THE EDUCATIVE IMPACT OF MUSIC STUDY ABROAD

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ABSTRACT

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This study explored the educative impact of a music study abroad program, specifically, what role music plays in encounters between students from diverse cultural backgrounds, and how such programs can help shape the identity of a global citizen and lead to a more socially just global community. If programmatic efforts can be impactful, preparing young people for life in a more interdependent, complex, and fragile world, then how can such values be informed, fostered, and even stimulated by engaging in international music travel? How is "difference" experienced and rendered meaningful? This qualitative case study followed U.S. music and music education students on a trip to Malaysia where they collaborated with Malaysian peers in bamboo instrument-making as well as music-making in traditional Malay styles. Perspectives, commentary, and reflections of and by all participants were recorded and investigated.

Pre-trip interviews were conducted two months prior to embarking on the international journey. During the program abroad over the course of three weeks, I interviewed four U.S. music students, five Malaysian music education students, and both a U.S. and Malay music professor. Additionally, a focus group was conducted with the Malay student-participants.

This study posited two primary benefits to studying music abroad and then analyzed data that would illuminate to what degree these benefits were achieved. The first of these benefits is the well-known enhancement in broader experience and new knowledge that will inform students' practice and musical life going forward. The second class of benefits has to do with building agency as global citizens, along with an appreciation of the entailed challenges. The interaction between visitors and residents, between students and a diverse cohort of educators, all begin to construct a sense of interconnectedness that goes far beyond the accumulation of musical knowledge. The findings substantiated the initial hypotheses and created new avenues of inquiry as well. One finding that went beyond the original scope of the study was that in reflecting on their experiences, participants began to build on a sense of global citizenship and a broadened civic consciousness. This in turn leads to investigations into the broader definition of education itself.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Ursula Antonelli-Huber, in memoriam, my first teacher: You left us way too early but nonetheless instilled in me a fundamental urge for true justice and fairness, which I carry with me to this day. It was your daily singing and listening to music on the radio when I came home from school that made my childhood so "vivace" and musical. The duets you always wanted to play together, you on the flute and me on the piano. I remember our spontaneous trips to Rome, Naples, Sorrento, Udine, and to Mama's hometown in Germany, filled with your unforgettable laughter, singing loudly in the car, in two voices, and enjoying our intriguing encounters with "others." This is for you, Mami, I hope you are proud.

To Nonna, my Italian grandmother, in memoriam: You were my earliest fan and unconditional supporter! You always believed in me through thick and thin. You taught me the fundamental values of the (Italian) family, social cohesion, and the appreciation for "madre terra." You taught me to always hold my head up high. I remember, vividly, you telling me in my earliest childhood years: "un giorno anche tu sarai un dottore, nonno." And here I am, Nonna, this is for you!

To Lisa and Ellen, my New York mothers: You gave me my second (New York) upbringing, a whole education in itself! You taught me what it truly means to be genuinely accepting of others through your boundless generosity of spirit, unselfishness, and big-heartedness towards humanity. You embody characteristics that we might envision in a global citizen. You always pushed me to take my academic career to the

next level. Without you, this dissertation would have never come to fruition. I hope you are proud! Thank you for everything you have done for me!

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And to the participants of this study: Thank you for your time, your insights, and for our shared adventures in Malaysia.

Finally, and in the spirit of this document, I would like to thank the many places and its beautiful people who inspired me on my travels and thus contributed to my work: New York City, Buenos Aires, Lisbon, Saugerties, and Woodstock, where the majority of this dissertation was written. Cagliari–Sardinia, Rome, Positano, Ibiza, Cambodia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Jerusalem, Switzerland, and Burning Man, for providing me intellectual stimulation and a school of life.

D. A.

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INTRODUCTION

A mere bookish learning is a paltry learning:

Students need some direct adventuring with the world, a steady and lively interplay with common folk, supplemented and fortified with trips abroad. Such contacts with mundane concerns serve not only to put an edge on the learner's faculties; they will appraise him of other people's humors, manners, customs, their politics, theology, and Jurisprudence, their social system, and their public works.

Michel de Montaigne, 1581/1877

VOYAGE, (Education.) les grands hommes de I'antiquite ont juge qu'il n'y avoit de meilleure ecole de la vie que celle des voyages; ecole oil I'on apprend la diversite de tant d'autres vies, ou I'on trouve sans cesse quelque nouvelle legon dans ce grand livre du monde; & ou le changement d'air avec I'exercice sont profitables au corps & a resprit.

VOYAGE, (Education.) the great men of antiquity judged that there was no better school for life than that of voyages; a school where one learns about the diversity of so many other lives, where one incessantly finds some new lesson in that great book of the world; and where the change of air along with the exercise is of profit to the body and to the mind.]

As cited in Van, Den Abbeele, Georges. *Travel As Metaphor*, 1991

Prelude

The scene: a Paris street, where an ordinary day is interrupted by an extraordinary event. A group of New York City high school students from underressourced backgrounds is recording a rap song with a French theme. The students have composed

the song themselves and are proud to share the hip-hop music they grew up with. A few days later, they perform their composition for high school peers in Switzerland, introducing fellow students on the other side of the globe to this unique musical art form. The experience profoundly impacted my US students and strengthened their resolve to finish high school and to subsequently pursue advanced education in subjects such as music, film, French, and international studies. For one of my students this experience was a catalyst, making him want to further explore the world and study the French language. He has been on a number of journeys since this experience and is currently saving for another Europe trip while aspiring to attend graduate school with a major in international studies. Another student who was filming music videos during our sojourn in Paris, went out to pursue film school and enrolled in an exchange program as a result of our study abroad trip.

I believe that the outcome and lasting impact of this trip were unprecedented for the students, whose immersion in the music, art, and traditions of other cultures profoundly impacted them, and made me wonder about how such experiences might cultivate a sense of what I will call in this document "global citizenship." The trip grew out of my recognition of music as one of the most powerful media to connect people from disparate cultures and foster mutual understanding and respect. Through my own international travels, I came to realize that music, the arts, and raw human encounter provide a cross-cultural exchange that makes the concept of global citizenship more tangible and, to put it in Montaigne's words, "put an edge on the learner's faculties." I agree that students need adventuring; but they also need to experience other people's manners and ways of thinking in order to reflect on their own positionality and ways of

being. In other words, study abroad programs are great for fun and adventure, but when done right they can foster global mindedness, cross-cultural and multicultural competency as well as develop cognitive growth and flexibility (Norris, 2015).

Introduction

What is a global experience? Gaudelli and Laverty (2015) describe it as an "experience standing out as an enduring memorial of an encounter with others" (p. 13). What does it mean to be a global citizen? Hansen (2011) describes it as a commitment to a broader moral purpose that goes beyond geographical borders, an awareness of how experiences with otherness can awaken us to wider insight and potentially inform a whole world philosophy. Gaudelli (2016) adds that to become a global citizen, programmatic efforts to prepare young people to live in a more interdependent, complex, and fragile world should be attempted. How can such values be informed, fostered, and even stimulated by engaging in international travel? How is "difference" experienced and rendered meaningful?

This study is about a cross-cultural and multicultural music trip to Malaysia with a group of four US American music and music education students collaborating with five Malaysian music and music education students over a time span of three weeks. In addition, the study included both a music professor on the US side as well as a professor of music education on the Malaysian side. The purpose was to explore the educative impact of a study abroad program in music from both the perception of the students as well as the music educators.

Personal Narrative

I was born in Switzerland and was raised by a Swiss mother and a southern Italian immigrant father. My grandmother was from Germany, other relatives from France and Spain, with an uncle who is half African American and half Native American. From an early age, I was exposed to traveling and experiencing other cultures, and I remember always having been under a spell by encountering "the foreign" both in people as well as in music.

I went to public schools in Switzerland from kindergarten through my first Master's degree. Through my Swiss public schooling, I engaged in my first study abroad experience where we visited Berlin with my high school choir seven years after the Berlin Wall came down. Global history literally came alive and singing with the Berliner choir, although the musical culture wasn't too divergent from the Swiss, helped demystify some preconceived notions even I, as a Swiss, held about our neighbors, the "Germans." Learning about Berlin's tumultuous and fascinating history from Berliners first hand repositioned my stance on my neighbors remarkably and instigated change of perspective. It was less the visits to Checkpoint Charlie or the Brandenburg Gate per se that left profound and long-lasting effects but rather the interaction with my host siblings. Sharing adolescent adventures with them made me realize that on many levels, our cultures and teenage experiences were fairly similar. As Montaigne (1581/1877) said, such interactions and "contact with mundane concerns serve not only to put an edge on the learner's faculties; they will appraise him of other people's humors, manners, customs, their politics, theology, and Jurisprudence." My host family would tell stories about their own family's anecdotes of the spring 1939 as well as the famous night in

Berlin in October 1990, providing me an insight and tangible connection to these historic events. I left Berlin with a more authentic understanding of both German history as well as their choral music than I would have had from a "mere bookish learning" (Montaigne, 1581/1877).

A year later, my junior year study abroad experience led me to Perugia, in central Italy – my second home country. Deadlocked in the assumption and presupposition that I knew my "own culture", it was fascinating and an awakening experience to interact with the so-called "foreign" and to witness repositioning myself on perceptions and prejudices I had about certain aspects of my own culture. Visiting the Italian high school shed light on the educative experience and humanist curriculum of my fellow neighbors in the south. Sharing our music with our Italian peers provided a powerful connection between the two cultures despite the fact that both musical heritages are rooted in the Western European canon. Personal growth resulted from this independent travel as I rediscovered my own culture independently from my family. Living with locals and interacting with peers my age provided me a different perspective on Italy than what I had come to know visiting my grandmother. Albeit my experience was certainly situational with that particular host family, and during that particular time and space, it certainly served to dispel stereotypes. I left Italy wanting to inquire further into my own culture. It was an experience, perhaps as Dewey (1938) described it, insofar that an experience is always "the actual life-experience of some individual" (p. 89).

As I am editing and revisiting this chapter in December of 2019, I find myself on a bus traveling to the outskirts of Buenos Aires in Argentina. I am on my way to visit my host sister, whom I had met during the exchange experience in Italy. It has been 22 years.

Our original encounter seems to have produced a lifelong friendship. As Gaudelli and Laverty (2016) put it, the context of our meeting during educative travel was "an experience standing out as an enduring memorial of an encounter with others" (p. 13).

An exchange year during my Master's program at the University of the Arts in Bern, Switzerland, led me to further pursue my studies at the Dalcroze Institute at The Juilliard School in New York City. The clash with a totally new culture or perhaps multiple cultures – considering New York City's inherent multiculturalism in some sense – rebuilt my knowledge structures after a radical rupture in a Piagetian, and thus constructivist, sense (Peterson, 2017). Put differently, we construct (new) knowledge through the dynamic process of active engagement with the (new) environment. Aside from advancing my musical studies, I improved my language as well as social skills, resulting in considerable academic improvement and cognitive development. Perhaps more importantly, I was able to debunk several stereotypes such as the lack of a food culture and geographic insensitivity that had been ingrained in me through mass media conditioning about "the Americans"; or at least New Yorkers. In short, the international venturing helped me understand cultural values and biases.

My personal study abroad experiences were most always related to music in some senses, given the nature of my studies; however, I often wondered whether music *actually* served as conduit – or an intermediary space perhaps – in achieving both cultural awareness and a sense of global identity. Through a scholarship I received during my Master studies at Columbia University's Teachers College, I embarked on another study abroad endeavor to Buenos Aires, Argentina. This time the academic curriculum I engaged in was both in music (studies in Indigenous Instruments of the Americas and

Musical Creation) as well as in social studies. We studied Latin American history and took a class titled "Poverty, Social Struggles, Revolutions," in which we analyzed the economic disaster that had occurred in Argentina in 2002. The cultural immersion both locally with Argentina as well as the encounters and lived experiences with other participants hailing from places such as Amman, Jordan, and Utah were life changing. Wanner (2009) asserts that "an overarching aim of study abroad is the discovery of the individual's self through the other and better understanding of the conditions surrounding our existence through contrast with other realities" (p. 81). In retrospect, I can second that assertion. My study abroad experience helped me see and reflect on my own cultural norms and ways of being from a different perspective. Further, having lived away from home immersed in different societies made me value as well as question my beliefs – and those of others.

