

# Exploring the Impact of a Short-Term Study Abroad Experience: Learning in Ethiopia across the Years

**Michele Parker**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Heidi Higgins**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Meredith Jones**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Cherie Chandler<sup>1</sup>**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Kayce Smith<sup>1</sup>**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Jennifer Stalls<sup>1</sup>**

University of North Carolina Wilmington

## Abstract

In higher education, there has been an increased call to engage students in global opportunities and develop their intercultural skills. Study abroad experiences are often used to help build these skills. This study was conducted to investigate students' perceptions of a short-term study abroad experience in Ethiopia, especially which aspects of the experience provided opportunities for students to increase their intercultural competence. Participants consisted of 20 pre-service education students enrolled in either a graduate or undergraduate program and traveled to Ethiopia during the 2015, 2017, or 2019 trips. We used a qualitative research method of document analysis to analyze the data, including digital stories and blogs. Excerpts of the data highlight how the pre-service teachers made sense of their experiences. Findings from this study reveal that participation in the short-term study abroad experiences positively influenced students' intercultural development. We discuss the pedagogical implications regarding programmatic considerations and how these influenced students' cultural sensitivity and ability to apply and extend their learning in an unfamiliar environment.

## Keywords

qualitative research; intercultural competence; study abroad; cross-cultural sensitivity; global engagement

---

<sup>1</sup> Contributed as a doctoral student author.

## **Introduction**

According to the Open Doors (2020) report, the number of U.S. students participating in study abroad programs has quadrupled since 1990, with 11% of all undergraduate students studying abroad during their degree program. The duration of these programs varies, ranging from eight weeks or less to a semester. Some even last the entire academic year. Data collected from study abroad experiences during the 2018/2019 academic year indicate that 64.9% of these experiences were short-term programs that occurred either during the summer or were eight weeks or less (Institute of International Education, 2020). Reasons for the increased popularity of short-term programs include the fact that barriers related to time commitments are often easier to overcome when less time is spent away from home. In addition, these programs are often more affordable, less likely to interfere with a student's academic schedule, and typically will not delay graduation (Donnelly-Smith, 2009). Long-term study abroad experiences provide students with time for in-depth exploration. However, most scholars agree that shorter study abroad experiences are worthwhile and can provide growth opportunities (e.g., Addleman et al., 2014; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011).

At many colleges and universities, the internationalization of higher education is a strategic goal (e.g., Kehm & Teichler, 2007; Pettitt & Macari, 2017; Siaya & Hayward, 2003). Post-secondary educators can provide opportunities to enhance intercultural engagement and understanding through undergraduates' coursework and co-curricular activities (e.g., Deardorff, 2011; Ruddock & Turner, 2007; Song, 2020). Study abroad programs allow students to engage globally and develop intercultural skills (Alonso-Marks & Hernandez, 2020). These intercultural skills can be centered around the political, religious, economic, historical, and cultural diversity of children and families in the school community who come from different countries (Trilokekar & Kukar, 2011). According to Fox and McIntyre (2019), participating in a study abroad program can positively impact employment skills.

Study abroad programs for education majors offer students opportunities to interact with individuals from other cultures and explore educational systems and teaching philosophies that differ from those in the United States. These opportunities are essential as the school-age population in the United States continues to become more racially and ethnically diverse. Classroom teachers must demonstrate cultural sensitivity when working with students in their classrooms. In this study, we draw from the construct of cultural humility, which originated in the medical field in the 1990s and promoted a holistic approach in working and engaging with individuals from other cultures (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998).

Cultural humility is not a linear continuum with a start and an end, but a lifelong process of focusing on self-reflection, engaging in personal critique, recognizing power imbalances in relationships, and acknowledging one's own biases (Wheeler, 2018). We see this as an essential learning outcome for study abroad, as cultural humility involves entering relationships with others to honor the other person's beliefs, values, and customs while being humble in one's ability to become fully knowledgeable. While abroad, for students to be culturally humble, they need to constantly learn from others within the culture, reflect critically on their assumptions about the world, and engage in ongoing self-assessment. However, instructors must create safe spaces while abroad for students to debrief and discuss cultural challenges to increase students' intercultural sensitivity and shift cultural perspectives and behaviors (Anderson et al., 2016; McKeown, 2009).

Post-study abroad, students should engage in structured opportunities organized by the program faculty, staff in the study abroad office, or additional student affairs professionals that allow them to (re)connect with others with similar experiences and reorientations. Also, post-study abroad interviews, reflective papers, and cultural presentations provide students with opportunities to articulate learning, development, and the personal and academic growth they experienced. These options allow students to process their experiences to negotiate and renegotiate the impacts on their cultural awareness and world views (Kortegast & Boisfontaine, 2015). If not given opportunities to reflect and process their experiences, students will quickly forget (Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011), or student learning will be truncated (Kortegast & Boisfontaine, 2015).

This study explored students' perceptions of a short-term study abroad in Ethiopia and adds to the current literature on the benefits of short-term study abroad experiences by exploring trip data collected across three years. Furthermore, this study is aimed at university faculty who coordinate and supervise international field experiences. The following sections will highlight study abroad in Sub-Saharan Africa, followed by an overview of Ethiopia. Then we share a discussion on the study abroad course requirements.

### **U.S. Study Abroad Students in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Sub-Saharan Africa consists of African countries and territories partially or fully south of the Sahara (or not part of the Arab world). Within Sub-Saharan Africa, there are four distinct regions: Central Africa, East Africa, West Africa, and Southern Africa. The Institute of International Education's Open Doors Report (2020) reported that 13,455 U.S. students traveled to Sub-Saharan Africa. East Africa consists of 20 countries, with Tanzania as the preferred destination for study abroad students ( $n = 1,334$ ). Meanwhile, Ethiopia only had 249 students, which is less than any other East African country (Institute of International Education, 2020). Also, the authors of the Open Doors report noted that 88% of U.S. students who study abroad were undergraduates, and 11.6% were graduate students. Most undergraduates are juniors (33%) or seniors (29.4%). Sixty-seven percent are women, and 32.7% are men (Institute of International Education, 2020).

