).

⁸¹ Alina Schartner. 2016. "The effect of study abroad on intercultural competence: a longitudinal case study of international postgraduate students at a British university." *Journal Of Multilingual & Multicultural Development* 37, no. 4: 402-418. *Humanities International Complete*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 30, 2017).

⁸² Ibid.

impacts on those other than the student studying abroad. This can include faculty and other students in the host school or members of the host family.

A study done in 2010 by Julie Cencula Olberding and Douglas J. Olberding hypothesized two things related to this ripple effect: H1: *Participants perceive the program as enhancing communications, relations, and trust between people from different countries.* H2: *The youth peacebuilding or exchange program increases participants' understanding and knowledge of other countries.* Students were surveyed both before and after their experience. 269 people participated in their survey, including study abroad students as well as those who would possibly be indirectly affected.⁸³

It was found that for H1, the “degree to which people from other countries are willing to listen and willing to share information” had a significant change between the pre and post evaluations. However, some of the highest mean scores came from the indirect participants. In terms of H2, it was discovered that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the item using the degree to which the the program changed participants understanding of the host country. European chaperones, an indirect participant, had the highest mean score for this item. Thus showing that after spending time with the American study abroad students, the chaperones changed their initial beliefs about students from the United States.⁸⁴

Overall, the study found, in its conclusion that the impacts of the study abroad program not only increased the cultural awareness and empathy of the students involved, but also of those who were indirectly participating in the study,

⁸³ Cencula, and Olberding.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

such as host families or professors and students at the host school. The effects of this outward reach included an increased knowledge and understanding of another country as well as more positive perceptions of those from a different country.⁸⁵

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL TRACK II DIPLOMACY

Another way to approach the hypothesis that study abroad helps facilitate track II diplomacy is to look at what makes track II diplomacy successful and to determine whether or not study abroad has those characteristics. According to *Building Networks of Diplomatic Cooperation* the most important components that contribute to the success of track II diplomacy are limiting government involvement, sharing resources, starting small, and broadening ties among universities and museums.⁸⁶

The first and one of the most important traits of successful track II diplomacy is limiting government involvement. This is most effective when it is done in the initial stages of the building of new civilian relationships. The person-to-person approaches are best done when the government agenda is kept separate. It is also important for institutions that are apolitical to take the lead in relations. Although some universities receiving funding or grants from the government, many are totally separate and would definitely constitute as apolitical. Also, at least in the United States, education has often been separated from the federal government, therefore making study abroad fall in line with this trait.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Cencula, and Olberding.

⁸⁶ Runde and Zargarian, 9.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Sharing resources and starting small are two other important aspects of track II diplomacy. Sharing resources can include things such as digital libraries, academic research, or even equipment or technology. Although study abroad does not directly cause the sharing of resources, the relationship that it allows to build often later leads way to the sharing of resources and partnering of universities. Starting small is something easily attained by a study abroad relationship between universities. Higher education institutions will often begin by allowing foreign faculty to visit their institution and allowing a relationship to build slowly before finally beginning a study abroad or exchange program.⁸⁸

Finally, broadening ties among universities is obviously being achieved when new study abroad programs are created or programs that are already in place are expanded. This final aspect of track II diplomacy is the the essence of this hypothesis and shows how study abroad programs do in fact help facilitate track II diplomacy.

⁸⁸ Runde and Zargarian, 9.

Study Abroad and Track II Diplomacy

Chapter 3

INTRODUCTION

This section of the paper will focus on the second hypothesis or H2 of the thesis. H2 states that study abroad experiences have the potential to increase individuals' positive opinions of other cultures and even increase cultural awareness. Because Track II diplomacy can be difficult to measure because it involves the interpersonal relationships of individuals and qualitative data, the researcher believes that the best way to tackle it is through looking at intercultural competence and empathy. Intercultural competence, as defined in the literature review is a "complex set of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately in interactions with others that linguistically and culturally are different from themselves."⁸⁹ And empathy, is the ability to, see someone else's perspectives and understand their point of view, even if it is not the same as your own.