It was mesmerizing to learn about various indigenous and folk traditions from people all over the world through sharing our music and "funds of knowledge," the ways of knowing we each had available to us (Gonzalez, 2002), with the "other." To some extent, the nature of the course and the encounter with others propelled us to become researchers of our own cultural capital, again, what Wanner (2009) meant by an essential part of the quest for self-improvement through knowledge of the other (p. 83). Put more broadly, investigating both our own cultural capital as well as our peers' cultures reminds me further of what David Hansen (2011) may allude to when he suggests that international experiences "enact a commitment to cosmopolitanism by inviting students to the study of different cultures with a view to understanding how people give shape,

substance and meaning to their lives," in our case using music and the artistic space as the primary conduit.

The lived experiences and hands-on acquisition of previously unknown musical styles as well as different cultural traditions were not only exponentially more meaningful than reading about these musical "genres" in a textbook, but the encounter with people from the other side of the globe promoted a profound and continuous impact on me. For a "[global] experience has pedagogical value if it extends beyond the momentary to the continuous; it's outward movement of experience is necessarily in the direction of the unknown" (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015, p. 18). Moreover, an

> experience is educative only to the degree that it rests upon a continuity of significant knowledge and to the degree that this knowledge modifies or "modulates" the learner's outlook, attitude, and skill. The true learning situation, then, has longitudinal and lateral dimensions. (Dewey, 1938, p. 10)

Years later, during my doctoral studies, I was part of another study abroad program specifically in music that called me all the way to China. Columbia University graduate music students collaborated with music education students from Xiamen University in Xiamen, China, composing an opera in a dual-language setting. Although I had partaken in several international programs prior to this trip, China was perhaps the most "other," or most "unknown" of all cultures I had personally experienced in my past. Over the course of three weeks, we composed opera scenes in small groups in a "mélange" of both American and Chinese students. We shared our musical and cultural traditions with each other in working towards what Moje et al. (2004) call a "third space." We all brought our prior experiences from our "first space" of our home, community, and peer networks with the "second space" of discourses we encounter in more formalized institutions such as work and school (Bhabha, 1994; Gutierrez et al.,1999; Soja, 1996) to our rehearsal spaces

to construct and integrate these knowledges to this "third space." Differences, misunderstandings, and perhaps even obscurity at times lived alongside a non-verbal yet mutual understanding and co-constructed new knowledge that went beyond national and cultural borders. Perhaps a growing awareness of some sort of global identity? I wonder.

While I have been drawn to traveling the world with the intention of exploring and experiencing other cultures musically and otherwise, or perhaps as Susan Sontag put it, because I want "to *see* more, to *hear* more, to *feel* more" (Moser, 2019, p. 237). I hope I will be forever seeking to appreciate differences (and commonalities) across cultural traditions. However, fundamentally, the more I think about it, I believe that I am, if unknowingly, looking to unearth the notion that we the human family are essentially a lot more the same than we are different.

I do not aim to proclaim that through such study abroad experiences with "otherness" and the unknown we shall dispose of our differences. I want to clearly manifest my stance against globalization. Instead, I suggest an exploration of how difference is experienced and rendered meaningful. This rings true with Appiah's notion that while we should aim for an appreciation for a collective humanity, we need not emphasize only the common aspects of humanity but welcome differences among people and cultures (2006). I believe that interaction, mutual understanding of differences - perhaps even discomfort - and the collaborative construction of new knowledge with cultures other than our own – in particular through spaces of musical sharing for the purpose of this document – will help shape the concept of what we may call a global identity. For a "global experience" is an experience standing out as an enduring memorial of an encounter with others" (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015). The impact and marvelous

broadening of horizons this Chinese adventure had on me was profound and enriched my perspective on the wider, global world.

The literature has long established the principle that learning globally should purposefully move students out of their comfort zones. Accordingly, "placing students into situations of otherness will create cognitive dissonance and lead them to an awareness of their perspective and appreciation of myriad other viewpoints" (Coryell et al,. 2010; Dwyer, 2004; Gaudelli, 2016; Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015; Kissock & Richardson, 2010; Merryfield, 2001; Palmer, 2015). However, how can we strategically plan for music study abroad experiences to "push" students to appreciate other viewpoints and not perpetuate stereotyping? How can we make sure that study abroad does not take a form of educational tourism, or as Woolf (2006) put it, "a trip, motivated, at worst, by a kind of voyeurism in which privileged young Americans go to observe relative poverty in a developing country" (p. 136)? Woolf (2010) goes a step further, warning that claiming to transform students into global citizens may create an impression of "global citizens as a new privileged class" (p. 35). Study abroad programs must ensure a mutual benefit between participating students of different cultures instead of framing a policy that prioritizes a single (American) perspective (Woolf, 2006).

My hunch as to what such enduring encounters and first-hand experiences through study abroad programs in music can spark goes beyond the immediate and the obvious. I believe it transcends subject matter and curriculum. In a broader philosophical sense, I dare to put forth the notion whilst being aware of the idealism upon which this stands, that a more harmonious and hopefully sustainable coexistence between the peoples of the world might be possible. In conclusion, I would like to elaborate: I have

traveled to 40 countries thus far at the time of writing and have experienced a myriad of situations certainly on both extremes, yet I have never encountered a people or nation that I felt needed to be bombed and eradicated. In fact, in my anticipated search for differences, I have often found equally as many similarities - so perhaps the quest for difference reveals a fundamental equality? – I wonder how music might play an intermediary or perhaps mediative space in the pursuit of becoming a global citizen.

Problem Statement

The benefits of study abroad programs in music are believed to outweigh the liabilities (Holcomb, 2003). Music study abroad programs have increased in popularity over the past few decades. However, little research has been conducted to understand the influence of these programs on the ability of participants who, by sharing their music, might become global citizens and develop a sense of cultural mindedness, or perhaps curiosity. Therefore, further research is warranted to understand the role music programs play in developing students' whole world perspective, whereby music students come to see themselves as being part of an emerging world community and in so doing develop a global identity. Gaudelli (2016) speaks to this concept of global identity when he defines global citizenship education as the process of addressing the intersection of globalization, education, and programmatic efforts to prepare young people to live in a more interdependent, complex, and fragile world.

Purpose, Procedures, Participants

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. I investigated a music study abroad program titled "Musicking Futures in Malaysia" that took place in Malaysia in the summer of 2019. Initiated by a US music educator, the program was a collaboration between a private midwestern US and a public Malaysian University. The context was collaborative music-making through exposure to traditional indigenous Malaysian and North American formats. Students and professors from both universities co-learned and explored various cross-cultural concepts of music, including making instruments from "scratch" and learning about their role in society. The course took place in three locations in Malaysia.

Research Questions

1. What are the benefits and challenges for students partaking in a music study abroad program?
2. What role does music play in the process of trying to achieve cross cultural understanding?
3. How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?

Research Design Overview

To better understand what factors music educators consider when organizing and realizing study abroad programs in music, and how these programs impact students, I conducted a qualitative ethnographic single case study accompanying and investigating a university study abroad music program. Ethnography generates a large amount of data and allows the researcher to investigate the cultural and social interactions of people (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) defined a qualitative case study as "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 37).

The study was framed to look at the program's educative impact both through the lens of the educator as well as its educative effect on the students, and the notion of what a global experience might look like. To collect data, I conducted 20 individual interviews with students and educators on both the US as well as the Malaysian side. Additionally, I conducted a focus group with the Malaysian student-participants as part of data triangulation as well as to inquire about the phenomenon from a different angle. Interviews were both targeted and open ended, targeted to discover the participants specific experiences, and open ended so that no predetermined answer followed. As an observer, I sat in classes, workshops, performances, and daily activities the students engaged in to take as many field notes as possible to capture a wide range of interactions with the foreign and unknown.

The interviews were conducted both individually as well as in a focus group to capture the experience of the group as a whole in addition to individual participants' experiences. I participated in the preparatory meetings in June 2019 leading up to the trip

to again capture the social interactions and discussions occurring between participants in order to record the full experience.

My Role as Researcher

I have participated in four study abroad programs myself, two particularly within the context of music with a third having been partially dedicated to music. As an educator, I have organized my own study abroad program for New York City public high school students. In addition, to give further context, I have lived in four different countries on three different continents; and I have traveled extensively, both professionally and personally. I therefore bring a background of personal experience and beliefs that influenced the selection of the research topic, and the analysis and interpretation of the data. Throughout the research process, I underwent constant consideration of fairness and accuracy in representing the accounts and actions of each of the participants.

A case study does not aim for generalizability as the multitude of factors and circumstances occurring during the study cannot be replicated and/or generalized. Hence, this proposal does not aim to produce a handbook for international music travel. Rather, the aim is to gain an understanding of the educative impact of this trip as it relates to personal growth, cognitive development, the participants' perception of other cultures as well as their own, and the notion of what global citizenship *might* look like: "The all-encompassing feature of a case study is its intense focus on a single phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 1994, p. 13). Ethnographic research is a narrative told by the

researcher. As a researcher, my identity and background shape my inferences and perceptions of meaning.

As I reflect upon my origins, having come from Europe, (world) traveling and moving to various countries is situated in a different frame of reference. Born and raised in a border town in Switzerland, where I could bike to both France and Germany in five and eight minutes respectively, exploring other countries within the proximity doesn't come with the connotation of wealth and privilege as it would in a frame of an American reference. I passionately believe that the educative impact of study abroad programs in music has the potential to be monumental for the participants, and was curious to gain a better understanding of what exactly the benefits and challenges as well as the role of music are in these experiences. This curiosity triggered the research topic and research questions.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact.

International travel during both the secondary and postsecondary educational levels has increased remarkably over the past two decades (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015; Paige et al., 2009), as the educative impact of the lived experiences promise long term benefits for participants (Dewey, 1938: Dwyer, 2004; Paige et al., 2009). In the 2015-16 academic year, 325,339 U.S students participated in study abroad programs compared to 241,791 in academic year 2005-06, an increase of 35% over a decade (Loveland & Morris, 2018; Paige et al., 2009). Similarly, ERASMUS, the European student mobility program, reports that 79,874 students enrolled in study abroad programs in the 1997-98 academic year compared to 272,497 in 2013-14, resulting in a staggering increase of 244% (European Commission – Education and Training, 2015). Some scholars argue that physically experiencing a foreign culture, rather than reading about it, is more meaningful and has a positive impact on a person's cultural awareness (Dewey, 1938; Palmer, 2015; SYTA, 2017).

Gordon Allport (1954), who developed social contact theory, suggests that if certain preconditions are met, contact among different ethnic groups will reduce prejudice and increase mutual understanding. According to Allport's theory, contact between groups is most likely to reduce prejudice if the following four conditions are met: 1) the two groups have common goals; 2) the group members have equal status; 3) the members of the two groups work collaboratively; 4) there is institutional support for the contact, for example, if group leaders support the contact between groups (Hopper, 2019). Pettigrew and Tropp (2000, 2009) found substantial support in testing Allport's theory by conducting a comprehensive meta-analysis of more than 500 individual studies including over 700 samples on whether and how intergroup contact reduces prejudice. The authors shed light on the debate over whether contact reduces prejudice and the role that Allport's conditions play in promoting positive intergroup outcomes (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2009). Findings revealed that contact reduces prejudice by (1) enhancing knowledge about the outgroup, (2) reducing anxiety about intergroup contact, and (3) increasing empathy and perspective taking while greater intergroup contact is generally associated with lower levels of prejudice. Interestingly enough, Pettigrew also explains that one's stereotypes about the other group might not necessarily change, but one grows to like them anyway (DeAngelis, 2001).

Thus, if Allport's theory is borne out, one could argue that study abroad experiences have significant long-term impact in reducing prejudice and ethnocentrism if strategically planned and ideally meeting Allport's conditions. In other words, study abroad programs then might foster cultural understanding and global citizenship (Dessoff, 2006; Paige et al., 2009). Allport's claim finds further support in The Student

Youth Travel Association of the United States' (SYTA) study conducted in 2017, where 74% of students reported increased acceptance of other cultures and ethnicities (p. 6).