### **Ethiopia**

Ethiopia was chosen as a study abroad destination as part of our College of Education's global initiatives. The second author has personal connections within the country and was invited to explore Ethiopia as a possible International Study Abroad destination in 2014, with the destination approved in 2015.

Ethiopia is a landlocked country located in the Horn of Africa. It is a country rich in cultural and ethnic diversity and one of the oldest nations in the world (Milkias, 2011). Ethiopia prides itself as the only uncolonized African country with its unique alphabet, language, and calendar. According to the United Nations World Population Review (2021), over 118 million people in Ethiopia belong to more than 80 different tribes and ethnic groups. With the second-largest population in Africa, it also has one of the fastest-growing economies globally. However, with this rapid population growth, the country still struggles with issues of poverty, including child malnutrition, high child mortality rates, and inadequate health care (Life Water, 2020).

Education in Ethiopia is free and compulsory for students ages 7 to 14, but government schools continue to struggle from lack of resources and poor facilities with high student-to-teacher ratios. In the rural regions, many schools lack necessities, with more than three-quarters of the schools without access to electricity (Girma & Sarangi, 2019). The Ethiopian school system includes six years of elementary education and six years of secondary education. However, education is compulsory only for all children until the age of 14. Primary grade levels receive education in their native language until eighth grade. Then instruction is presented to students in English. Instruction in English is a challenge as the English language abilities of the teachers and the students tend to be limited. Although the expected years of schooling that a child would receive is 8.8 years, the average is 2.9 years. However, the literacy rate for men and women ages 15 years and older has improved and is currently at 51.8%, whereas it was only 34% in 1994 (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 2018).

### **Context of the Study**

The United States, like many other countries, is a multicultural society. College curricula must expose pre- and in-service educators to cultural diversity, helping them understand the influences of culture on education and gain awareness of how culture affects people (Ruddock & Turner, 2007). Faculty and staff are committed to student engagement, creative inquiry, critical thinking, thoughtful expression, and responsible citizenship at our university. The university's mission reflects diversity, globalization, and teaching excellence, reflected in strategic priorities (University of North Carolina Wilmington Strategic plan, 2016). As such, faculty and staff frequently engage undergraduate and graduate students in applied learning opportunities, including over 1,000 study abroad choices (University of North Carolina Wilmington International Programs, n.d.). Since 2008, 262 students from our university have studied in Africa, with most students (50%, n=130) traveling to South Africa. Twenty students (8%) have participated in short-term study abroad in Ethiopia. Because of the second author's relationships with Ethiopia, this trip was led by faculty members in the College of Education. The faculty member and Ethiopian connections secured all aspects of the trip, including housing, school visits, cultural excursions, and transportation.

### **The International Field Experience in Ethiopia**

The International Field Experience in Ethiopia is a short-term study abroad trip (approximately 10 days) designed for education majors. It is coordinated and supervised by the university faculty. Students and faculty depart for Ethiopia at the close of the fall semester, typically in mid-December. Recruitment for the Ethiopia study abroad begins in the spring semester, and the number of student participants is limited to 10. The limitation is intentional as we prefer to travel around Ethiopia in one van, which can only accommodate 14 passengers. A smaller group size allows for more intimate conversations, which is an integral part of the success of the trip. Students applying for the trip must be education majors, participate in pre- and post-departure meetings, and travel during the selected days. All students who met these requirements have been accepted into the program. Participation in the study abroad trip requires students to be enrolled in a 3-credit International Field Experience course during the fall semester.

Before departure, students were required to attend multiple pre-departure meetings focused on discussion topics, including:

- Useful phrases in conversational Amharic
- An overview of language structure, oral and written
- Ethiopian culture, Ethiopian education (e.g., structure, focus, curriculum)
- Connections between education and culture and how this compares to schools and schooling in the United States

During these initial meetings, students were also given time to explore potential English Language lessons that they could teach to students in Ethiopia. Planning was focused on determining materials that students may need to purchase or create to deliver a particular lesson or set of lessons. In these planning sessions, the discussion centered on the idea that students needed to spend time in the classrooms observing and talking to their assigned teacher(s) to determine the cultural appropriateness of their plans and would need to adjust, as necessary. The inaugural International Field Experience in Ethiopia occurred in December 2015, and the subsequent cohorts of students traveled to Ethiopia in December 2017 and 2019. See Table 1 for the composition of each cohort based on gender, race, experience abroad, and program level. As indicated, the majority of students were female and white. See Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Participants' Gender, Race, Experience Abroad and Educational Program by Cohort Year*

Year	Gender		Race/Ethnicity				Previous International Travel	Program Level		
	Male	Female	Asian	Black/African American	White	*Multiracial		Undergraduate	Master's in Teaching	Ed.D.
<b>2015</b>	-	8	1	-	5	2	4	5	1	2
<b>2017</b>	1	5	-	-	6	-	5	5	-	1
<b>2019</b>	-	6	-	1	5	-	4	5	1	-
<b>Total</b>	1	19	1	1	16	2	13	15	2	3

\*Both students self-identify as Black and White

## Course Requirements

The course requirements for the International Field Experience in Ethiopia included:

1. Attending and participating in course meetings before, during, and after travel
2. Creating a blog before departure with an identified area of research related to schools, learning, or teaching in Ethiopia
3. Blogging daily to document experiences in school and what was learned about the interest area
4. Blogging post-trip to reflect on overall experience
5. Engaging in the field experience
6. Creating a digital story about the impact of the experience on one's professional and personal life

After returning to the U.S., the university participants were asked to submit their digital stories. The primary faculty member did not include a description of a digital story in the course syllabus.

However, a digital story might synthesize voice, images, video clips, music or audio, and text in a brief package (de Jager et al., 2017; Flicker & Hill, 2014). During the 10-day trip, the university group spent time at different schools located in Addis Ababa. The level of engagement varied from school to school. It included opportunities to observe, provide instructional support, co-teach lessons with Ethiopian and American colleagues, and develop curricula and support materials. See Table 2 for information about the schools visited and the opportunities for engagement.