To look at cultural competency and empathy, the researcher will use personally conducted interviews with James Madison University students who have studies abroad, as well as data from the BEVI, a test that measures students' beliefs, events, and values, from the past three years. This data and interviews will focus on students who studied abroad for a semester or full summer term. Unfortunately these only limit the researcher to study abroad destinations in Europe. Although non-traditional study abroad programs or programs that are in Africa, the Middle East or Asia, may prove interesting or pertinent to this study, James Madison

⁸⁹ A. E. Fantini, 2007. Exploring and assessing intercultural competence, Center for Social Development, Global Service Institute.

University only offers short term programs in these locations. Because of this, the data collected would not be consistent because time spent in the host country would vary.

SEMESTER PROGRAMS

The semester study abroad programs at James Madison University include the Florence, Antwerp, Salamanca and London programs. Because of the different styles of each of these programs, they each tend to attract a certain stereotype of student. This is important to note, because although some students might feel as though their cultural empathy or competency increased through their experience, they may have already had high levels of these to begin with. Often what motivates students to study abroad can often change what they get out of it because of how they choose to approach their experience.

The Florence and London programs, for example, include mostly general education classes and as a result, attract a younger group of students. Students who participate in these programs are able to fulfill general education requirements for James Madison University as well as take cultural classes pertaining to the country. Because these students are generally younger, and in the beginning half of their college career, most of them who were interviewed stated that they already knew they wanted to travel and study abroad before starting at James Madison University. Student B, a senior communications major who studied abroad in Florence the summer before their second year at JMU said, "I came into JMU doing a lot of research on my major and everything it had to offer. I heard that JMU's study abroad programs were some of the best in the country. So I already knew I wanted to set

aside a summer to go abroad when I came to JMU.”⁹⁰ She also said that she set aside specific general education courses that she knew she could complete in Florence because “I knew Italy was someplace I had always wanted to go and explore,” she said. Student B even stated that she already knew that she wanted to incorporate traveling into her career before she studied abroad.⁹¹

Student E, a senior Social Media Arts and Design major with a concentration in Communication studied abroad spring semester of her second year at JMU in London. Like Student B, she knew she wanted to participate in a study abroad program before she began her studies at James Madison University. “I visited London when I was in high school and when I was looking at colleges I definitely made it one of my requirements to have a good study abroad program. So it kind of started in the beginning. I just liked traveling. When I saw there was an opportunity in London I already knew how much I loved the city and wanted to live there for a longer amount of time,” she said.⁹² Student E realized that she did not get the full experience the first time she went to London and wanted to experience a more immersive trip. She also noted that she was one of the youngest students who participated in the London program during her term.

The Antwerp program, on the other hand, focuses completely on third year, College of Business students. In this program they complete their COB 300 capstone course, often thought as one of the most difficult in the business major. This study

⁹⁰ Student B. Interviewed with Makena Rafferty-Lewis. Personal Interview. Harrisonburg, VA, January 24, 2018

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Student E. Interviewed with Makena Rafferty-Lewis. Personal Interview. Harrisonburg, VA, January 25, 2018.

abroad program in mainly for older business students in order for them complete requirements in their major, with the added bonus of studying abroad. Student A, a senior marketing major who went abroad with the Antwerp program during the fall semester of their third year at James Madison University stated that she mainly went abroad to complete her major requirements and to have fun. “I heard from a lot of people that COB 300 was going to be a lot easier there. Plus I wanted to go abroad. I heard from my business fraternity that COB 300 was so fun and you learn a lot there so that was the best option,” she said.⁹³

Although most students participate in the Antwerp program to fulfill academic requirements, some students still hope to gain a cultural experience. Student D, who graduated early in the winter of 2017 and went to Antwerp the summer before her last semester, said she used it as a chance to experience visiting a new country. “I had never been to Europe or any place like that and I knew that the abroad program for Antwerp was a good experience, especially with COB 300,” she said.⁹⁴

The Salamanca program also attracts a different kind of student because of the language requirement. Students must be at a certain Spanish level before they are able to participate in this study abroad. Because of this, students who go to Salamanca are generally more interested in cultural and language emersion. Student E also participated in the Salamanca program the summer before her fourth year at James Madison University. After going to London, “I wanted to do something that

⁹³ Student A. Interviewed with Makena Rafferty-Lewis. Personal Interview. Harrisonburg, VA, January 21, 2018.