This literature review examines both the history, benefits, potential drawbacks, and meaning of global citizenship associated with international travel and study abroad in conjunction with education, as well as specific accounts of cross-cultural and multicultural music ensemble travel.

Travel and Education

Aristotle (ca. 350 B.C.E./2000) argued that those who experience are more successful than those who have only considered theory. He believed that individuals gain education through experience, active involvement, and learning by doing. In Aristotle's thought, *theoria* implies not only observation, but also involvement and action (Dunne, 1993; Kodish, 2006). Dunne (1993) interprets Aristotle by saying that theory is indeed action. Experience, or practical wisdom according to Aristotle, implies openness and continual learning for the sake of taking purposeful action.

Education in conjunction with travel is a notion that has been in currency for centuries. In some parts of the West, the idea of student travel as experiential education was formalized as early as the late 1600s (Gyr, 2010). From the 17th to the 19th century, it was the elite British men who first embarked on the "Grand Tour" (Ritchie, 2003), in which they ventured across the great sights of Europe as a form of education, a "bildung." Historically, the Grand Tour started as a travel endeavor for upper-class men though later women, craftsmen, and the middle class of various European nations participated in the educational venture as well. The student traveler would often spend several months in Paris, Rome, and Venice as well as visiting the smaller towns along the

way. The initial intent of these trips to continental Europe was to shape the student into a well-rounded English gentleman. Thus, it was expected the young man travel to Paris to learn his manners, learn how to dance, how to dress and how to engage in civilized conversations (Porges, 2017). In Italy, the traveler was to learn about sculpture, paintings, architecture as well as ancient Greek and Roman artifacts. This notion of civic and humanistic ideals was based in the cultural awakening emerging in the Renaissance: the revival of a thirst of knowledge and intellectual inquiry. John Locke stated that "to form a good gentleman, book learning is secondary; primary is modesty, politeness, and knowing ways of the world" (Locke 1693/1964).

Following the upper-class, other ranks and genders began traveling to the continent for both adventure as well as to hone their craftsmen skills. Various trade unions encouraged the travel experience, and some made it a required element of training often lasting several years. The workers were expected to return home as accomplished craftsmen (Porges, 2017). During the Elizabethan era, both men and women were encouraged to be educated in the arts and sciences given that Queen Elizabeth I personally valued student continental travel. While primarily young men embarked on the Grand Tour, some women broke the more conservative notion and engaged in travels to the continent as well, though usually of shorter duration.

While educational experience was the primary reason, the English monarchy had its own agenda by sending its wealthy sons to the continent as these young men were to make important contacts and seek connections to influential Italian and French families (Stoye, 1989). The intention was to observe political structures, build political alliances and instill a sense of cosmopolitanism. For political treaties were considered crucial to

ensure peace and security between England and the continent. However, these trips also instilled a sense of cultural superiority in the young traveler. In reporting about a young man's travel diary, Gailhard (1678) highlights the belittling of various cultures, which revealed early forms of national superiority. Many English student travelers returned to England convinced that their government was superior. Thus, the Grand Tourist of the 18th century was instrumental to a strategic British foreign policy. Travel on its own does not guarantee a sense of global citizenship in a more democratic sense but needs to be conducted in a context of exchange and mutual understanding.

As a consequence of the industrial revolution that started in England in the 18th century, there were increasingly more non-aristocratic students among the travelers, who could include children of merchants and tradespeople. Through technological innovation more distant and formerly unreachable locations became accessible. In contrast with the destinations of the earlier Grand Tour, student travelers at that point journeyed across the Alps into Switzerland traveling as far east as Vienna and Prague, and a southern alternate route led them to Spain and all the way to Morocco (Porges, 2017). However, the aristocrats' original intention of cultural and intellectual inquiry soon had to give way to mass recreational tourism amongst the middle class seeking entertainment, drinking and gambling as well as professional and commercial contacts.

Likewise, in the 17th century musicians traveled from post to post, and by combining the different customs they encountered on their journeys, produced a cosmopolitan musical life and style (Burkholder et al., 2014). Germans, like the English, studied abroad and traveled across Europe from court to court and wrote music in almost all genres, drawing on Italian and French as well as native styles and blending them into a

cosmopolitan form. Indeed, it was the German secret to balance "tastes between native trends and foreign influences" (Burkholder et al., 2014, p. 432), thus making the experienced composer-traveler the most in-demand musician amongst the courts in Europe. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart rose to international acclaim being able to draw on various compositional and performance techniques. It was through his many extensive tours through Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, England, Holland, and Italy with his father Leopold that Mozart became familiar with every kind of music written or heard in Western Europe (Burkholder et al., 2014; Solomon, 1995).

In the 19th century, the custom of studying abroad was adopted by educated and affluent Americans, who ventured out to inquire about European culture and ponder the shadows of the past (Porges, 2017). Even earlier, Wanner (2009) reported on the "medieval tradition of the traveling scholar who brought his learning to others and inevitably enriched his own knowledge" (p. 82). Likewise, Stone and Petrick (2013) trace the intertwining of education and travel through past centuries, referencing ancient Chinese and Western philosophers who mentioned the benefit of learning from travel. Today, the problem of environmental issues and the COVID-19 pandemic lead to the following question: should we still have study abroad programs? And, has the intention of the individual who longs to travel the big, wide world for personal enrichment changed from the ways in which the above scholars reported? Wanner (2009) observes that,

> The current thrust to elevate study abroad to an entitlement for college students continues these traditions and gives them a systematic makeover with modern goals, means, and expectations. Yet they still embody an essential part of the quest for self-improvement through knowledge of the other. (p. 83)

Most teachers who design study abroad programs would agree with Wanner that a crucial part of traveling is the pursuit of self-improvement through experiencing the "other"

through a different cultural framework (Palmer, 2015) and consequently construct new knowledge.

Benefits of Study Abroad

Stone and Petrick (2013) argue that most travel is educational because it broadens the mind as people learn from and interpret experiences. Travel is transformative; it changes people by altering their worldview and exposing them to different cultures and working towards eliminating stereotypes (2013). Inevitably, such transformation is not automatic and must be planned strategically (Gaudelli, 2016). Put differently, as Doerr reminds us, "study abroad experience can provide world-shattering moments, for it to become a meaningful learning experience about the world, we need rigorous analytical frameworks (2019, p. 4).

The Student Youth Travel Association of the United States (SYTA) conducted a study on the impact of student group travel on young people aged 10-18, their teachers, and the school community in general, and it found that 60% of teachers report a positive impact of travel on students' academic experiences. In addition, more than half of student-participants perceive academic improvement as well as an increase of intellectual curiosity as a result of student travel (SYTA, 2017, p. 2). Seventy-four percent of students reported increased acceptance of other cultures and ethnicities, supporting Allport's (1954) study, while 73% reported increased willingness to know, learn, and explore more about the "foreign." Dessoff (2006) reaches similar conclusions upon reviewing multiple studies by stating that participation in study abroad programs can be especially influential in improving intercultural competency and foreign language skills.

The SYTA (2017) study further revealed that 56% of the students reported increased independence, self-esteem, and confidence.

Further findings illuminate that learning outcomes and benefits range from personal growth to knowledge, cultural awareness, and cognitive development (Dessoff, 2006; Hadis, 2005; Paige et al., 2009; SYTA, 2017; Stone & Petrick, 2013), as I will detail in the following sections. While several studies (Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004) show that longer stays result in higher personal growth, academic performance, and cultural awareness, Dwyer (2004) found a large number of participants who engaged in short-term travel experiences also exhibit lasting educational benefits, increased self-confidence, and a better understanding of their own cultural values. Dwyer's study (2004) drew upon 50 years of data surveying over 3700 student alumni who were enrolled in the Institute of International Education for Students' programs. The number of years of data, the number of different locations and the variety of academic models used allowed IES to isolate and assess the longitudinal impact of specific program components for large enough sample sizes to make the results statistically valid and reliable (p. 153).

Lamet and Lamet (1982), drawing on samples over a 10-year period, found that 62% of students who had studied abroad say out-of-class experiences are the most valuable aspects of those experiences. Similarly, 74% of students in the SYTA study (2017) reported that "nothing compares to practical experience; it enhances the in-class experience" (p. 7). In other words, students valued the combination of having both in-class experiences as well as out-of-class experiences more than only the former. Students who traveled show an increase in functional knowledge, intercultural awareness, and

personal development. Wanner (2009) adds that "an overarching aim of study abroad is the discovery of the individual's self through the other and better understanding of the conditions surrounding our existence through contrast with other realities" (p. 81). However, Wanner also warns that although the benefits and outcomes of study abroad have been researched, it is often unclear whether these are due to travel, interaction with other cultures, formal classroom education, or a combination and thus creates "difficulty to attributing the desired (vague) effects to a single (precise) cause" (p. 88). Goneya (2008) echoes Wanner's lament by stating that "it is often difficult to isolate the impact on student outcomes [based on study abroad participation] of a single type of experience (p. 19).

Unlike Stone and Petrick (2013), Gaudelli and Laverty (2015) argue that no experience per se, including a global one, is intrinsically "good," and further state that "a global experience, therefore, has pedagogical value if it extends beyond the momentary to the continuous" (p. 18) and if future experiences are informed by such past experiences. In other words, such (global) experiences must reach beyond tourism, they must incentivize transformation of sorts within the experiencer. Gaudelli and Laverty (2015) emphasize that higher education excursions are often defined – or confined – by objective conditions such as change in architecture, geographically distant locations, sounds and cuisine, while erroneously assuming that students will automatically engage in careful observation when confronted with these new or unknown (objective) circumstances. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938), a pioneer in the idea of learning through experience, proposed that the knowledge and skills that a person acquires in one situation can help them understand and react to subsequent experiences. Although Dewey did not

explicitly articulate a "global" experience, he argued that it is important that educators consider how these objective conditions are going to interact with the students' internal and future conditions. Further, Dewey argues, it is a mistake to suppose that these necessarily constitute a new experience. Finally, speaking to experience in a broader sense, Dewey reminds us that

> Experience is educative only to the degree that it rests upon a continuity or significant knowledge and to the degree that this knowledge modifies or "modulates" the learner's outlook, attitude, and skill. The true learning situation, then has longitudinal and lateral dimensions. (p. 10)

This would mean that students need to draw from their experiences by grappling with the newly learned to modify their outlook and ultimately apply their insights to future situations. The following section examines experiences in a global context and how such experiences may form one's global identity.

Global Citizenship and Experiences

Global experiences, according to Gaudelli and Laverty (2015), "should be planned with a view to allowing for spontaneous activities, events, and encounters" (p. 20). They must, in the language of Dewey (1938), provide "room for the free play of individual thinking or for contributions due to distinctive individual experience" (p. 48). Drawing upon Dewey, Gaudelli and Laverty further state that while global education has the potential to broaden and deepen our students' experience, it is not enough that students simply be exposed to culturally diverse "others" but that "we must consider how the experience will live on in the student's future experience and recognize that how it lives on is partly a function of his or her past experience" (p. 22). Furthermore, sustained reflection such as journaling and group reflection discussion should be an integral part in

a study abroad (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015), for it is through reflection, as an experience in and of itself, that insights are drawn, and future activities conceptualized.

In a mixed method study called *Beyond Immediate Impact: Study Abroad for Global Engagement*, Paige et al. (2009) surveyed 6,391 alumni across 22 higher education institutions and study abroad providers throughout the United States. Additionally, the research team conducted 63 individual interviews randomly selected from the survey respondents who agreed to participate in the interview phase. Three case studies drawing from these in-depth interviews were subsequently developed. The researchers explored the ways in which participants in study abroad programs have become globally engaged since their overseas experience and how the participants ascribe their global commitment to their study abroad journey. Men represented 32.9 percent of respondents and women 67.1 percent. The survey was developed to examine and assess the impact of the participants' study abroad experiences on their subsequent participation in global engagement endeavors as well as on their future educational and career choices. Other questions inquired about the most impactful activities students were involved in during their undergraduate study. The qualitative portion focused specifically on how participants study abroad experiences impacted their sense of global engagement, a capacity that was subdivided by the researchers into five categories: civic engagement, voluntary simplicity, knowledge production, philanthropy, and social entrepreneurship. Participants included alumni selected from a time span of over 50 years, thus providing evidence on the long-term impact of study abroad programs specifically as it relates to the five variables of global engagement.