**Table 2**

*Description of Schools Visited in Ethiopia in 2015, 2017, and 2019*

School Number	Years Visited	Type of School and Grade Levels	Student Engagement Opportunities	Language Instruction
1	2015	Private pre-k through 8 school. Majority of students are Ethiopian with a few International.	Observed Provided instructional support Co-taught Lessons	English
2	2015	International pre-k through 12 school for children all over the world. Small percentage of Ethiopians attend the high school.	Observed Provided instructional support	English
3	2015	Government public pre-k through 12 school.	Observed	Amharic English Grades 9-12
4	2015, 2017, 2019	Private pre-k through 2 school for children identified as living below a set economic level. School serves lower socioeconomic families affected by HIV/AIDS.	Observed Provided instructional support Co-taught lessons Developed curricula and support materials	Amharic
5	2017, 2019	Private pre-k through 8 school with two campuses with nursery students separated from the main campus. Students are Ethiopian.	Observed Provided instructional support Co-taught lessons Developed curricula and support materials	English

---

6	2019	Private pre-k through grade 12 school with three campuses. Students are Ethiopian.	Observed Provided instructional support Co-taught lessons	English
7	2019	Private pre-k through grade 12 school with three campuses. Students are Ethiopian.	Observed Provided instructional support Co-taught lessons	English

---

During the international experience, the university group regularly interacted with Ethiopians in their daily environments, including home and leisure. For instance, in the 2015 and 2017 trips, university participants helped cook and serve meals and assisted with cleaning the campus of the fourth school. On the weekends, university participants had opportunities to explore parts of the city and surrounding areas. For example, students visited Born Free’s animal sanctuary outside of Addis Ababa. They also traveled to Bishoftu, and the first group spent a day with an alumna working with the Peace Corps in a small village outside of Addis. The students engaged in numerous coffee ceremonies and had a traditional meal at a local home. After school was dismissed, the university participants explored Ethiopian culture. These activities included visiting the National Museum of Ethiopia, exploring the Addis Merkato and Yod Abyssinia for a traditional Ethiopian dinner, and live performances of songs and dance from diverse Ethiopian ethnic groups. During the evenings, time was dedicated to group discussions prompting personal reflection.

### **Purpose of the Study**

In this qualitative study, we explore university participants’ lived experiences personally and professionally during the International Field Experience in Ethiopia. Specifically, we answered this qualitative research question: *What aspects of the short-term study abroad experience provided opportunities for students to grow personally and professionally?*

### **Methodology**

We conducted a qualitative research study about the International Field Experiences to Ethiopia in 2015, 2017, and 2019. This research focuses on the students’ experience on the ground. For each cohort year, we collected data from various sources (e.g., a focus group, pre- and post-questionnaire, digital stories). However, the consistent data sources across the three different cohorts were digital stories and blogs (see Table 3). Hence, document analysis was used to answer the research questions. Bowen (2009) defined document analysis as a “systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents” such as “electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material” (p. 27). Previously referenced as social facts, documents are produced, shared, and used in socially organized ways. The text (words) and images recorded without a researcher’s intervention can be examined and interpreted to elicit meaning, understand, and develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009).

## Blogs

The students used multiple formats for the blogs, including YouTube for the video blog and cloud-based platforms such as WordPress, Wix, Adobe Spark, and Weebly. Since two participants from 2015 had blogs with sites that are no longer in use, we had access to 18 blogs: eight blogs from 2015, five from 2017, and five from 2019. The study includes these 18 blogs, which consisted of 81,721 words, 267 pictures, and one video of 19 minutes and 38 seconds. The researchers downloaded the blogs and converted them to HTML files. Then we transferred the content to a Word document.

## Digital Stories

Each digital story had various presentation applications, including a voice narration over still pictures and videos, captions with still images, music, and an interactive presentation that used still photos, captions, and videos. The songs were either instrumental, consisting of lyrics related to their experiences, or lyrics and rhythms from an African country. Every story included a range of 15 to 74 still photographs from the trip. Nine digital stories from the original data set were still available for this study: one from 2015, three from 2017, and five from 2019. As the participants own the digital stories, many have deleted or removed their stories from their platforms.

## Data Analysis

We used a conventional content analysis approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) to analyze blogs and digital stories. As Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2008) stated, content analysis is commonly used with textual data. After reading the transcripts, MAXQDA 2022 was used to determine word counts. Then statements were coded and grouped into categories. Later we merged the categories into themes representing patterns of experiences. We used notes and graphic organizers “to code, annotate, retrieve, and arrange data in different configurations for analytic reflection and discovery” (Miles et al., 2020, p. 42). For credibility, an audit trail provided a detailed account of how the study was conducted and how the data was analyzed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Methodological triangulation provided corroboration and confirmation of the findings (Bekhet & Zauszniewski, 2012). We used detailed descriptions to facilitate transferability (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

## Results

First, the codes from the blogs and then the digital stories are presented. Categories and themes across the methods follow this information.

### Blogs

For blogs, codes included *students, schools, teachers, classrooms, coffee, breakfast, Amharic, book, songs, learn, market, and culture*. In MAXQDA, the two-case models for 2017 and 2019 and 2015 and 2019 were generated. These comparisons shared six frequently used words: (1) friend, (2) love, (3) family, (4) traffic, (5) students, and (6) Ethiopia. The words “students” were used the most, followed by “Ethiopia” and then “love.” The most similarity in terms exists between the blogs from the years 2015 and 2017. See Table 3.