⁹⁴ Student D. Interviewed with Makena Rafferty-Lewis. Personal Interview. Harrisonburg, VA, January 25, 2018.

pushed me even more. It was a good opportunity to practice [Spanish] and push myself outside of my comfort zone even more,” she said. “I defiantly got more confident in speaking.”⁹⁵

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

The adjustment period that each student experiences while traveling abroad differs depending on their personal background and where they are traveling. This can also affect a student's intercultural competence and their desire to be more culturally aware. If a student has a more difficult time adjusting, they may be less likely to feel empathy towards another culture or not have as much of a desire to be culturally aware. On the other hand, if a student has a positive experience adjusting, they would be more likely to want to increase their intercultural competency.

From the students who were interviewed, there seemed to be a pattern of how a student adjusted depending on which program they attended. Students who participated in the Florence and London programs seemed to adjust more easily because they had been abroad before. “Being from where I am, the culture is already really different in Hawaii and I think my eyes were already open to that and I felt that I really wanted to experience everything,” Student B said.⁹⁶

Although some students were able to adapt easily to the cultural change, they still encountered difficulties in day-to-day life. Student E felt somewhat out of place when she first arrived to London. “I thought it was very high fashion and very fancy. Almost like I wouldn't fit in. But once I got there you realize there are normal people

⁹⁵ Student E.

⁹⁶ Student B.

everywhere and it isn't extreme as you expect it to be."⁹⁷ Student E felt that adjusting to being in London was easier though because the language was the same. "But there are always different words for the same thing or how you are supposed to behave in certain interactions. We were a group of Americans and we can get kind of loud. And you know when you are on the tube it is frowned upon to get loud and interrupt other people's journeys. Just keeping in check how our culture fits in in other cultures," she said.⁹⁸

Although Student E did not have to deal with the language barrier, students in Italy did. Student B recalls a time when she was trying to rent a car to do some extra traveling. "We were trying to rent a car from this guy and I knew no Italian words for anything that had to do with that. It was interesting to see how badly he wanted to communicate with me and I wanted to communicate with him and we were trying to make it work and it opened my eyes that people are the same anywhere you go but the language barrier can just be tricky. But it's great when you can find a way to come to the same level of understanding with each other," she said.⁹⁹ Although she struggled with communication, Student B says that it helped her become more understanding of another culture. She noticed that they had to learn to connect in new ways which made her feel closer to the people she was meeting, even though they seemed so different from herself.

Students who studied abroad in Antwerp had different experiences adjusting. The program itself does not focus on cultural emersion, however, all of the student

⁹⁷ Student E.

⁹⁸ Student E.

⁹⁹ Student B.

who were interviewed from the Antwerp trip had never been abroad before. This caused them to have a tougher time in their cultural adjustment. Student C, a senior finance major who went abroad to Antwerp the spring semester of their third year at James Madison University, said that because he was abroad right after the 2016 Presidential election, people were constantly cornering him, asking about politics. “It was actually worse than I thought it was going to be, because I realized people there actually follow politics in the U.S,” he said. “Everywhere I go they would just recognize our accent and ask me questions about politics and I was like woah I don’t even get this in America.”¹⁰⁰ Student C didn’t particularly like talking about the election and he said it was difficult having people he didn’t know ask him about it all the time.

Students who studied abroad in Salamanca, were often more experienced travelers, but the program itself focuses on immersion because of the language portion and having students live with host families. Student E said it was an adjustment living with a host family because they acted so different than her own parents. “The padre (host father) would just be more assertive as to what he wanted and how he wanted it. My mom would probably tell my dad to go do it himself. It is easy to say oh that’s wrong of him to speak to her like that but is it wrong? That is there culture. And you really have to learn how to not project your own culture on to other people and realize it’s not wrong, it’s just different,” she said.¹⁰¹ However, Student E said that she was able to adapt to her new home in Salamanca and truly

¹⁰⁰ Student C. Interviewed with Makena Rafferty-Lewis. Personal Interview. Harrisonburg, VA, January 24, 2018.