The researchers defined the five variables in detail as follows: 1) *civic engagement* was construed as a concept where respondents reported involvement in a set of civic activities, such as voting on either the local, state, national or international levels. 2) *Voluntary simplicity* was a conception defined as the effort to leading a more modest and simpler lifestyle (Paige et al., 2009). This manifested further in pursuing and practicing an environmentally aware style of living. The concept of 3) *knowledge production* examined participants' formal publication output, in both print and new technology formats, during the course of their life and career after the study abroad experience. 4) *philanthropic* endeavors examined participants' focus on two categories of activities: voluntary work, most commonly with educational organizations, and monetary donations. The last variable was expressed as 5) *social entrepreneurship*, within which the researchers examined the participants' influencing of for-profit organizations in order to "channel an increasing portion of its surpluses and/or profits for the good of the community" (p. 13).

Quantitative results showed that 89% of the participants reported that study abroad was the most salient experience during their undergraduate years, ranking as the number one most impactful activity. In regard to global engagement, 60% reported involvement in a civic activity, which included voting in elections (94.2%), playing a leadership role in improving quality of life (55%), and 73.2% of participants indicated having made conscious purchasing decisions based on companies' social or political values. Further, 86.1% of the participants reported voluntary simplicity, and 54.1% reported to have engaged in philanthropic endeavors. Lastly, 25% reported to have a substantial influence on their for-profit organization to be socially aware as a result of

their study abroad experiences. Significantly more of the respondents went on to graduate school as a result of studying abroad compared to the general U.S. college undergraduate population (Paige et al., 2009).

The qualitative results from the three case studies strongly suggest that the study abroad experience profoundly shaped the lives and careers of the participants. These impacts seem to be in harmony with Gaudelli and Laverty's (2015) proposition insofar that a valuable [global] experience "will live on in the student's future experience and […] that how it lives on is partly a function of his or her past experience" (p. 22). The participants revealed that they would not have risen to their current positions (e.g., university professor, head of not-for-profit organization promoting African development, and director of curriculum integration at the learning abroad center of a US university) had it not been for their study abroad experiences.

One of the participants, a professor at a Japanese university, explicitly mentioned that her study abroad experience enhanced her political awareness, which eventually led her to design a course in global citizenship at the university where she teaches. She further stated that she strongly encourages her own students to study abroad (p. 16). Both quantitative as well as qualitative data showed a dramatic impact of study abroad on global engagement as per the categories delineated above.

In examining the shaping of both a global citizenship identity as well as cosmopolitan ideals, Hendershot and Sperandio (2009) conducted an exploratory mixed-method case study to shed light on students' perceptions of determining factors and aspects that contributed to the development of their global citizenship identity within the context of an undergraduate global citizenship program at Lehigh University. The

researchers investigated four cohorts. Students in the first cohort entered the program in 2004 and graduated in 2008. Cohorts 2, 3, and 4 enrolled in subsequent academic years. The four-year program was based on a curriculum that focuses on globalization, cultures, global literature, and global citizenship. Additionally, students partook in two study abroad experiences. The first international trip was approximately two weeks in length and took place during freshman year. The second study abroad experience had to be at least five weeks long and took place in a non-English speaking country. During both trips, students engaged in structured experiences and activities led by faculty members.

The researchers surveyed students across all four cohorts, conducted self-reflective interviews with students from cohort 1, and a focus group interview with participants from cohort 2. Additional data sources included document analysis of the program admissions essays from all cohorts. 65 out of 93 students responded to the survey resulting in a response rate of 70%. The survey, consisting of 18 Likert-type as well as three open-ended questions, focused on the process of transformative learning for social responsibility specifically as it related to students' experiences in Lehigh's Global Citizenship Program. Included was the open-ended question: "Give your definition of global citizenship."

Findings suggested that interactions with other cultures and experiences acquired in foreign places through the program's organized study abroad were perceived as being the most salient components in developing global citizenship identities and fostering cosmopolitan ideals. The findings will be discussed in the following section. Based on these findings and given the nature of my dissertation, I will focus on the study's results

pertaining to the impact of the study abroad component of the program by examining the concept of cosmopolitanism in the following section.

Cosmopolitanism, according to Nussbaum (1996), suggests that all human beings should be included in a broader community of dialogue. In this community, political considerations are rooted in a space of intertwined camaraderie. Community members are called to pay special attention to this union called humanity. Further, Nussbaum argues that cosmopolitan education should teach students citizenry that embodies all of humanity, re-defining notions of patriotism. Building on Nussbaum's conception, Appiah (2006) reminds us that aiming for such an appreciation need not emphasize only the common aspects of humanity. An acknowledgement and, perhaps more importantly, appreciation of differences among people and cultures can drive legitimate understanding and empathy. Scrutton (1982) suggested, in a time where "cosmopolitanism" was not yet a buzzword in the literature, that to be cosmopolitan one must believe in and pursue a lifestyle that shows a familiarity and ability to incorporate the manners, habits, languages, and social customs from other cultures. This rings true with Hansen's (2011) commitment to a broader moral purpose that goes beyond geographical borders, driven by an awareness of how experiences with "otherness" can awaken us to wider insight and potentially inform a whole world philosophy.

So what *is* a global citizen? Hendershot and Sperandio (2009) derived the data from the following findings from a doctoral dissertation. The study investigated undergraduate students' perceptions of their global citizenship development during their studies at Leigh University's Global Citizenship Program. Results suggest that students perceived a global citizen to comprise the following, a person who is

> open minded and accepting of other cultures in a respectful, tolerant and non-judgmental fashion; pursues knowledge and seeks understanding; feels part of the human community, and possess a sense of awareness, which includes not only self-awareness, but also awareness of the interconnections between local and global issues and of one's actions in the world. (p. 3)

Interview analysis suggested that the most salient tenets students gained through their study abroad were actions and reactions experienced through engagement with foreign cultures (Hendershot & Sperandio, 2009). One participant who was part of a study abroad trip to Chile reported specifically that the trip provided an opportunity to experience out of classroom -and out of institution- experiences connecting with another culture "in ways beyond those experienced by tourists" (p. 49). The student participant mentioned "going out to farm fields and talking with union labors and survivors of a torture camp" helped him realize that "they're people. They're human beings […] not like they are a museum exhibit" (p. 49). Participants further reported that becoming aware of "different aspects, ideas, and ways of responding to issues was key to developing an understanding of global citizenship" (p. 52). In describing the importance of awareness, students articulated the most crucial aspect of interacting with "the other" was in fact the development of *self*-awareness. This resonates with Wanner's (2009) assertion that a crucial part of traveling is the pursuit of self-improvement.

Hendershot and Sperandio (2009) concluded that study abroad experiences were not only paramount moments in the lives of the participants but also the most salient experiences of the GC program, which in turn became key elements in developing a global citizenship identity. Hendershot and Sperandio (2009) inferred that the students' voices

> fill an important gap in our knowledge of how best to develop initiatives that promote the cultivation of cosmopolitan ideals which, if translated to practice, become the defining element of global citizenship. (p. 54)

Definitions of Global Citizenship

In addition to the definition of global citizenship as described by Leigh University's Global Citizenship Program study referenced by Hendershot and Sperandio (2009), Doerr (2019) depicts other authors in the field and their definition on global citizenship. Darla Deardorff (2009) defines global citizenship as follows: "(1) global knowledge; (2) understanding the interconnectedness of the world in which we live: (3) intercultural competence, or the ability to relate successfully with those from other cultures: and (4) engagement on the local and global level around issues that impact humanity." (p. 348).

Martha Nussbaum's notion of a "world citizen" according to Lewin and Kirk (2009) is as follows: (1) "capacity for critical examination of oneself and one's traditions," (2) "an ability to see themselves not simply as citizens of some local region or group but also as human beings bound to all other human beings," and (3) "the ability to think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself." Nussbaum's belief echoes and reminds me of Hansen's (2011) commitment to a broader moral purpose that goes beyond geographical borders. He writes that a *kosmopolites* or "citizen of the world" (Hansen, 2014), exemplifies the capacity to be open reflectively to local concerns, commitments, and values; and that cosmopolitanism offers a pedagogy which "people learn to balance reflective openness to the new with reflective loyalty to the known" (Hansen 2011, p. 1).

A Critical Look at Study Abroad and Global Citizenship

In her book *Transforming Study Abroad: A Handbook* (2019), Doerr proposes to rethink various terminologies and concepts typically associated with and commonly accepted in the study abroad literature. While fundamentally a proponent of study abroad, Doerr criticizes conventional 'assumptions' of concepts such as "difference," "global competence," and "immersion" (2019), the latter being a term with currency in the industry, and suggests new critical frameworks for study abroad, which she prefaces as follows: "Although study abroad experience can provide world-shattering moments, for it to become a meaningful learning experience about the world, we need rigorous analytical frameworks" (p.4).

Drawing on politics, identity, and argued through a postmodernist lens, Doerr poses the question for instance whether immigrants (undocumented or not) exhibit a "global competence" in the same way study abroad alumni do, and asks who could decide. That is to say, does the global depend on the existence of the national? In the same vein, Woolf (2010) warns that claiming to transform study abroad students into global citizens "supports the idea of global citizens as a new privileged class" (p. 35). Similarly, Zemach-Bersin (2009) states that "global citizenship appears as a commodity with the primary function of allowing Americans to succeed economically, socially, and politically, in the globalized world" (p. 317). Doerr argues that in order to gain "global competence," a concept predicated on the idea of nation-state, crossing (national) borders then is imperative and thus "privileges" national border crossing over crossing regional borders for example (Doerr, 2019, Wimmer & Schiller, 2002). Not only does this concept perpetuate the nation state ideology and, according to Doerr, 'privileges' the West over

the non-West, but the notion of global(ism) is predicated on the concept of "cultural difference."

Doerr raises a controversial point in arguing that the notion of experiencing "cultural difference" is also predicated on the concept that by crossing national borders one culture ought to necessarily experience another culture and thus as a consequence gains "global competence." Yet this presupposes that the (host) nation state is internally homogenous (Doerr, 2019). This leads to another critique of Doerr. The notion of "cultural difference" suggests that "culture" is an entity of comparison predicated on the concept of "cultural difference" and thus regards culture as static and delimited uniform units. The perception of what one calls culture does not live in a vacuum but is rather situated within complex systems constructed by customs and regulations. Thus, immersing oneself into such a bounded entity might hinders study abroad students' ability to grasp and understand how difference, according to Doerr, is a conception constructed based on power relations.

In this regard, Doerr further argues that there is no "full immersion" possible into this one preexisting host culture as the mere fact of hosting a study abroad student inherently changes the host families' quotidian circumstances and thus their "culture". In Doerr's words, "there is no circumscribed 'other' reality of 'culture' of the host society for students to be immersed in; what happens during study abroad is constructive negotiation between two politically positioned subjects with diverse backgrounds" (Doerr, 2019, p. 55). The author continues to debate that "culture" as we perceive it is neither static nor does it exist in a vacuum but rather is composed and situated in varied

structures, regulations, and systems of practices. Accordingly, Doerr criticizes the notion of "culture" as fixed and given.

Another key concept within the study abroad literature is "immersion." The claim is that through immersion, living like a local, students ought to experience what it is like to live one's life as a native (Brockington & Wiedenhoeft, 2009; Cushner, 2009). Further, it is claimed, students acquire global competence and may become global citizens by understanding another culture, learning other ways of being, and by gaining proficiency in another language (Doerr, 2019). However, Doerr further questions whether any act of "living like a native" is considered immersion, or even possible: "What if you are an immigrant trying to adjust to a new country – is that an act of immersion? Is staying with an immigrant family in the study abroad destination an act of immersion?" (p. 94). Most importantly, who makes that determination? In concluding her argument about whether "living like a local" portrays a misconception, Doerr suggests "living *with* locals" to be a more accurate view and terminology (Haoming, 2019).