**Table 3***Common Words in 2015, 2017, and 2019 blogs organized by the highest word frequency*

<b>2015</b>		<b>2017</b>		<b>2019</b>	
Word	n	Word	n	Word	n
Students	109	Teach	333	Students	473
Teach	60	Students	278	Ethiopia	192
Ethiopia	36	Ethiopia	117	Love	52
School 1	35	Experience	87	School 7	35
Learn	26	Learn	78	Family	31
Coffee	25	Coffee	66	Friend	23
School 4	24	Love	45	Traffic	14
Love	20	School 5	41		
Church	12	International School	31		
Experience	12	Family	30		
Family	10	Give	27		
Prepare	8	School 4	24		
Friend	6	Food	23		
Food	5	Prepare	13		
Games	4	Friend	12		
Give	3	Museum	9		
Traffic	3	Traffic	8		
Museum	2	Games	8		
		Church	3		

## Digital Stories

The text within the digital stories centered on education (N=124). Next, in terms of frequency, were landscape, architecture, or buildings (N=71), and food or drink (N=56). A list of codes is provided from highest to lowest frequency. See Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Codes for the digital stories from 2015, 2017, and 2019 trips*

Code	n
Education	124
Landscape or Architecture	71
Meals or Coffee	56
University and Ethiopia	20
University	18
Clothing	12
Activities at School	8
Ethnic Diversity and Collectivism	7
Students in Ethiopia	6
Adults in Ethiopia	5
Music or Instruments	5
Social welfare, healthcare, disability	5
Economy, government, jobs	4
Industrialization	2
Language	1

To analyze music as social data, Bauer (2000) articulated three steps of analysis required: the need to (1) transcribe the sound event for analysis; (2) describe elements of sound such as dimensions of rhythm, melody, and harmony; and (3) associate a particular structure of sounds with a social group that produces it, is exposed to it, and listens to it. Within the digital stories, the fast beats of

the rhythm, the words of lyrics in two songs, and the instruments communicate cheerfulness. For instance, “Ancient Energy” was an instrumental song played in one digital story. The song had a soothing, optimistic rhythm played by a flute and strings, guitar, drums, and piano. The lyrics from “Best Day of My Life” and “I Lived” speak to the relationships built, places visited, experiences in the schools, traditions, and food in Ethiopia. One song with African language had djembe drums and call and response singing. As Given (2008) notes, “musical concepts can provide structures for conceptualizing and communicating” (p. 537). Table 5 describes the music and songs integrated into the digital stories, reflecting students’ positive experiences in Ethiopia.

**Table 5**

*Description of the music within Digital Stories from 2015 through 2019*

	2015	2017	2017	2019
<b>Title of Song</b>	No Title	<i>Ancient Energy</i>	<i>I Lived</i> by OneRepublic	<i>Best Day of My Life</i>
<b>Genre</b>	African	Instrumental	Pop	Pop
<b>Description</b>	Drums, call and response lyrics, African language	Flute, guitar, and drums	Drums, guitar, synthesizer	Drums, guitar, synthesizer
<b>Software</b>	Ice Cream	Smilebox	KizoA	Video application using pictures as slideshow

### **Blogs and Digital Stories**

Codes such as *breakfast*, *lunch*, *dinner*, *coffee*, and [coffee] *ceremony* were combined into the category “food and drink.” Additional codes were grouped into categories (see Table 6).

**Table 6**

*Example codes and how they were merged into categories*

Example Codes	Categories
Education, activities at school, teachers, classrooms, lessons, children or kids, learning, play, help, book, recess, observing, resources, material, games, read, grade level, disability, meeting, reflection, math, knowledge, English	Education experiences
Breakfast, lunch, dinner, coffee	Food and Drink

Clothing, religion, traditional, language, Amharic, culture, ethnic diversity and collectivism, mountain, landscape, buildings, architecture, campus, music or instrument, dancing, song, coffee ceremony	Culture
Church, museum, mountain, campus, market, traffic, van, pollution and sanitation, architecture, buildings, city, Addis	Places Visited
Amazing, great, beautiful, fun[ny], wonder[ful], friendly, nice	Descriptions
Family, relationships, love, friends, heart, Milki, Director, students in Ethiopia, UNCW + Ethiopia, Adults and Ethiopia	Relationships

Then we merged categories (1) places visited, (2) culture, and (3) food and drink. The categories education, culture, and relationships were the basis of the three themes presented in order of prevalence in the data corpus.

1. Professional and educational experiences in Ethiopian schools.
2. Acknowledgment of Ethiopian culture includes food, clothing, museums, and way of life.
3. Relationships formed during the trip.

Each of these themes is described with contextual details and direct quotes from the university participants.

### **Professional and Educational Experiences in Ethiopian Schools**

A significant focus of the trip was university participants observing and participating in Ethiopian classrooms and schools. Participants discussed experiences where they practiced their professional skills and their overall experiences with Ethiopian teachers and students. One of the most common responses in participants' blogs centered on Ethiopian classrooms' culture and classroom practices. A favorite cultural practice observed by university participants was the morning ceremony where school children lined up outside to hear the morning message and engage in activities in Ethiopian schools. One university participant recounted what she saw:

*My favorite part was their morning announcements, when they recited their school's pledge and screamed three times, "I love my country, Ethiopia." ["I love my country, Ethiopia" - repeated three times in call and response between students].*

Once in classrooms, university participants observed teaching and learning practices. They were able to rotate among classrooms to gain insight into different grade levels. One participant recounted her experience. For example:

*I went into a first-grade classroom. Most of the students spoke no English. However, some knew basic words. The students had a tough time paying attention when we were in the room. They were interested in us. Several students passed me their stickers, drawings, and notes. Later today, I went into a fourth-grade classroom. I read a book to the students about football. The students liked the book since they clapped when I was finished. Together, we went to recess. We had the students play a game. Carrie would shout a number, and the students would get into groups of that number. The students enjoyed the game. We were able to practice saying numbers in English.*

Similarly, a participant in the first cohort reported:

*I spent time in a third-grade classroom. First, the students had an English lesson where they were learning about family members. I was able to flip through one student's notebook and saw that they had also been learning about fractions. Kimberley gave a great lesson on shapes and colors using some flashcards that she had brought. We distributed supplies, which excited the kids. Next, students had their Amharic lesson.*