¹⁰¹ Person E.

become invested in the people she met there and what was going on in Spain as a whole. She said that she really realized that there are whole systems and lives that are happening outside of her home in the United States.

HOW STUDENTS CHANGED

This section will use the qualitative data gathered from the interviews to help prove H2 that studying abroad increases cultural awareness and improve a students' opinion about other cultures. All of the students who were interviewed stated that they changed in some way after studying abroad. Some students felt that they became less judgmental, more trusting, or even more able to work in diverse groups. Student A felt that she learned a lot about her self and became more mature throughout her study abroad experience in Antwerp. She told a story that she felt shaped her experience.

"I had a lot of bad luck abroad. For instance we were at a restaurant in Italy and I caught our breadbasket on fire. Imagine if someone did that in America, I would have thought they were an idiot. I feel like I have more empathy now, for people when things like that happen to them, because I stuck out like a sore thumb," she said. "Before I feel like I was more bratty and would judge people more often than not. Now I feel like I have been to these places and have seen a lot of different perspectives. Now after going abroad I have been the outsider who doesn't know what's happening."

Student A felt that after her study abroad experience, she was able to be more understanding of people of different cultures. She said that after spending time in

another country where she was the one who felt out of place, that she is much more likely to give people the benefit of the doubt in the future.

Student D said that she learned valuable lessons about traveling alone as a young woman. She talks about one time when she lost her friends while shopping and a woman offered her help. And I would have never asked for help but she could clearly see that I was distraught and upset,” she said. “The biggest thing is that there are a lot of good people in the world. And they may not look like you or talk like you or have anything, maybe even in common with you. But they are good and that was maybe one of the biggest thing I learned. I think that opened my mind for when I go to other places.”¹⁰² Student D stated that she soon realized that friendly and helpful people could be anywhere, even if they are different than you. She felt that this experience truly made her change her view of the world and empathy for others. “I am going into public accounting and accounting you can do anywhere. Now because of my study abroad experience, I actually want to go abroad and work abroad because the company I am working for is international. I loved my experience, I wouldn’t change it for the world,” Student D said.¹⁰³

One of the final examples that can show how students changed during and after their experience is that they were able to adapt to better work in diverse groups. Student C worked with a group of all Belgium students while in Antwerp. “I was the only American,” he said. “We did a sustainability project and the one thing I took from it was adapting to how they responded to criticism and how not to push

¹⁰² Student D.

¹⁰³ Student D.

their buttons too much and be patient, because there was a language barrier.”¹⁰⁴ Student C realized how important it is to be understanding of the fact that other cultures do things differently.

Student C learned to change how he did things in order to be more productive with others. “You kind of had to work on their time, because they don’t work past nine to five, the normal business hours which was kind of frustrating because you cant work after class,” he said.¹⁰⁵ After his time abroad, Student C now feels that he would like to work abroad because he would benefit more working with a diverse set of people rather than those who were just from the United States.

These students all changed in somewhat different ways, however, social maturity, understanding, and becoming comfortable with diversity are all major factors that go into intercultural competency and empathy. “I was thinking that going abroad will magically fix the uncertainty about my future career path and how I think of my self; like I’m going to come back Audrey Hepburn or something. But it didn’t of course,” Student B said. “It happened in a gradual way. When I got back I just felt like something had shifted almost, I felt more calm with myself, I felt more experienced and I felt more capable of figuring things out on my own.”¹⁰⁶ Like Student B, everyone interviewed felt a stronger general understanding and willingness to work to communicate with people from different cultures. They all felt that their experiences had made them more open minded and felt that they were much more likely to be more accepting and travel abroad in the future. Although

¹⁰⁴ Student C.

¹⁰⁵ Student C.

¹⁰⁶ Student B.

some students had isolated negative experience on their trip abroad, they discounted them as simply part of traveling abroad, not due to the study abroad program itself. Although some students had things go wrong on their trip, or unexpected setbacks, they chalked these up to learning experiences and events that helped them grow personally as individuals. All of the students surveyed came away with an overall positive perspective on their study abroad experience.