Echoing other authors (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015; Southcott, 2004), Doerr argues that mere immersion or participation in a study abroad program alone does not necessarily warrant a genuine learning experience unless it is complemented with premeditated activities that prompt students both to engage *with* local people and reflect intensively on their lived experiences (Doerr, 2019). Critical reflection on lived experiences lies at the very hard of experiential learning, which I will discuss in the next subsection of this literature review.

Suggesting that simply immersing oneself into the host society warrants a meaningful experience, no matter what the activity is, implies that the host society is

homogenous. This notion of immersion however generalizes any experience and insinuates that any engagement, or immersion, with "a local" shall be of the same value, supporting again the claim that the host society is homogenous. Doerr finds contradiction in this very concept as she claims that the mere presence of a student naturally changes the composition of the study abroad destination and thus inevitably no longer gives credence to the notion of it being allegedly homogenous. To this end, Doerr urges "students to challenge this contradiction in the discourse of immersion and instead view study abroad experience as something constantly co-constructed by study abroad students and people in the host society along with diverse people in the space of the host society" (p. 98).

In another light, Doerr (2019) suggests a new framing of the concept of "immersion" by changing the focus on observing the differences of customs and social interactions between people in the host society. Students should question why certain things and people they encountered made them notice a difference and connect these to wider sociocultural constructs. Based on this new notion, "immersion" can be "understood in a new way, not as plunging into the cultural other's world but as focusing on the construction of difference among people" (p. 108).

Doerr (2019) raises a point in questioning whether the study abroad experience imperatively entails crossing a border in order to "experience difference"? Doerr wonders whether "the project of studying abroad relies on the existence of borders to cross [and if so] do we inevitably focus on, or even seek out, difference rather than similarity among things we experience?" (p. 145). The point raised by the author criticizes not only the implication of borders but also that the framework or [study abroad] project might push

students into compulsorily seeking for differences. We might give some attention to Doerr's argument of: "If global competence involves bridging differences, what is the unit of difference?" (p. 51).

Finally, Doerr reminds us that what we consider important goals in study abroad programs framed as desirable outcomes such as "skill," "cultural knowledge," "intelligence," or "competence" is not universal but subjective and culturally determined, echoing Bourdieu (1989), who argues that impugning a term's definition is a political battle to impose one's view of the world and warrants investigation as such, rather than labeling one definition as objective and thus neutral. Hence, assessing students according to those parameters (skill, cultural knowledge, intelligence, and competence) is not neutral but imposing one particular culture's take on said criteria. In Doerr's words, "In sum, we need to be aware that what we assess is what we value, not something neutral." (p. 168). Perhaps study abroad should be considered a practice of social competence and not global competence, suggesting that self-transformation ultimately might be considered primarily social in nature. In conclusion, echoing other authors (Dewey, 1938; Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015; Gonyea, 2008; Southcott, 2004), Doerr emphasizes that deep (self-) reflection on the part of the study abroad student (and facilitator) upon their lived experiences is critical.

The literature reviewed thus far indicates that the study abroad experience and hence lived experience seems to live harmoniously in conjunction with the notion of experiential education. Accordingly, further exploration of the concept of experiential education is warranted and follows in the next subsection.

Experiential Education

Michel de Montaigne (1581/1877) whose quote opened this chapter was a French Philosopher of the Renaissance who became known for popularizing the essay as a literary genre. Montaigne offered some philosophical insights on the importance of global (travel) experiences. Montaigne argued that these not only broaden one's perspectives but that it is difficult to imagine things in their "grandeur" if not personally experienced. Education, according to Montaigne, is not a passive process, but an active interaction between the pupil and his environment (Vacca, 1955). Montaigne suggested that one should use the world as our looking-glass and to share in the variety of temperaments, schools of thought, opinion, laws and customs. He traveled to Switzerland and the spa baths of Germany and Italy in 1580-81 for health and rejuvenation purposes. It was on this journey where Montaigne experimented first hand his reaction to and the effect of the different bath waters he ingested at the various spas in which he sojourned. In recording the results of the varied bath waters and doses in his journal, Montaigne narrates how it enabled him to compare one bath to another and hence, one experience to another (La Charité, 1970). Montaigne illustrates with this anecdote the importance of learning from (personal) experience and the active interaction with one's environment (Halpin, 2015).

While the term "experiential education" had not been officially used and applied until the 20th century (Porges, 2017), one could argue that Montaigne's notion of travel experience was a precursor to what we call today experiential education. For Montaigne, being and life cannot be reasoned, they are experienced. The non-intellectual facet of life shall not be cerebrated and intellectualized, to paraphrase La Charité (1970).

The concept of experiential education has been in currency for centuries if not millennia prior. Predating Montaigne, ancient Greek culture had already formed a similar concept. Plato's (ca. 375 B.C.E./1987) educational philosophy divided education into two categories: intellectual quest and physical experiences, believing that the integration of the two might lead to the creation of an individual with perfect character (Porges, 2017). Accordingly, the physical branch of Plato's educational conception might be deciphered as a predecessor of experiential education. Similarly, Porges interprets the Greek philosophers by saying that

> The common thread between Plato, his mentor Socrates, and Plato's student, Aristotle, was that each believed that individuals gained education through experience, involvement, and learning by doing. This then may be construed as among the earliest examples of EE. (Porges, 2017, p. 7)

Perhaps describing what the field of experiential education today might call a holistic education (Stonehouse et al., 2011), Plato (ca. 375 B.C.E./1987) says the two branches of education, one philosophical, generally meaning intellectual pursuits, and the other physical,

> are not intended the one to train body, the other mind, except incidentally, but to ensure a proper harmony between energy and initiative on the one hand and reason on the other, so we may venture to assert that anyone who can produce the perfect blend of the physical and intellectual sides of education and apply them to the training of character, is producing harmony of far more importance.

The Association for experiential education (AEE) defines the concept eponymously as a process through which a learner constructs knowledge, skill, and value from direct experiences (Luckmann, 1996). Arguably, in some sense, experiential education is a supposition one is surrounded by on a daily basis. Students who engage in direct experiences especially in circumstances foreign to them are compelled to construct

meaning and attach their own value to a situation. The learning task and setting however assume authenticity (Luckmann, 1996). It is the educator's task to structure experiences to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and assume responsibility for the results. The AEE further defines experiential education as a philosophy that informs various pedagogical approaches in which educators deliberately engage learners in direct and hands-on experiences supported by reflection in order to expand knowledge, "increase skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities" (Iwasaki, 2019).

Experiential education has been practiced for thousands of years and grew considerably during the Enlightenment (Porges, 2017). Swiss philosopher Rousseau suggested that early stages of education should draw from students' direct interactions with the world and less from books (Porges, 2017). Rousseau took for granted that the self-development of the child is driven by immediate interests (Rousseau, 1762/1979), (i.e., not by instruction or by formal education). He suggested that education should occur outside of school and grow out of experiences that students encounter on a day-to-day basis (Smith & Knapp, 2011). In *Emile* (1762), Rousseau's educational novel/treatise, he elaborated on how children learn by experience, by trial and error, and through these experiences should draw their own conclusions about life.

Dewey, who was influenced by Rousseau, proposed that students travel to a historic location and learn by experiencing how people lived (Ainsworth, 1979). This very concept recalls one of the compelling points of inquiry of the present study, insofar that I am intrigued to investigate whether through study abroad and thus experiencing the "other" first-hand, one might construct new knowledge and attempt to understand the

"foreign." Dewey's philosophy arguably lies at the very heart of experiential education bringing forth the very development of experiential education programs and experiences (Porges, 2017); for Dewey (1938) called for "education of, by, and for experience" (p. 29). In the latter part of the 20th century, the conception and model of experiential education was proposed by various scholars across a variety of disciplines.

Kolb's (1984) experiential four-stage learning model for instance combines experience, perception, cognition, and behavior to create learning. According to Kolb's learning theory, learning is "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (p. 41). He built his conception by combining the theories of John Dewey and Jean Piaget (Doerr, 2019). The key tenets are active engagement in structured experiences within which students investigate, take risks, and problem solve. Another crucial tenet is the deep reflection after the fact, critical analysis, and the conceptualization of the learned experience. The newly constructed knowledge, which is personal, is then applied to future learning and experience. The concrete experience of travel and discovery provides an avenue where the traveler can reflect on the experience, thus creating learning (Mouton 2002). In the following subsection, I will examine experiential education practiced in conjunction with a study abroad program in music education.

Music Education Abroad: A Case Study

Specifically, within a music context, Southcott (2004) conducted a qualitative study analyzing participants' reflective journals reporting on the experience of Australian music education graduate students who embarked on a three-week educational trip to

Europe (Switzerland, Austria, and Hungary) as part of their final assignment in a course called “European Perspectives on Music Education” (EPME). They visited the Dalcroze Institute in Geneva, the Orff Institute in Salzburg, and the Kodaly Institute in Kecskemet. Prior to the experiential component on site of the EPME, students read extensively on the three methodologies that were the academic focus of the course. The academic work prior to the tour meant that the experiential components were made more meaningful for the students (Southcott, 2004). During their visits at these three institutions, students participated through practical engagement with the subject matter. Students reported how they were able to apply theoretical ideas into practice by both observing and *experiencing* the methodologies firsthand. Southcott used experiential education (Luckmann, 1996) as a lens for her study and determined that this study abroad trip fulfilled all requirements to classify as an experiential education, which, as delineated above, are the following: concrete experiences, reflective observation, and critical analysis and synthesis.

Defining experiential education as a “process through which a learner constructs knowledge, skill and value from direct experience,” Luckman (1996) further states that “carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis” (p. 7). Critical reflection was indeed the intention of the EPME program. Activities were designed to lead and invite the students to reflect on the academic subject matter. This concept also reminds us of Dewey (1938) and Gaudelli and Laverty’s (2015) notion that “sustained reflection” must be part of the experience in order for it to be meaningful and to have a future impact on the student participant.

Southcott found the following to be critical of experiential education: authenticity, experiencing original sources, unpredictability of outcome, spontaneous opportunities of

learning, and holistic engagement including activating all the senses. The latter being at the core of the Dalcrozian methodology. Southcott's (2004) findings showed that students gained a meaningful and comprehensive understanding of the pedagogies of Dalcroze, Orff, and Kodaly through extensive reflective journaling and *hands-on* experiences when visiting these three institutions. Southcott concluded that the "principles of experiential education have wide applicability and should be considered in all disciplines and in the widest range of educational environments" (p. 13) including international travel as she demonstrated with the EPME study abroad program.

Music Ensemble Travel

Other studies specifically pertaining to music education (Olsen 2010, 2008; Robinson, 2011) primarily report on the mechanics of music ensemble travel, mainly relating to the planning, fundraising, and execution of such trips. Robinson (2011) suggests group travel for band or orchestra as a means of "outreach and promotion" and thus through recruitment trips ensuring a band program's longevity. He provides lists and tips for potential future trip leaders to pay attention to "liability and insurance protection" (p. 52) and to make sure to choose the right travel planner and provide chaperones and students with a handbook. Olsen (2008) suggests that plenty of advanced planning as well as an abundance of patience, and clear communication with both parents and students are necessary for the "success" of such trips. Olsen further lists ways to save money, how to pick the right bus company, and proposes that one inquires whether instruments will be stored properly when in transit. In contrast to Olsen's more mechanical reports, Robinson (2011) does mention further benefits such as student enrichment and positive life-changing effects as a result of music ensemble travels.

Similarly, Hagman (2010) describes the ways in which Missouri school district ensemble trips provided opportunities to teach students concert behavior, concert dress, and to observe orchestra rehearsals. She further elaborates how taking her fifth-grade students to see a drum corps show resulted in improved behavior during her own rehearsals with these students in the following years. Moreover, Hagman indicates, it developed the students' perception of what a marching band could look like. Olsen (2008, 2010) included quotes of band directors she interviewed in her article, for example: "There is nothing like watching these young students' eyes open up for an experience that they might never otherwise get; […] they feel a lot more mature and worldly when they come home" (2008, p. 34); […] "I've even considered going on a trip and not having them play, just going somewhere for the cultural experience" (2010, p. 43). However, there is no empirical evidence in Olsen's reports as to whether such trips are fundamentally educative and have long lasting impacts on the participants.