These quotes illustrate the typical classroom experiences university participants observed in classrooms. During these observations, the participants also noticed their preconceived notions about the education system in Ethiopia. One participant shared:

*I underestimated the education system in Africa; I let stereotypes and assumptions cloud my judgment, but it has never felt so good to be wrong. The students are bright and eager to learn, and the teachers are passionate about what they do, despite the lack of resources.*

Finally, participants also reflected on how they practiced their professional skills while in Ethiopian classrooms. These experiences required university participants to modify previous lessons spontaneously and to navigate challenges in real time. An individual captured this experience by sharing:

*During our first day of observations at School 1, the principal informed us that we would be teaching the next day. When I walked upstairs to meet my partnership teacher, she seemed very confused, as if she did not know I was coming. She told me the students would be learning about fungi tomorrow. It was challenging to plan a lesson without Wi-Fi and the little information in their textbook that night. The following day when I walked into class, my teacher was nowhere to be found, and it was my job to teach the students an entire lesson. I did not even have a piece of chalk for the chalkboard. I believe in 'fake it until you make it,' and I did. I asked a student to hunt down some chalk for me, and I started facilitating a conversation about fungi. I would ask the students a broad question like "Is fungi good or bad" and have the students try think-pair-share. This strategy was difficult because these students were not used to working in groups and were taught to speak softly in class. When a student would share, I would have to repeat what they said for the class to hear. During one part of the lesson, a student who had not spoken all class said something extremely profound, and I slammed my hand on his desk and screamed, "yes!" For my students in the States, this would be normal. My students know when I am excited, I like to show it. Spontaneous screams and dance moves are typical. Unfortunately, this student who did not meet me until the day before assumed I was about to hit him and*

*flinched. This response made me realize I needed to turn down my big loud American personality.*

The same person shared their professional experience while at School 4:

*I have more experience in outdoor education than in traditional education. I developed a combination of the two during my time at this school. At this school, the classrooms are overcrowded and the size of a shoebox. When it was my turn to teach a lesson, I immediately brought all the students outside and continued their lesson of numbers in a big circle on the grass. These students knew little English, but from the help of my peers and plenty of examples, the game was underway, and it was a huge hit! Students would walk around in a circle during the game, and I would spontaneously yell a number. The students would then rush to create a group of that number. Any remaining students moved to another university participant to learn a song and dance. I had played this game many times in a camp setting and never realized how effective it could be teaching numbers in a foreign language. With few materials and little time plan, I learned the benefits of games like this.*

### **Acknowledgment of Ethiopian Culture Such as Food, Coffee, Clothing, and Way of Life**

Participants frequently commented on Ethiopian culture and traditions. Hosts invited our group to participate in a coffee ceremony in every location visited. Though not all participants like or drink coffee, they recognized its significance:

*It is quite an intricate ceremony, and it highlights all the aspects of Ethiopian social traditions. There is the hospitality aspect where you honor guests with a delicate part of their agriculture. It also displays the genuine humbleness and friendliness of Ethiopians. They share what they have and present it beautifully because you are new, and they honor you.*

During the afternoons and evenings, university participants traveled to various parts of Ethiopia, where they explored distinct locations, which allowed them to learn about the history and cultural traditions. Many of the sites visited are tourist spots though locals still use them. For example, one person wrote:

*The architecture of the Holy Trinity Cathedral church was beautiful! In one corner of the church is the burial of Emperor Haile Selassie I. During our tour, a funeral was taking place at the church. It was a fantastic experience to get a glimpse of this tradition.*

In a daily blog post, a participant recounted:

*We went to a museum after school, and the traffic was heavy. The museum was on the campus of Addis Ababa University. The Selassie Museum is housed in a former palace that is now a part of the university grounds. They had exhibits about their traditions, culture, and history.*

During every trip, university participants toured the National Museum of Ethiopia. The museum houses the fossilized skeletal remains of a female hominin. The skeleton dated 3.2 million years

ago (Lucy, n.d.) was found in 1974 by two researchers in Hadar in Ethiopia and called Lucy (Institute of Human Origins, n.d.). Reflecting on seeing Lucy at the museum, a participant shared:

*A sense of awe and wonder overtook me at the realization that I was in a place I had always wanted to see things I had always wanted to see. It was a humbling experience of being in Africa, where life seems to originate. I will never forget this feeling.*

As participants engaged with Ethiopians and explored the area, their writings indicated contrasts for what they were seeing and experiencing. At one local shop where scarves and other goods are woven, an individual described:

*It is a confusing mix match of technologies. The weaving barn was also confusing. Older men and women hand-woven scarfs on ancient looms while talking on cell phones.*

Another person attempted to describe what this meant:

*Although I will never explain the wonder and beauty that Ethiopia portrayed, I will always explain how simplistically beautiful the people were and how welcoming the culture is. I will try to explain the clash between the old and new cultures, and you see the variations of traditional and contemporary clothing styles. Everywhere, you could see religious and conservative clothing and more western-style choices. You could often see the meshing of the two, which indicates the evolution of the country and the pursuit for advancement. When traveling through Addis Ababa, participants noticed the affection commonly displayed solely among men and only among women. The endearment was between the same genders, rarely between men and women.*

A male participant described how he interpreted this interchange:

*I noticed many people holding hands, which symbolizes their unity. Milki reached and grabbed my hand. At that moment, I was no longer an outsider looking in. In that instant, I became part of the Ethiopian culture.*

### **Relationships Formed during the Trip**

The theme of relationships encompasses personal connections formed:

1. Among university participants and Ethiopian students
2. Between university participants
3. Between university participants and the guide for the trip

In schools, we spent time working alongside Ethiopian teachers and pupils. In many blogs, the university participants described forming relationships with Ethiopian pupils.