BEVI DATA

The BEVI data being used in this study was taken from Fall 2015 to Summer 2017. It includes data from students who studied abroad in one of the semester programs during the Fall, Spring, and Summer between these dates. In total, data from 296 students was collected; 94 from Antwerp, 94 from Florence, 72 from London, and 38 from Salamanca. Although this is a smaller sample size than usual, this data set includes a unique set of data that is not usually gathered through the BEVI testing. Generally, students take the BEVI before they study abroad (T1), then right before or right after they return home (T2). Unfortunately, the problem with this is that these T1 and T2 data sets, there is no way to account for the re-adjustment period once a student has returned home. Often times, student prepare to adjust to a new culture when they leave for their study abroad, however, they do not expect to need to adjust when they return back to their home country.¹⁰⁷

Although the BEVI uses multiple scales to measure beliefs and values, this study will focus on using Scale 8: socio-emotional convergence, scale 15:

¹⁰⁷ Nan M. Sussman, "Re-entry research and training: Methods and implications." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 10, no. 2 (1986): 235-254.

sociocultural openness, and scale 17: global resonance. The Socio-emotional convergence scale addresses openness and awareness of one's self and others and the larger world. People who score high on this scale are able to see the world in shades of gray. The Sociocultural openness scale looks at ones ability to be progressive and open minded regarding a wide range of actions, policies and practices. The higher the score, the more open they are. The global resonance scale looks at ones investment in learning about and encountering different groups, languages and cultures. A person who scores high on this scale seeks global engagement.

BEVI DATA

Table 1: ANTWERP DATA

	Socio-emotional Convergence	Sociocultural Openness	Global Resonance
Average	-8.23	-5.99	-7.62
Standard Deviation	20.75	24.00	27.13
Percent Increasing	34.41	34.41	33.33
Percent Decreasing	62.37	53.76	54.84
Percent Staying Equal	3.23	11.83	11.83

Table 2: FLORENCE DATA

	Socio-emotional Convergence	Sociocultural Openness	Global Resonance
Average	-2.38	0.55	-1.77
Standard Deviation	21.79	18.68	22.18
Percent Increasing	44.09	41.94	40.86
Percent Decreasing	52.69	44.09	45.16
Percent Staying Equal	3.23	13.98	13.98

Table 3: LONDON DATA

	Socio-emotional Convergence	Sociocultural Openness	Global Resonance
Average	-6.83	-7.17	-4.32
Standard Deviation	24.87	24.96	25.85
Percent Increasing	35.21	40.85	35.21
Percent Decreasing	59.15	56.34	52.11
Percent Staying Equal	5.63	2.82	12.68

Table 4: SALAMANCA DATA

	Socio-emotional Convergence	Sociocultural Openness	Global Resonance
Average	-1.95	-2.27	-1.35
Standard Deviation	18.97	16.39	19.64
Percent Increasing	37.84	43.24	37.84
Percent Decreasing	48.65	32.43	37.84
Percent Staying Equal	13.51	24.32	24.32

Table 5: TOTAL DATA

	Socio-emotional Convergence	Sociocultural Openness	Global Resonance
Average	-5.26	-3.48	-4.32
Standard Deviation	21.98	21.80	24.48
Percent Increasing	37.63	40.00	36.61
Percent Decreasing	56.95	48.14	48.81
Percent Staying Equal	5.42	11.86	14.58

DATA ANALYSIS

The data analyzed for the four separate semester abroad programs (Tables 1-5) was measured on the three scales of socio-emotional convergence, sociocultural openness, and global resonance which are all scales ranging from 1-100; one being the lowest possible score and 100 being the highest. The numbers represent a percentage of the students that either increased or decreased their

score on each respective scale. There is also an average score that gives average percentage of increased or decreased amounts. Because the results from the four separate programs were so similar, they will be discussed in terms of the total data, or the average results from all of the programs. On average, the socio-emotional convergence decreased by about five points with 37.63% of student's scores increasing from T1 to T2 and 56.95% decreasing. The sociocultural openness of students also decreased by about three points with 40.00% of students scores increasing from T1 to T2 and 48.14% decreasing. Finally, the global resonance score decreased by about four points with 36.61% of students scores increasing form T1 to T2 and 48.81% of decreasing.