Helsel (2015) conducted a qualitative multiple case study looking at three Western Pennsylvania schools and their secondary ensemble directors to both examine the advantages and disadvantages of engaging the ensemble in the travel experience as well as to determine ways to improve procedures. Helsel explored the multidimensional facets inherent within ensemble travel and the various motives the three participating music educators who regularly engage in travel with their secondary ensembles (choral, orchestra, and band) dispose.

The participants were recruited through purposeful sampling with the intent of including respected representatives of their specific area and "intelligent people who would bring rich detail and various perspectives to the conversation and to the topic"

(Helsel, 2015, p. 7). The study sought to determine to what degree is travel worth undertaking for the students, the educator, and the music program, weighed against the loss of class time and the expenditure of administrative labor involved in the planning. Further, the researcher explored with participants ways to improve the experience of school ensemble travel for teachers, students, and parents. Data collection included individual interviews with each of the three ensemble directors, a representative from each choral, band, and orchestra as well as a focus group interview. Additionally, writing prompts completed by the participants were collected and analyzed.

The results showed that these trips served as a relevant recruitment and retention tool for all three ensemble directors. However, the data showed that recruitment and retention were only a byproduct of travel while all participants agreed that there was so much more educational value in undertaking ensemble trips, such as social maturity and cognitive development (Helsel, 2015). A recurring theme was how these experiences bring people together and create a bond not only amongst students but also between students and teachers. The ensemble directors attributed retention levels to the relationships fostered during these trips versus travel activities per se. In a musical ensemble where blending is the goal, participants reported that having a bond with comrades was very valuable. In addition, the teacher knew the students better. Therefore, they had a more efficient way of reaching the students, thus improving the sound. In short, rehearsals improved.

Participants further stated that students gained real world skills such as sharing space with others, learning how to present their school, and navigating a city but also gained a greater cultural understanding from travel (Helsel, 2015). The personal and

cognitive development reported by Helsel coincides with the conclusions of several studies (Dwyer, 2004; Stone & Petrick, 2013; SYTA, 2017; Wanner, 2009) that show a positive impact on life skills and a range of benefits as a result of educational travel (Paige et al., 2009; Stone & Petrick, 2013; SYTA, 2017). One participant reported that the "cultural enrichment for the students complemented their natural growth as a musician and student" (Helsel, 2015, p. 14). This person explained that educators want their students to be lifelong learners, and *music* educators want their students to be lifelong music-makers. Another participant pointed out the benefit of receiving sincere feedback from respected adjudicators, who "are able to give honest assessment since they are not close enough in proximity to be biased by whether students would choose or not choose their college as a result of the adjudication" (p. 14). Another participant reminded us that for many students this may be their only travel opportunity.

In examining the disadvantages of these trips, Helsel (2015) found that all participants agreed that the trip is a distraction for both the ensemble that travels as well as the ensembles at home due to missed rehearsals and not being there for other classes. Planning and preparing for these trips takes up endless amounts of time, which extends way beyond the school hours. The participants further noted that while the loss of teacher time is a major issue, students missing classes causes a problem as well. These sentiments were echoed by students, administrators as well as parents. Nonetheless, Helsel concluded that "knowing that travel helps with life skills and that it does pertain to recruitment and retention is useful to the profession" (p. 18). Even more helpful, or crucial perhaps, was Helsels' finding that bonding, personal growth, and (extracurricular) learning occurs during travel, an assertion echoed by other authors in the field (Dwyer,

2004; Lamet & Lamet, 1984; Palmer, 2015; Stone & Petrick, 2013; SYTA, 2017; Wanner, 2009). Helsel (2015) feared that he might "discover more liabilities than benefits of band trips" (p. 20), yet the opposite was true and he reported that the benefits of trip taking outweighed the liabilities.

Southcott's (2004) findings showed that students gained both a meaningful understanding of the pedagogies of Dalcroze, Orff, and Kodaly through hands-on experiences when visiting these three music institutions. They also gained an awareness of a different cultural context evidencing positive impact through study abroad travel in conjunction with experiential education. While the majority of the literature in this subsection primarily focused on the mechanics of music education and study abroad relating to ensemble travel (Hagman, 2010; Helsel, 2015; Olsen 2010, 2008; Robinson, 2011), findings show that despite disadvantages such as lost teacher and classroom time, valuable educational benefits resulted from taking music trips abroad.

Summary

The literature reviewed demonstrates a rich tradition of travel in conjunction with education as illustrated by Montaigne (1581/1877) and the Grand Tour (Gyr, 2003; Porges, 2017). Although music study abroad programs have increased in popularity over the past few decades, this literature review also shows that little research has been conducted to understand the educative impact of study abroad in music and the influence of these programs on the ability of participants who, by sharing their music, might become global citizens and develop a sense of cultural intelligence. This compels me to return to my problem statement that consequently, further research is warranted to

understand the role music (programs) play in developing students' whole world philosophy whereby the music student comes to see herself/himself as being part of an emerging world community and in so doing might develop a global identity.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. This study focuses on a cross-cultural and multi-cultural trip to Malaysia with a group of four US music and music education students collaborating with five Malaysian music and music education students over a time span of three weeks. In addition, the study included both a music professor on the US side as well as a professor of music education on the Malaysian side. From June 2019 to September 2019 I interviewed, observed, and accompanied the US student participants throughout their experience, which included both pre-trip interviews in the US and the study abroad trip itself, which took place in Malaysia in August 2019. The Malaysian participants joined for the majority of the program duration in Malaysia. A more specific aim of the study was to explore the educative impact of study abroad programs in music from both the perception of the students as well as that of the music educators.

Research Questions

1. What are the benefits and challenges for students partaking in a music study abroad program?

2. What role does music play in the process of trying to achieve cross cultural understanding?
3. How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?

Procedures

I conducted a qualitative ethnographic single case study investigating both an undergraduate and graduate music study abroad trip. I took part in a private US university's music trip to Malaysia as the researcher in the summer of 2019. I have no affiliation with the participating US university nor did I know any of the student participants prior to the present study.

Case study research "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Further, a case study is confined by time and place (Creswell, 2013). The study included individual interviews, a focus group, and direct observations. Ethnography generates a large amount of data and allows the researcher to investigate the cultural and social interactions of people.

To collect data, I interviewed nine students and two educators on both the US and the Malaysian side. Further, I conducted a focus group with the Malay student-participants. In addition, I took field notes throughout the study abroad. I asked permission from all participants before embarking on the study. Through method triangulation by using multiple research methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations, I ensured the research methods would mutually compensate for their respective weaknesses.

Table 1

Research Design & Chronology

Step	Description
1. Topic Identification	The researcher's background and interest in designing and implementing international study abroad trips in music and their impact on both students and educators' experiences informed the identification of a problem statement and purpose of the research.
2. Literature Review	An initial review of the literature was conducted to identify relevant studies in music and music education that helped inform the researcher's current study. A wider focus was applied to the review of literature so as to elaborate on the notion and origin of education in conjunction with travel and delineate its history.
3. Preliminary Proposal	A preliminary research proposal was presented to the Teachers College music faculty on May 8, 2018. The feedback and recommendations for revisions helped to further refine research questions, the methodological approach, and to revise the focus on the review of the literature.
4. Exploratory Study	An exploratory study was conducted in June of 2018 with the purpose of confirming whether the positive impact of study abroad as predicated in the literature review, and the potential of this experience to help students become global citizens applied to the participants interviewed for the pilot study.
5. Advanced Proposal	An advanced research proposal was presented to the Teachers College doctoral music committee in May of 2019. Required revisions and suggestions were applied to the final version of the document.
6. IRB Approval	Following the successful defense of the advanced research proposal, all required documentation was submitted to IRB at Teachers College Columbia University for approval.
7. Consent Form Participants' Rights	In June of 2019, participants were contacted via e-mail communication to ascertain their willingness to participate in the study. Willing participants received an invitation letter detailing the purpose of the research study, a timeline, and the expectations for participants involved in the study. Additionally, an Informed Consent Form that explained the participants' rights, details of confidentiality, data collection methods as well as the risks and benefits involved in the participation of the study.

8. Pre–trip interviews	Pre-trip interviews with participating US students were conducted in June of 2019. Transcription and coding began with the purpose of guiding and informing subsequent interviews.
9. Interviews (MALAYSIA)	During the study abroad journey, which took place in August of 2019 in Malaysia, participants each took part in two interviews that lasted about 45 minutes. Participants were asked to give details of their experiences describing any implications that those experiences may have on their future teaching practices. Interviews were audio-recorded.
10. Transcription and Coding of Interviews	Recorded interviews were transcribed and coded. Emergent themes were identified inductively.
11. Data Analysis	Coded data was synthesized into emerging themes that describe participants' experiences and perceptions during the study abroad trip, and address the research questions of this study.
12. Conclusions	Findings were discussed both across participant groups as well as within both the Malay and the US groups. Conclusions were drawn and reported by research questions.

Note. Some elements are based on the schema in Bloomberg and Volpe (2008)

Case Study

Case study research "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real world context" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). The Musicking Futures music study abroad trip served as the context within which the phenomenon under examination, the educative impact on study abroad programs in music, was investigated. The specific case in this study, which is "bounded by time and place" (Creswell, 2013, p. 97), was the "Musicking Futures in Malaysia" study abroad trip during which I collected data over the course of three weeks in addition to a first round of pre-trip interviews conducted two months prior to the start of the program. I used multiple sources of data collection, which included interviews with both students and teachers on both the US and Malaysian side,

field note observations and a focus group, as well as triangulation of multiple data sources. Potential flaws of the interview method are that participants may be performing responses and may change their answers in a follow up interview. In order to address these shortcomings, I also incorporated and conducted observations in my methodology.

Research Sample

I used "purposeful sampling" (Merriam, 1998) to recruit participants as predetermined by the nature of my study: a single case study consisting of a three-week international music study abroad program in Malaysia. Accordingly, the criteria established to participate in this study was therefore partaking in the study abroad program for the full duration as both, either a music educator, or a student-participant.

University Settings & Impetus for the Malaysia Study Abroad

Central University is located in the Midwest in a state capital. A private university founded in 1855, today it has an enrollment of 4,685. Central University consists of six schools and colleges and offers over 60 undergraduate majors as well as study abroad programs in over 40 countries. The university offers associate, bachelor's, post-bachelor's certificate, master's, and doctoral degrees.

A music study abroad program through Columbia University's Teachers College that took place in China in 2017 where Dr. Naismith's wife and I were enrolled gave Dr. Naismith the impetus to ultimately organize the Musicking Futures in Malaysia trip. He had reached out to four different Universities in 2017. Mululay University was the only one to respond and agree to collaborate with Central in organizing a music study abroad

program. In the summer of 2018, Dr. Naismith and his family traveled to Malaysia to meet with the music faculty at Mululay university and discuss the details of the program.

Mululay University is a public university based primarily in Shah Alam. Established in 1956, the university's initial focus was to help rural Malays. Mululay university accepts only *Bumiputera***,** meaning Malays or indigenous people of Malaysia and southeast Asia. Today, the university has grown into the largest higher education institution in Malaysia by physical infrastructure, staff (academic and non-academic), and student enrolment. Mululay is one of the largest universities in the world and home to some 168,000 students both *bumiputeras* and international students ("MARA University," 2018).

Participants

A total of nine students and two educators participated in this study. Four participants are from the Midwest of the United States. Though one participant within the US group comes from Mediterranean Europe and was pursuing a 2-year master's program as an exchange student at the US institution where the trip was advertised and offered. Of the four US participants, three were enrolled at Central University, two in undergraduate programs and the exchange student in a graduate program. The fourth participant was not enrolled in any university but has been a practitioner in the field of music, education, and community service for nearly 30 years.

On the US side, there was one educator who also served as the leader and organizer of the study abroad program. On the Malaysian side, there were five students who were all enrolled in the same undergraduate program in music and music education at our guest institution. In addition to the five Malay student-participants, there was one

educator who was both a music professor as well as the dean of Mululay university. All student participants were between 19 – 24 years old, except one US student-participant who was in her late 50s. The US educator was in his mid-40s and the Malay educator in his mid-50s respectively.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, living conditions and religious practices, the Malaysian student participants were not able to participate in all the activities of the Musicking Futures in Malaysia program. Additional information and descriptions about both the participants and the research sites as well as the study abroad program with a detailed itinerary will follow in subsequent chapters.