*These kids accepted us and our skin color, though they were fearless with their questions about our religions and our nationality. There were no barriers between us, and our different appearances served as awkward yet funny conversation starters, which led to learning experiences for all of us.*

In 2017, the participants had spent two days at the school and had met and interacted with the director when one participant became quite ill. The director noticed that the participant was sick

and helped navigate a trip to the local hospital. Reflecting on the experience, the participant observed:

*Let me say this: This remarkable woman, the Director, brought me back to life. From the second we stepped foot into the hospital, it was her way or the highway, and she made sure that I got the treatment I needed as quickly and efficiently as possible. She took my arm and wove me through the hospital.*

In 2017, at the end of the school day, the university group revisited school #4. This visit allowed us to participate in professional development with the teachers and administrators from the school. Presented by a university instructor, the activities were designed so that participants had to engage with different mathematical materials and interact with their colleagues. Seating arrangements were pre-determined so that university participants were intermixed with the Ethiopian teachers. One university participant reflected on this experience and the relationships that they formed:

*It was amazing to see our group, primarily strangers, put this fact aside to solve a puzzle made for elementary school kids. There was anger, but the funny type of anger and laughter heard at every table, and it was a positive experience. By the end of the activities, we all felt like equals, humans passionate about teaching.*

One of the doctoral participants shared:

*Today we observed classes, taught, and fed the students. The children are exceptional! I spoke with the board members of the school and the Director.*

As the trip ended, one university participant indicated:

*I enjoyed teaching the students dances and songs. I taught them the Wobble, Macarena, Boom Chicka Boom, and Cupid Shuffle. They love to dance. I played with the students and learned some of their traditional dances! The teachers and administrators are so sweet and helpful. Leaving Wednesday, I cried real tears. I felt like I was a part of their family, and they have forever changed my life.*

The design of the International Field Experience was such that university students and faculty experienced Ethiopia as a group and were not allowed to explore on their own. Unsurprisingly, the university participants often reflected on the relationships formed within the group. These examples about the last day in Ethiopia are from 2017 and 2019 respectively.

*We had fun getting pizza and ice-cream and just hanging out with Milki, but there was that elephant in the room the entire day. That night at the airport was the worst. Everyone sad and crying, not wanting to leave just yet. I can't even finish this blog post.*

Another university participant said:

*I gained many friends this trip, some that I am sure will be lifelong. The experiences and the bond that we have is unbreakable.*

Consistently highlighted in blogs was the guide and interpreter, Milki. For example, one person said:

*Milki has been the glue that has held this trip together. None of it could be possible without Milki. He is our transportation, entertainment, and personal tour guide with infinite wisdom. He is our “dad” on this trip in many ways.*

Meanwhile, another participant wrote:

*Milki (our driver, guide, and translator) took us to a fantastic local coffee bar.*

She further captured the relationship with Milki in this blog entry:

*After our day at school ended, we spent time at Milki’s house with his beautiful family and lots of tasty food. This night was one of my favorites we spent in Ethiopia. We were surrounded by delicious food, laughter, conversation, and company. Milki opened his home to us and treated us like we were his family. It was a night filled with lots of warm and fuzzy vibes.*

The relationships that we formed are exemplified by Milki saying:

*I am with my guests, my sweet family.*

A university participant echoed:

*And after just two short weeks in the beautiful country of Ethiopia, that precisely is what the people around us were: family.*

## **Discussion**

The present study examined how university students made sense of their personal and professional experiences during a study abroad trip to Ethiopia. Also, we explored aspects of the short-term study abroad experience that provided opportunities for university students to increase their intercultural humility.

### **Professional and Educational Experiences in Ethiopian schools**

Through the international field experience in Ethiopia, we sought to bring an intercultural and global dimension to students’ educational experiences. The university participants were given opportunities to observe Ethiopian classroom practices and lead classroom activities. These experiences prompted reflection on the similarities and differences between Ethiopian and U.S. classrooms. Furthermore, opportunities to lead classroom activities created experiences where students had to plan, implement, and modify lessons. It was the first experience leading hands-on classroom activities for many university participants. Providing hands-on learning activities during a study abroad experience provides a deeper level of learning beyond typical tourism study abroad trips. For example, in Jones and Catapano’s (2020) descriptive case study, the three participants strengthened their teaching and leadership skills in the Belize short-term experience by leading hands-on activities with children and teachers. Similarly, in Kim’s (2017) study, five preservice

teachers underwent personal and professional transformations during their short-term internship in Korea. Cumulatively, scholars have reported the valuable lessons university students learned working with culturally diverse children in educational settings abroad (e.g., Addleman et al., 2014; Cushner & Chang, 2015; Hauerwas et al., 2017; He et al., 2017; Kim, 2017; Mars, 2008; Marx & Moss, 2011; Santoro, 2013; Shedrow, 2017).

### **Ethiopian Culture**

Naturally, this study abroad experience opened the eyes of university students to the Ethiopian culture not only through school visits but also during cultural excursions and interacting with local people. Like Jones et al. (2012), university participants reported “developing new understandings of social issues, privilege, and stereotypes” (p. 201) in Ethiopia. In their qualitative studies on short-term immersion programs, Ruddock and Turner (2007) and Jones et al. (2012) found that university participants became comfortable with the experience and transitioned from one culture to another. More specifically, Jones et al. (2012) reported that participants “crossed boundaries between the familiar and unfamiliar and made sense of their experiences from the context of the people they encountered” (p. 209). Parallel to Ruddock and Turner (2007), our findings demonstrated that interest, openness, and acceptance from local people and interacting with them helped the university participants to adjust to Ethiopia and develop cultural sensitivity and humility (Wheeler, 2018).

Although solely about graduate students and Student Affairs, Pettitt and Macari’s (2017) results mirrored the university participants engaged in the Ethiopian field experience. In both studies, participants “described enhanced awareness of their own culture, became more mindful of cultural differences and identified connecting with others as an important part of their intercultural development” (Pettitt & Macari, 2017, p. 182). Like in nursing, we hope that university participants “who have had the experience of adapting to a new culture, can act as cultural brokers to promote culturally sensitive” instruction for students from diverse backgrounds (Ruddock & Turner, 2007, p. 367). We believe that for educators to deliver instruction congruent with students’ needs and experiences, they must respect people’s cultures and “ways of being” (Chenoweth et al., 2006, p. 39).