Overall, the Antwerp data decreased the most from T1 to T2. This can mainly be attributed to the idea that students participating in this program for the level of difficulty of the course compared to taking it in the United States at James Madison University's main campus. The College of Business capstone class is widely known to be much easier if taken abroad in Antwerp. Because of this, students are less likely to focus on cultural experiences and widening their global lenses, and focus more on the 'fun' aspect of being abroad while taking an easy class. London came in with the second highest decrease. This can be attributed to the fact that most students do the London study abroad program when they are in their first or second year at James Madison University. They are younger and less mature than students who go abroad later in their college years. Because of this, the students may be less open culturally or less willing to make an effort to diversify their views. The Salamanca program decreased the least from T1 to T2. This can be attributed to the

fact that students attending the Salamanca study abroad program are participating in the program because of its cultural and language immersion aspects. All of these students are majoring or minoring in Spanish and know the language expectations before they go on the trip. Because of this, students would be more likely to be culturally open and willing to broaden their thinking about other cultures and more prepared to do so on their trip.

Although this data is inconsistent with the hypotheses, it is quite common that right as students are finishing their study abroad experience, they are tired, and getting ready to return home. This attitude can change the results of the BEVI and often show that students go backwards in a sense and become less culturally open. Although, we can clearly see when speaking to students in the interviews, later on about their study abroad, none of them have these types of feelings. For many students, after a month or so of re-adjustment time, their scores for the BEVI have the potential to rebound and come back to match or exceed their cultural scores.¹⁰⁸ This is why a T3 score would be incredibly useful, but is not currently part of usual BEVI test methodology. However there was a study done using data from the Forum BEVI Project, a national, multi-year, and multi-institution project that assesses the processes and outcomes of international, multicultural, and transformative learning via the BEVI.¹⁰⁹ This Data can be seen in Table 6. The data is measured on a scale from 1-100; 1 being that there is no socio-emotional convergence/sociocultural

¹⁰⁸ Sussman, "Re-entry research and training: Methods and implications."

¹⁰⁹ V. Hart, Kenny, P., Giesing, W., Wang, F., Staton, R., Sternberger, L., & Shealy, C. "Assessment of beliefs, values, and global learning: A mixed methods approach". *Poster presented at the 16th Annual Engagement Scholarship Consortium Conference at Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA. September 2015.*

openness/global resonance, and 100 being there is the most amount possible of the aforementioned three factors. This number is made from an average of the students' scores. The data includes T3 data, which is taken from the BEVI results of students six months after their return from their study abroad program. This data is measured on

Table 6

	T1	T2	T3
Socio-emotional Convergence	64	39	75
Sociocultural Openness	48	35	62
Global Resonance	58	39	68

It is clear that there is a dip from T1 to T2 data. However, after the six months of time after the students return home, their score goes back up in all three categories, exceeding their T2 and even initial T1 score. This study shows that it is plausible for students' scores to rebound after their T2 test.

Study Abroad and Track II Diplomacy

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

The theses tested in this study were that study abroad can have a positive impact on the person to person relationships between nations, or nations' track II diplomacy (H1) and if study abroad experiences can change individuals' opinions or increase cultural awareness (H2). The outcome of this study, based on student interviews as well as BEVI data was that both of these hypotheses can be considered highly probable. Because this is qualitative data, and there are no specific studies in place to measure these kinds of hypotheses, the researcher finds that although H1 and H2 are highly probable, there is no way to say they have been unequivocally proven. This study decided that measuring empathy and intercultural competence would be the best way to look at a student's reaction or change in thought.

Although the BEVI does provide some concrete quantitative data, there are some major flaws in the questionnaire. First of all it is incredibly long and the answers rely on students willingness to participate and take the test, which often takes more than 30 minutes of time. Second of all, although the questionnaire for the BEVI is public, it is not made public which questions on the survey go into the score for each scale used for measurement. Some questions may contribute to multiple scale scores. However, the BEVI creator is very protective of the specific items on the BEVI that connect to each scale. This is because the questionnaire is designed so that the student taking it, does not know what the BEVI is trying to discover which

each question. Therefore, it is less likely that students are able to 'lie' to the BEVI because they don't know what each question is trying to figure out.