Musicking Futures in Malaysia Study Abroad Program

The three-week course took place at Mululay University, its main campuses in a city just 20 minutes from Kuala Lumpur; in Georgetown on the Malaysian Island of Penang, and Kelantan, in northeast Peninsular Malaysia. All three locations served as my research and observation sites. A description of each site in detail will follow in the next chapter. The study abroad program was open to all Central University students regardless of major. The course emphasized collaborative music-making through exposure to traditional (indigenous) Malaysian and North American formats. Students and professors from Central University co-learned with Mululay University students and professors, to explore various cross-cultural concepts of music, including making instruments from "scratch" and learning about their role in society. This latter part of the program took place in the Bamboo forest in Kelantan province and consisted of gathering materials (bamboo), making instruments with local musicians, co-composing and improvising

music together as a class, which included all student-participants as well as local musicians.

Classes taught by the US professor and held primarily at Mululay University during the days we sojourned in Shah Alam consisted of reading and discussing texts intertwined with music-making, debriefing the program as it proceeded, and working on a final project.

Research Paradigm

This study's analysis and examination was framed through the perspective of the interpretative paradigm that is meaning making in interactional context. According to the interpretivists and constructivists, reality is a social construct and thus created as people – and by those people – interact with one another in a specific social setting. This paradigm further defines shared constructs as being circumstantially situated and they are therefore affected by the cultural, ethnic, political, age, and other contextual characteristics of those who uphold them. Further, "within this paradigm the recognition of potential 'multiple realities' as explained from the emic perspective of the 'lived experience' is emphasized" (Kelly, Dowling, & Millar, 2018, p. 11).

I believe that this study's context, the music study abroad program in Malaysia, calls for the lens of this paradigm as the many factors and characteristics delineated above possibly influenced the participants' construction of experiences and their perceived situated reality. The interpretive paradigm is concerned with understanding the world as it is from subjective experiences of individuals using meaning (versus

measurement) oriented methodologies, such as interviewing or participant observation, that rely on a subjective relationship between the researcher and subjects.

Methods of Data Collection

Interviews

Interviews were structured to be both directed and open-ended and were conducted both individually as well as in a focus group to capture the experience of the group as a whole in addition to individual participants' experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I interviewed participants before as well as during the trip abroad. "Case study interviews will resemble guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2008, p 118). Interview questions were not limited to the protocol generated prior to interviews, discussions prompted additional questioning and dialogue: "A good qualitative researcher sometimes gets people to talk about things they would otherwise keep hidden or never think to mention" (Taylor et al., 2016, pp. 189-190).

Specifically, I conducted three interviews with each of the US student-participants: a pre-trip interview of approximately 30 minutes in June 2019 during orientation; a second interview about one third into the program (mid-August 2019) of approximately 40 minutes; and a final cumulative interview of approximately 45 minutes at the end of the program (late August 2019). Further, I interviewed each of the five Malaysian student-participants towards the end of the Bamboo forest project (mid-August 2019) for approximately 30 to 40 minutes. The interview, a fundamental component of qualitative research, allowed the researcher to learn how participants "understand the world in which they live and work" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 36).

Given unforeseen circumstances, the Malaysian participants were not able to join us for the remainder of the program. I was however able to meet with all of the Malaysian student-participants for a final cumulative focus group interview that lasted two hours toward the end of the trip. In addition, I conducted one in-depth interview with both the US music educator as well as the Malaysian music educator and associate dean of the music education program, which lasted approximately 80 and 75 minutes respectively.

The pre-trip interviews took place on campus at Central University in June 2019. All of the US student participants attended an info meeting about the upcoming Malaysia trip except Jackie, who joined the meeting via Zoom. I interviewed Jackie a few days afterwards via Zoom. The individual interviews with the Malay student participants took place in the Bamboo forest on our penultimate day of the bamboo project. The second round of interviews with the US student participants took place in our apartments in Georgetown. The focus group with the Malay student participants took place in our hotel in Shah Alam where I also conducted the interview with Dr. Arshad on our last day in Shah Alam. The third and final round of interviews with the US student participants took place in our hotel rooms in Kuala Lumpur, on our last day of the study abroad program.

The purpose of the interviews was to gather in depth-information, generate personal histories as well as cultural knowledge and beliefs of the participants to ascertain whether or not their perception of other cultures and their traditions changed over the course of the study. Questions were framed to be both structured and open-ended so that a feeling of naturalness and authenticity occurred. In other words, questions were designed so that they left room for unintended answers and consequences. Interviews were intended to elicit the participant's perception of cultural differences and how it

connects to their own culture. How similar and perhaps non-similar the approach to education in how they are being taught is perceived by students and whether they like it better or not, and if so, why? Did the experience stimulate their interest in other cultural approaches and motivate them to travel, and further, did it prompt them to reflect on their own cultural norms and traditions? Potential flaws of the interview method are that participants may be performing responses and change their answers in a follow up interview. In order to address these shortcomings, I also incorporated and conducted observations in my methodology.

Observations

While I was neither a participant nor a non-participant observer, I sat in rehearsals, performances, and daily activities the students engaged in to take as many field notes as possible to capture a wide range of interactions. The group was together every day for the entire duration of the trip. Immersing myself into the phenomenon of travel by partaking in the trip along with the participants, I was able to observe relevant behavior and environmental conditions, which serve as yet another piece of evidence in the case study (Ying, 2018). I grappled with the observer's paradox (Crystal, 2008; Shanmuganathan, 2005) as the mere presence of the researcher necessarily influences the process and actions of the participants.

I also attended the preparatory meetings in the US leading up to the trip to again capture the social interactions and discussions occurring between participants in order to record the full experience. Further, I tried to immerse myself in the experiences of the participants in order to develop a window into the minds of the people being studied (Johnson, 1997). Did impressions of the other culture(s) change between pre-trip

discussions and post-trip reflection meetings? Through direct observation, I intended to gather data to address especially my second research question: What role does music play in the process of trying to achieve cross cultural understanding?

Focus Groups

I conducted a focus group interview with the Malay student-participants that lasted about two hours after returning from the Bamboo forest towards the end of the program. The presupposition of a focus group interview is that "an individual's attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum: People often need to listen to others' opinions and understandings in order to form their own" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 84). Vaughn et al. (1996) elaborate on this point: "The major assumption of focus groups is that with a permissive atmosphere that fosters a range of opinions, a more complete and revealing understanding of the issues will be obtained" (p. 4). The focus group provided alternative interpretations to the research findings (Vaughn et al., 1996), while simultaneously serving to triangulate the data.

According to Creswell (2018), focus group interviews can be beneficial for students who, during individual one-on-one interviews, may be hesitant to provide information. Additionally, focus groups may stimulate new ideas among the students that result in deeper conversations and new insights. Indeed, this proved to be the case as certain participants effectively opened up more during the focus group in comparison to the prior conducted individual interviews. Consequently, they revealed and shed light more explicitly on how these experiences informed their perception of other cultures as well as their own. All data was transcribed and analyzed for ongoing understanding of

similarities, differences, and emerging themes. All of the semi-structured and focus group interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

As with all methods of data collection, focus groups entail problems of their own due to the group dynamics involved (Merriam, 1998). Other group members may interfere with individual expression or be dominated by one person. “Group thinking” is also a possible outcome, as members may be inclined to agree with one another without questioning the basis of their own opinion. (Merriam, 1998). Consequently, the facilitator / researcher must ensure to implement specific strategies while conducting the focus group so as to minimize “group thinking” answers and further must possess a level of skill capable of dealing with such group dynamics. As an educator with experience facilitating group discussions, I tried to mitigate these challenges as they arose.

Trustworthiness and Soundness of Research

I implemented three types of validity, or rather credibility, often used in qualitative research, as described by Maxwell (1991, 1996), in this study. These are: descriptive, interpretive, and theoretical. Descriptive validity stresses factual and accurate reporting on the account of the researcher. I reported and described events, settings, and behavior as factual as possible by using low inference descriptors. Descriptive validity further implies to report as many interactions as deemed feasible even if the researcher in the moment of taking notes does not personally regard the interactions crucial. Interpretive validity refers to developing an affinity to “accurately portraying the meaning attached by the participant to what is being studied by the researcher.” Establishing relationships and getting to know the participants more closely helped to

more precisely interpret both their perceptions and recounting of events as well as their behaviors. Theoretical validity is defined as attained when "a theoretical explanation developed from a research study fits the data and, therefore, is credible and defensible" (Johnson, 1997, p. 286). While my primary focus was not to attempt to fit the data into existing theoretical constructs, the phenomenon and findings will be compared to existing theories to see whether there is correlation in order to potentially also obtain theoretical validity.

Data Analysis

During the analysis process, I attempted to make sense of the vast amount of collected data. I applied an inductive, bottom-up approach when searching and examining the data for themes and reoccurring patterns (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). The variety of data collected throughout the duration of the study provided, "multiple perceptions to clarify meaning," and therefore increased the study's trustworthiness through triangulation (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 72).

Portraiture was used as a method to depict my interpretation of the individual characteristics, personal histories, reflections and contributions of each of the participants (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). In creating portraits, presented in Chapter IV, I drew from observations, interviews, and informal conversations to describe meanings as presented to my understanding. Ethnography is primarily an exploratory process that involves continuously generating questions and answers in the field throughout the duration of a project (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). Accordingly, I continually compared and contrasted the findings throughout the analysis process while simultaneously coding the

data into possible categories and refining emerging themes (Taylor et al., 2016). While the intention was certainly not to force my findings into an existing theory, I nonetheless compared my data to other studies including my exploratory study to see if similar relationships among patterns emerged or themes occurred specifically in regard to potential benefits of study abroad programs in music such as personal growth, cognitive development, life skills, cultural awareness, and academic performance.

Exploratory Study

An exploratory study I conducted in June of 2018 revealed themes that made me ponder and warranted further inquiry. I wanted to examine the long-term impact of a study abroad experience I designed and implemented in 2014 on my former students. During the winter of 2014, I took eleven of my music students at an urban public high school in New York City where I taught at the time, who had never traveled on an international trip. We visited France, Italy, and Switzerland. The idea of Europe 2014, as the trip was called, was for students to expand their cultural horizons while being ambassadors of their own heritage. As the director of the international travel program, I designed the itinerary to include experiences that required the participants to actively engage in new situations with the goal to provide an "actual life-experience" (Dewey, 1938). I wanted to know how this trip has impacted my students' perception of cultures other than their own. Further, I was curious to know whether students develop a sense of what we might call global citizenship as a result of this trip.

My exploratory study explored the following research questions: 1) How were the students' beliefs about both their own and another culture impacted by actively

participating in a guided educational trip abroad? 2) In what ways did these students perceive the study abroad program to be beneficial? I wanted to know what lingered in these students' minds years later and in what ways were values associated with global citizenship enlarged through these experiences. 3) Were there aspects of this experience that diminished or thwarted the positive characteristics of global citizenship? I interviewed two of my former students who had participated in the trip described above. The interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for emerging themes. The following findings emerged from the exploratory study: (a) the students reported a positive impact from the study abroad experience specifically as it related to personal growth and how they knew themselves, (b) the participants reported an increase in intellectual curiosity; (c) participants reported developing a multicultural awareness and a notion of Global Citizenship as evidenced in the awakening to wider insight; (d) participants expressed social bonding and forming new friendships as a key highlight of the study abroad experience.

The exploratory study confirmed that study abroad travel has a positive impact on participants yielding various benefits and coincided with the results found in the reviewed literature. The research questions guiding the present study were informed by the key findings of the exploratory study. In consideration of my larger dissertation study, the exploratory study further revealed that the aspect of music, and in what ways music might serve as a conduit in achieving a tangible notion of global citizenship, should be put more consciously into focus and thus examining the intersection between music education and the general educative impact of study abroad programs. In other words, as Wanner (2009) alluded, while the "benefits and outcomes of study abroad have been

researched, it is often unclear whether these are due to travel, interaction with other cultures, formal classroom education, or a combination," and thus creates "difficulty to attributing the desired effects to a single cause" (p. 88). Ultimately, the exploratory study helped me to reposition the scope of this present study while also refining the reviewed literature.