### **Relationship Building**

Our International Field Experience would not have been successful without the second author’s connections before departure. Building solid relationships has been documented in study abroad research. For instance, Song (2020) discussed the importance of trip designers creating opportunities where university participants can get involved in communities and build positive relationships while abroad. In particular, the relationship with our guide Milki was a highlight and meaningful part of the trip for most faculty and university students. Our guide’s daily and immeasurable assistance on each trip was also a critical component for relationship development.

### **Pragmatic Considerations**

Through program planning decisions, before and during the high-intensity international experience, the university participants had direct exposure to the culture (Song, 2020)—in this case, Ethiopian. In the present study, due to the relationships built during the experiences,

debriefing conversations, and connections sustained after the trip, we argue that university students benefited from well-organized out-of-class activities. Scholars (e.g., Anderson et al., 2016; McKeown, 2009) acknowledge that increasing learners' intercultural sensitivity requires instructors to create safe spaces to debrief and discuss cultural challenges. There were opportunities to dialogue about observations and interactions in Ethiopia for each cohort. There were conversations in schools, traveling to and from locations, and discussions (based on reflection prompts from the primary instructor) in the guest house before and after daily activities. University students' having shared experiences they reflected on helped put matters into perspective, thereby facilitating adjustment to cultural differences (Ruddock & Turner, 2007). To prompt additional reflection and deepen university participants' learning, the daily blogs and digital stories were course requirements consistent with applied learning pedagogy (e.g., Ash & Clayton, 2009; Jones & Catapano, 2020).

### **Limitations of the Study**

The blogs and digital stories were consistent across the trips. These were the sole data sources for this study. Since some time has passed since the trips, the links to some data sources were either broken or removed. Our understanding of the university participants' experiences is based on what they shared. Furthermore, this study is based on the experiences and perspectives of a group of people who attended the same trip from the same university. While these findings are not generalizable across all universities and study abroad trips, they are noteworthy and may be transferable to other institutions and trips.

### **Conclusion**

Across cohort years, the International Field Experience in Ethiopia provided an opportunity for university participants to increase their intercultural knowledge and awareness while being sensitive to culturally defined needs. The different educational settings and a host family dinner allowed participants to move beyond superficial impressions of Ethiopian culture. These transformative learning experiences illustrate how short-term study abroad trips can have a notable impact on students (Addleman et al., 2014; Biber, 2020; Jones et al., 2012).

This study contributes to the fields of education and study abroad, providing relevant details for program planning and having transformative dialogues when undertaking an international experience in Ethiopia. We see the fusion of intercultural humility, sensitivity, and personal growth through relationship building, cultural activities, and spending time in Ethiopian schools.

## References

- Addleman, R. A., Nava, R. C., Cevallos, T., Brazo, C. J., & Dixon, K. (2014). Preparing teacher candidates to serve students from diverse backgrounds: Triggering transformative learning through short-term cultural immersion. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *43*, 189–200. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2014.08.005>
- Alonso-Marks, E., & Hernandez, A. S. (2020). Intercultural development during short-term study abroad: The role of intensity of interaction on cross-cultural sensitivity. *Estudios de Linguística Inglesa Aplicada*, *20*, 13–46. <https://doi.org/10.12795/elia.2020.i20.02>
- Anderson, C. L., Lorenz, K., & White, M. (2016). Instructor influence on student intercultural gains and learning during instructor-led short-term study abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *28*(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v28i1.377>
- Ash, S. L., & Clayton P. H. (2009). Generating, deepening, and documenting learning: The power of critical reflection in applied learning. *Journal of Applied Learning in Higher Education*, *1*, 25–48. <https://hdl.handle.net/1805/4579>
- Bauer, M. (2000). Analysing noise and music as social data. In M. W. Bauer & G. Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound* (pp. 264–281). SAGE Publications. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781849209731>
- Bekhet, A. K., & Zauszniewski, J. A. (2012). Methodological triangulation: An approach to understanding data. *Nurse Researcher*, *20*(2), 40–43. <https://doi.org/10.7748/nr2012.11.20.2.40.c9442>
- Biber, D. (2020). Transformative learning curriculum for short-term study abroad trips. *Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism*, *21*(2), 198–204. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2020.1775757>
- Bowen, G. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, *9*, 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- Chenoweth, L., Jeon, Y. H., & Burke, C. (2006). Cultural competency and nursing care: An Australian perspective. *International Nursing Review*, *53*(1), 34–40. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1466-7657.2006.00441.x>
- Chieffo, L., & Griffiths, L. (2004). Large-scale assessment of student attitudes after a short-term study abroad program. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, *10*, 165–177. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v10i1.140>
- Cushner, K., & Chang, S. (2015). Developing intercultural competence through overseas student teaching: Checking our assumptions. *Intercultural Education*, *26*(3), 16–178, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2015.1040326>
- Deardorff, D. K. (2011). Assessing intercultural competence. *New Directions for Institutional Research*, *149*, 65–79. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.381>
- de Jager, A., Fogarty, A., Tewson, A., Lenette, C., & Boydell, K. M. (2017). Digital storytelling in research: A systematic review. *The Qualitative Report*, *22*(10), 2548–2582. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2017.2970>
- Donnelly-Smith, L. (2009). Global learning through short-term study abroad. *Peer Review*, *11*(4) 12–15. <http://catcher.sandiego.edu/items/cee/Reading4.Short-term%20SA.pdf>
- Flicker, S., & Hill, A. (2014). Digital storytelling. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of action research* (pp. 267–270). SAGE Publications. <https://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781446294406>