Finally, the BEVI is generally only given in sets of T1 and T2 data, or in other words, before a student studies abroad and directly after. For more accurate data, the test should include T1, T2, and T3 data, testing a student a couple of months after they return home. It could also be beneficial to test students after a longer amount of time, 10 years for instance, after their study abroad experience. It could be beneficial to see if their scores in the socio-emotional convergence scale, sociocultural openness scale, and global resonance scale were still as high as they were at the point of the T3 scores. This could give more insight on the lasting effects of study abroad and really help to see if Track II diplomacy was being affected by these students' experiences.

One counter argument to the T1-T2 data dip, then resurgence with T3 is that attending a university promotes cultural openness and study abroad actually has a negative impact on that. Then once a student returns from study abroad and re-enters university life, the 'bad effect' from study abroad wears off and you continue increasing your cultural openness due to the attendance of university. However, this claim can be refuted using the qualitative data from the interviews. The individual interviews with the students and the anecdotal data proves that although negative things can happen to a student during their study abroad experience, their overall take-away is positive and the study abroad does not decrease a student's desire to be culturally aware. The anecdotal data aligns with the T3 results and fits with the post study abroad timeline. Another way to go a step further to prove this would be

to have a control group of university students who had not studied abroad take the BEVI when they first entered college and after they complete it. Unfortunately because of the time limitation of this thesis, this option was not available.

Although this study did the best research possible with the information available, there are some other avenues that could be explored which would increase the legitimacy of the study in the long run. First of all, more BEVI data collection would go a long way in increasing the legitimacy of the data gathered. Secondly, the information is currently only gathered from the United States end of the study abroad. If international students could be interviewed or tested by the BEVI to see what their experience is when they study abroad in the United States, it would change the scope of the study.

In addition, the data would be more reliable if students from other universities, besides James Madison University, could have been included in the study. It is possible that, because of its proximity to Washington D.C., and it being a liberal arts college, the scores from T1-T3 would see a greater increase than the scores of students who were surveyed that go to school in the Midwest, or attend a private university. However, based on this research, because so many students from different cultural backgrounds were surveyed, it is highly plausible that there would be similar increases in students' scores, even if they attended a different university.

Another aspect to look at is the scope of the data gathered. Because the only substantial BEVI data available was on the semester programs of Antwerp, Salamanca, Florence, and London, this limits the results of the study. If more BEVI data could be gathered on short term study abroad experiences or long term

semester programs outside of Europe, or non-traditional study abroad, this would possibly yield different results than what were concluded in this study. This raises the question, as to why James Madison University does not offer semester programs in unconventional places, such as Africa or the Middle East. It is possible that there is simply not a demand for these types of programs from students. In the opinion of the researcher, there would be a greater adjustment period for a student spending a semester with a program that was not in Europe. Because it might be harder to adjust to a non-western culture, students might be less likely to participate in the program. However, once a student passed the adjustment period, it is quite possible that the benefit would be much larger than that of a study abroad program in Europe. The T1-T3 data could see even more of an increase. As students are exposed to cultures that are so different from their own, their cultural awareness and empathy might increase more than it would if they were spending their time abroad in Europe.

Overall, based on the research gathered, it is highly probable that students who experience study abroad are more likely to empathetic to other cultures as well as have an increased intercultural competency. Because of this, it is more likely that they will be able to participate more effectively in Track II diplomacy. In conclusion, because this study chose to measure the success of Track II Diplomacy as empathy for other cultures, it can be seen that Study Abroad and activities like it, which broaden ones' intercultural competency and openness also increase empathy for others who are of a different cultural background. Therefore, it is highly probable that study abroad, as it increases empathy, does have a positive impact on Track II

Diplomacy (H1). It can also be deduced from this study, that a study abroad experience is very likely to change an individuals opinion and level of cultural awareness of people from other cultures (H2).

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