

A Qualitative Study: The Impact of Study Abroad on Cultural Competence

M. Minix SN, M. Vanden Bosch PhD RN, & S. Strouse PhD RN
Acknowledgements: Ware, K & Branch, E

Background

- Limited literature regarding undergraduate nursing student perceptions of cultural competency after study abroad in Ghana initiated the pilot study in 2018.
- The pilot study resulted in limited data.
- As a nursing student, I spent 5 weeks in Winneba, Ghana during June/July 2019. I observed in various clinical settings and studied the culture and history of Ghana.
- I personally experienced an increase in perspectives of culture competency during this study abroad and my curiosity about others' experiences determined my interest in this study.



Review of Literature

- Search terms: *cultural competence, nursing student, study abroad*
- 8 articles examined:
 - 6 studies, 2 narrative accounts
 - 4 studies involved undergraduate nursing students
- Researchers collected data via surveys, interviews, self evaluation and reflective journals.
- Review indicates a lack of a standardized tool to measure cultural competency specific to nursing students and available without a fee.

Research Question

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to assess the impact of study abroad experiences in Ghana on the perspectives of cultural competency in junior- and senior-level traditional and RN to BSN nursing students at a Midwest university.

Methods

Investigators used:

- A phenomenological approach to gather student perspectives.
- A cultural competency survey tool developed by previous student to gather demographic data and student perspectives.
- Survey Monkey (2018) and Qualtrics (2019) to gather data pre- and post-trip.
- Modified Giorgi method to analyze qualitative data.
- A one-tailed, paired t-test to analyze quantitative data.

Demographics

- 12 students completed both surveys.
- All students were white and born in America.
- Age ranged from 21-32 years old.
- 9 female students, 3 male students.
- 10 traditional senior-level students, 2 RN to BSN students.

This project has been approved by Grand Valley State University's IRB as exempt.

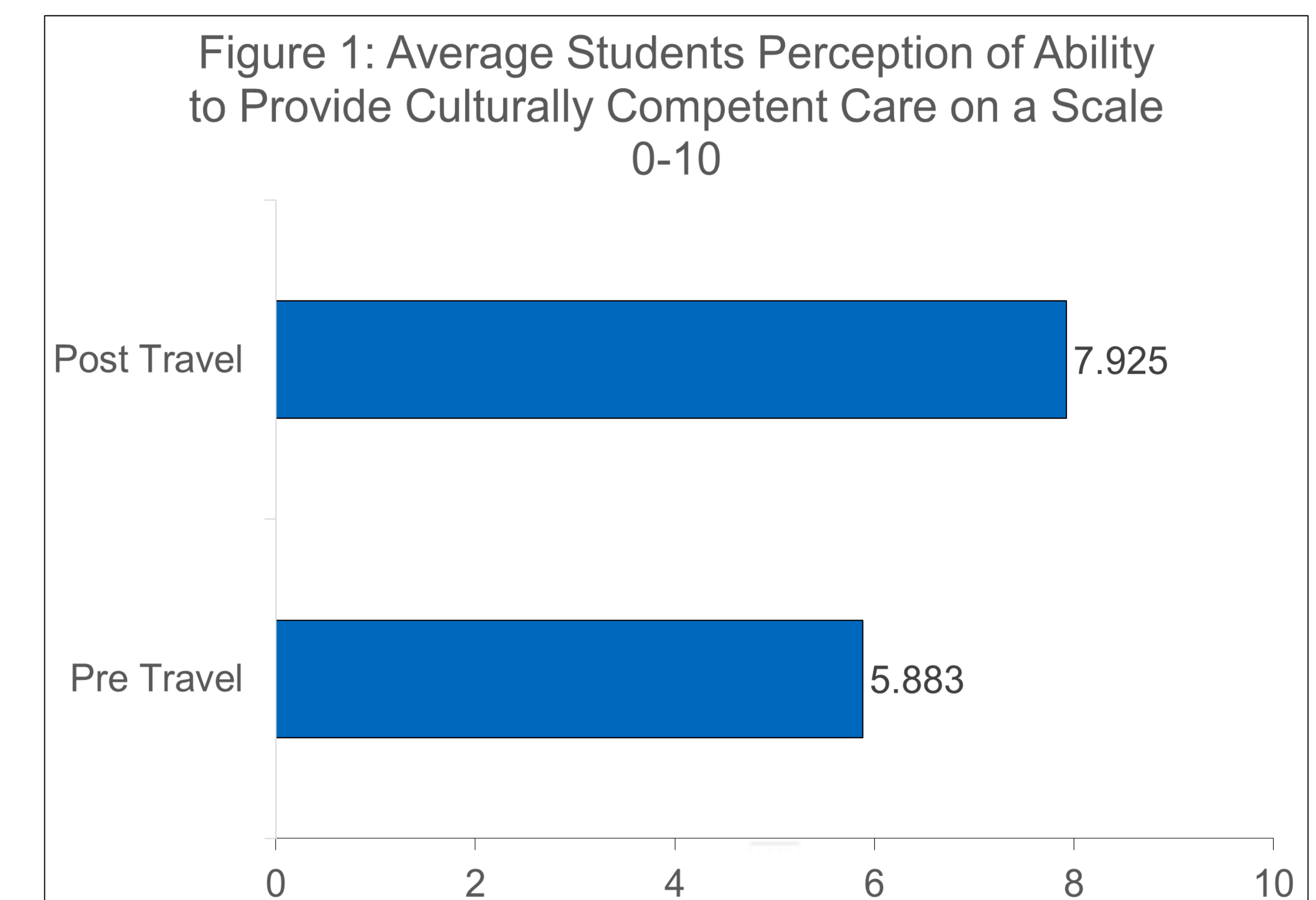
Survey Results

Phenomenological Themes

- Students:
 - Used a theoretical approach prior to the trip suggested by "being aware" or "providing care"
 - Developed an enhanced application of cultural competency post-trip
 - Gained a better understanding of their own culture and nursing universality

Cultural Competency Scores post-trip

- Significant increase from pre- to post-trip as noted in Figure 1 (p -value of <0.0001)
- Mean difference in scores: 2.0417



Conclusions

- Nursing students' perspectives of providing culturally competent care increase during study abroad
- Nursing students gain cultural experience and skill prior to practice which is desirable for future employers
- Nursing programs should utilize and offer more study abroad programs to increase student's perspectives of cultural competency