- Fox, P., & McIntyre, C. (2019). Clear advantages to studying abroad: So why aren't students enrolling? Presented at the 2019 CIEC. Retrieved from <https://peer.asee.org/clear-advantages-to-studying-abroad-so-why-aren-t-students-enrolling>
- Girma, W., & Sarangi, I. (2019). *History of education and English language teaching in Ethiopia: A brief survey*. ERIC Clearinghouse. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331412029\\_History\\_of\\_Education\\_and\\_English\\_Language\\_Teaching\\_in\\_Ethiopia\\_A\\_Brief\\_Survey](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331412029_History_of_Education_and_English_Language_Teaching_in_Ethiopia_A_Brief_Survey)
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*. SAGE Publications. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909.n378>
- Hauerwas, L. B., Skawinski, S. F., & Ryan, L. B. (2017). The longitudinal impact of teaching abroad: An analysis of intercultural development. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 67*, 202–213. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.06.009>
- He, Y., Lundgren, K., & Pynes, P. (2017). Impact of short-term study abroad program: Inservice teachers' development of intercultural competence and pedagogical beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 66*, 147–157. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.04.012>
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research, 15*(9), 1277–1288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>
- Institute of Human Origins. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://iho.asu.edu/about/lucys-story#where>
- Institute of International Education. (2020). U.S. study abroad for academic credit trends, 1989/1990–2018/2019. *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*. Retrieved from <http://www.opendoorsdata.org>
- Jones, M., & Catapano, S. (2020). You want me to lead? A case study of pre-service teachers in an international applied learning context in Belize. *International Journal of Teacher Education and Professional Development, 3*(1), 73–87. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJTEPD.2020010105>
- Jones, S. R., Rowan-Kenyon, H. T., Ireland, S. W., Niehaus, E., & Skendall, K. C. (2012). The meaning students make as participants in short-term immersion programs. *Journal of College Student Development, 53*(2), 201–220. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2012.0026>
- Kehm, B. M., & Teichler, U. (2007). Research on internationalisation in higher education. *Journal of Studies in International Education, 11*(3-4), 260–273. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315307303534>
- Kim, M. (2017). International field experience for preservice teachers: A case study of undergraduate students in a TESOL practicum in Korea. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Ohio State University.
- Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: Practical guidance for qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice, 24*(1), 120–124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092>
- Kortegast, C. A., & Boisfontaine, M. T. (2015). Beyond “It was good”: Students' post-study abroad practices for negotiating meaning. *Journal of College Student Development, 56*(8), 812–828. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2015.0091>
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2008). Qualitative data analysis: A compendium of techniques and a framework for selection for school psychology research and beyond. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*(4), 587–604. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1045-3830.23.4.587>

- Life Water. (2020). Retrieved from <https://lifewater.org/blog/8-ethiopia-facts-poverty-progress-and-what-you-should-know/>
- Lucy (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://joyofmuseums.com/museums/africa-museums/ethiopia-museums/addis-ababa-museums/national-museum-ethiopia/lucy-australopithecus/>
- Mars, H. A. (2008). Learning about self far from home: A pre-service teacher's intercultural development during an international program. *NERA Conference Proceedings*, 34. [http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/nera\\_2008/34](http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/nera_2008/34)
- Marx, H., & Moss, D. M. (2011). Please mind the culture gap: Intercultural development during a teacher education study abroad program. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 62(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487110381998>
- McKeown, J. S. (2009). *The first-time effect: The impact of study abroad on college student intellectual development*. State University of New York Press.
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey Bass.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Milkias, P. (2011). *Africa in focus: Ethiopia*. ABC-CLIO.
- Pettitt, C., & Macari, D. (2017). Intercultural pedagogy in study abroad: The experience of white female graduate students. *Higher Education Politics & Economics*, 3(1), 182–205. <https://doi.org/10.32674/hepe.v3i1.14>
- Rowan-Kenyon, H. T., & Niehaus, E. K. (2011). One year later: The influence of short-term study abroad experiences on students. *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 48(2), 213–228. <https://doi.org/10.2202/1949-6605.6213>
- Ruddock, H. C., & Turner, D. S. (2007). Developing cultural sensitivity: Nursing students' experiences of a study abroad programme. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 59(4), 361–369. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04312.x>
- Santoro, N. (2013). 'If I'm going to teach about the world, I need to know the world': Developing Australian pre-service teachers' intercultural competence through international trips. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 17(3), 429–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2013.832938>
- Shedrow, S. (2017). Cross-cultural student teaching: Examining the meaning-making of one white, female, middle-class preservice teacher. *Journal of International Students*, 7(2), 270–290. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v7i2.381>
- Siaya, L., & Hayward, F. M. (2003). *Mapping internationalization on U.S. campuses*. American Council on Education.
- Song, J. (2020). The effects of a short-term study abroad program on developing students' intercultural competence and oral proficiency. *Linguistic Research*, 37, 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.17250/khisli.37..202009.001>
- University of North Carolina Wilmington International Programs. (n.d.). Events, Awards & Programs. Retrieved from <https://uncw.edu/international/getconnected.html>
- University of North Carolina Wilmington Strategic Plan. (2016). Retrieved from <https://uncw.edu/strategicplan/documents/uncw%20strategic%20plan.pdf>
- Tervalon, M., & Murray-Garcia, J. (1998). Cultural humility versus cultural competence: A critical distinction in defining physician training outcomes in multicultural education. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 9(2) 117–125. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hpu.2010.0233>

- Trilokekar, R. D., & Kukar, P. (2011). Disorienting experiences during study abroad: Reflections of pre-service teacher candidates. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 27(7), 1141–1150. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.06.002>
- United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] Institute for Statistics. (2018). *National commissions for UNESCO: Annual report, 2017*. <https://en.unesco.org/countries/ethiopia>
- United Nations Human Development Programme. (2020). *Human Development Reports (2020)*. <http://hdr.undp.org/en>
- United Nations World Population Review. (2021). <https://worldpopulationreview.com/>
- Wheeler, M. (2018). Cultural competence and cultural humility: A literature review for understanding and action. *Tripartners.com*. Retrieved from <https://inclusion.uoregon.edu/distinguishing-cultural-humility-cultural-competence>

### **Corresponding Author**

Michele Parker  
Professor, Department of Educational Leadership  
University of North Carolina Wilmington  
(910) 962-2292  
[parkerma@uncw.edu](mailto:parkerma@uncw.edu)