Ethical Considerations

Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006) describe the process of conducting qualitative research as evoking many different emotions in both the participants as well as the researcher. As a result, ethical considerations must be taken into account throughout all phases of the study, and the researcher must operate at the highest standards of ethical practice to maintain participants' privacy and a value-sensitive approach to the research: "The trustworthiness of data is tied directly to the trustworthiness of those who collect and analyze data and their demonstrated competence" (Patton, 2015, p. 706). Patton referenced the integrity of researchers and their conduct to collect and report research honestly. Thus, researchers must consider ethical issues to establish safeguards that will protect participants from harm and ensure confidentiality (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016, p. 161). Continuous reflection was needed in order to recognize and account for bias such as preconceived impressions of possible conclusions.

I ensured confidentiality by adhering to Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB) policies. Participation in this study was voluntary. Perspective participants from the Musicking Futures Malaysia study abroad program received information about the nature of this study prior to volunteering for the study. Once invited for participation,

participants were asked to review and sign an informed consent form to participate. The informed consent form informed participants of their rights and the precautions taken to preserve confidentiality and their anonymity. All participants were given pseudonyms.

To preserve relational ethics, I was aware of my role and impact on participants during interactions and treated participants with respect (Tracy, 2013). All participants were informed that they could feel free to refrain from answering any question or disclose anything they did not want to talk about if any discomfort was experienced. Data collected from interview audio recordings and interview transcripts were preserved in a private and locked secure space in the researcher's home.

Summary

This qualitative study used a single-case-study research design. The study aimed to capture the experiences of both students and educators attending a study abroad program in music, and to understand how this program influenced the participants who, by sharing their music and experiences, might develop a conception of global citizenship. The study was conducted in three different locations across Malaysia: at Mululay University in Shah Alam, just outside Kuala Lumpur, in Georgetown on the Malaysian Island of Penang, and in the Bamboo forest in the province of Kelantan. The research project took place in the summer of 2019 and spanned a three-week period. The participants in this study included one US music educator, one Malaysian music educator, four US student-participants from the Midwest of the United States, and five student-participants from Malaysia. The data was collected through in-depth interviews conducted before, during, and at the end of the trip, as well as through a student focus

group in an attempt to capture the experience holistically from different angles and through a variety of sources. In addition, I took field notes documenting my experiences as well as interactions and observations of the participants throughout the study abroad experience.

Chapter IV

PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. This chapter presents the participants' profiles in the form of portraitures (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005). In the following section, I describe participants based on my interviews, impressions, observations both in and outside of the classroom, and informal conversations. First, I begin with a description of the US student-participants followed by the Malay student-participants and finish with the two music and music education professors.

Portraitures

Renderings in dissertation portraitures are a delicate endeavor. The researcher as portraitist hopes to produce sincere depictions of his or her participants by walking a fine line between seeking what Lawrence-Lightfoot (2005) calls "analytic rigor and human connection" (p. 10). In this sense, it is a dialogue between science and art (p. 13). Perhaps in a more artistic description, we might call what I am doing painting with words. In accompanying my participants every day throughout the entire experience, and starting with pre-trip interviews two months prior to embarking on our Malaysia adventure, I tried to *listen for* a story rather than *to* a story (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2005) when trying to

capture the complexity of human experience, which in the end, is that of depicting a portrait.

Participants' Profiles

Because there ended up fewer students than initially anticipated, this allowed me to do a more detailed rendering of each participant. Descriptions of each student and music educator will be woven in with the interview data. Quotes are reported verbatim and pseudonyms for both the students and the educators are used.

Marisol. Marisol is a cheerful 20-year old United States-born woman whose family is from Mexico. She has lived all her life in the same city and state in the Midwest of the United States. Marisol seemed always in good spirits and was the sunshine on our trip. Every image I recall of her involves a big smile. She loves music and has had music classes from kindergarten all the way through senior high at the charter school she attended. The first instrument she came in contact with was the guitar, then in fourth and fifth grade she started taking piano lessons. In middle school, Marisol started playing the violin and joined the orchestra. She really enjoyed the violin and playing in an orchestra but unfortunately the orchestra program was cut due to budget constraints. In contemplating other options, she joined the choir as she entered high school. Today, she identifies as a singer but proudly recounted that she used to be a solid violinist back in her heyday: "I still have it [the violin]! I practice a little bit, but not that much. I'm not as great anymore."

Marisol likes to listen to pop and gospel music. She is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in elementary education with a minor in music. Apart from a weekend

trip with her high school choir to Toronto, Canada, Marisol had never left the United States. She has nine siblings and mentioned that there was always a lot of music playing in her house. What she really likes about music is the community feeling and the emotions it evokes. She also mentioned that her high school teacher was a great influence to and support of her.

Marisol is that student who listens more than talks. She was never the person who raised her hand first. It took a long time for her to share her opinions in class discussions. Even though she was quiet in conversations, I could always see that she was listening attentively. She opened up more and let her hair down as time went by and she got more comfortable with the group. This was evident in that she would partake in many conversations towards the end. However, she was deeply grateful for the experience, always positive, and genuinely interested in exploring the unknown.

In an informal conversation we had during the last week of the study abroad program, Marisol said that "interacting with people [of other cultures] firsthand is a lot more valuable than reading about them from a book. All your senses are involved, it makes your emotions and [other] perceptions and reactions more real." In another informal conversation where we talked about the Bamboo forest experience, Marisol remarked that "not having the internet forced us to actually communicate with each other all the time, which in retrospect was invaluable for the bonding experience." She really enjoyed making her own instrument, the very fact of actually making something on your own, and recalled it as one of her favorite experiences. Her laugh was infectious, and she was constantly caught singing under her breath all day long. She was fond of the variegated food in Malaysia and recalls laughingly the "especially spicy food!" She

added: “the chicken was amazing by the way; make sure you put that in your research, they need to know! […] if you can attach a recipe, do that [laughs].” Marisol celebrated her 20th birthday while in Malaysia and deeply treasured the tight bond and the relationships the students formed amongst themselves.

Jackie. Jackie is an articulate and confident 20-year old US American Caucasian woman. She just finished her sophomore year of her undergraduate studies. Jackie grew up in a small midwestern town with a population of about 2,000. Her hometown is roughly an hour away from the state’s capital. She has a younger sister who has started college this year at the same institution as her. Jackie is currently triple majoring in music education, clarinet performance, and mathematics. She added, “I’m involved in a lot of extracurriculars on campus and I’m super passionate about what I’m doing.”

Her first introduction to music was through an early childhood music program called “Kindermusik” that her parents put her in at age five. This program introduces children from birth to five to music primarily through folk songs. At age seven, Jackie asked her parents if she can take piano lessons and hence started playing the piano in a leisurely way. In seventh grade, she started to play the clarinet, which is to this day her main instrument.

As she got more serious with lessons, Jackie also started to get involved with honor bands and realized that she really liked it. Introducing herself on the first day in class in Malaysia, she added that one of the valuable things in participating in honor bands was to be around like-minded people. While neither of her parents plays an instrument, she comes from a musical family. Both parents are great supporters of her musical endeavors and especially her dad thoroughly appreciates music, to which she

added, “[my dad] is very appreciative of music and he actually has a very large knowledge of music. He has Gershwin CDs and every possible symphony that you can imagine in a CD case downstairs in the basement.” She recalls her parents playing their disco music at home. Jackie listens to a lot of classical music and especially likes Saint-Saens’s romantic songs. She also listens to pop music here and there though more the alternative subgenre. On the whole, she listens to everything except for rap and country music.

Jackie has traveled quite extensively within the United States with her family. It is important to her father that she and her sister be exposed to the ways in which other people live and to see different aspects of life throughout the United States. For her grandparent’s 50th anniversary, the family took a cruise to Mexico and Belize. However, it was not as much exploring the country and the different cultures as it was to briefly hopping on and off the ship to sightsee places for a couple of hours.

In eighth grade, Jackie participated in a three-week trip to Europe organized by the People to People organization. However, she said that every step was planned out for them and thus was more an “introduction to other cultures” as opposed to genuinely exploring the countries and cultures they visited. When asked in the pre-trip interview what she liked best about traveling, Jackie elaborated:

> I really love traveling because I like being able to see the different scenery. That sounds really dumb, but I’m a sucker for just pretty landscapes and I know that doesn’t really relate to culture at all, but I just love being able to see different geographical features.

Jackie is very meticulous in anything she tackles; controlled and organized. This was reflected in the impressively thorough organized google folder she shared with the group with all her photographs she took on the trip; each cataloged –and subclassified– by

various categories. She told me in our second interview that it was quite challenging for her to lie down on the bed –and pillow– in the Bamboo forest after seeing all the bugs and animals crawling around. Her rather high-strung nature observable at the beginning of the trip in her squeamish tracking of the taxi driver's every turn, changed over the course of the program and she seemed to be a lot more relaxed about life's endeavors; she recalls "I'd been slowly learning to let go […], so when I came in as a freshman in college, it was like, I'm going to graduate with three majors and a 4.0 and an honor thesis and all these things. And now [after Malaysia] I'm like, I'm going to graduate, it's fine."

She of all people was most fascinated by the gibbon monkey's howling and early morning singing although not being an animal, or much less, a monkey person. She concluded in our final interview that the "biggest thing I'm going to take away [from the Bamboo forest] was that I learned how to really let go."

Sue. Sue is a 58-year-old US Caucasian woman. She is a mother of two and was born and raised in the Midwest. While she had not attended an official college class in decades, she audaciously joined the study abroad program with the "younger folks" and put up a good fight. Sue has been a lifelong musician and has been singing and leading choirs for over 25 years. She has directed church, community, and college choirs in small ways. While at this stage in her life she does not care much about official degrees, she graduated in the first class in art administration that came out of said university in her hometown. At the time, she recounts, it was akin to a music degree with a few business classes.

Sue's first musical experience was her mother singing lullabies to her. She comes from a very musical family; her father was a trained classical pianist and tuba player

while every family member on her mother's side learned to play the piano by ear. Hence, there was a lot of music played at home especially Russian composers, rock and roll, and the Beatles. The family went to church, so Sue received lots of musical exposure this way, and she also sang in church choirs. She continued her musical journey by starting the flute in middle school and joined the choir in high school. Sue first started a music education degree with classical flute as her major instrument; however, after a semester she switched to arts administration.

While she never received formal choral training, she has taken numerous workshops over the past three decades to further develop her skills. When we talked about what music she likes to listen to, she said,

> Ironically, I don't listen to a lot of music; isn't that funny? I don't, I really like and I don't listen to the radio in my car. I really love silence. I really do. I'd say probably, I don't know, it's not fair to say, I could... what I listen to and what I like might not be the same thing.

Sue and her husband enjoy silence and lots of alone time. They like to go camping and occasionally do attend a bluegrass music festival. Though her favorites are still the Russians within the classical catalog: Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, and especially Stravinsky.

Sue has done much work in community building through music. She is interested more in the relational aspect of music within a community music context and how singing can help people deal with trauma, as opposed to the traditional performance-oriented choir work. She identifies strongly with the social justice community and sees herself as a passionate advocate. Accordingly, she co-founded the justice choir movement in her hometown. Sue has taught vocal improvisation in prisons and thinks of improv as a particularly unique form to connect with people emotionally. Her current work lies at the

intersection of the arts, humanities and religion or faith. In her current position, Sue manages a large festival that is designed to catalyze social change through creative combinations of said three subjects. Her passion for social justice vividly became apparent in class discussions on texts on the subject. She was very studious, she always did her homework and actively participated in every class.

When I asked her what her exposure to other cultures was, she said, “I’d say I’m a standard boring American, I’ve been to Canada and Mexico, but I haven’t really been outside that.” Nonetheless, when she was 23 years old, her father took her on a trip to Europe where they visited Germany and Italy. What fascinated her most was the history and “how old everything was.” She recalls standing in some building in Germany that had been a hospital in 1,400 A.D. and said that “my 23-year-old brain couldn’t even conceive that.” She remembers that the first trip abroad certainly made her understand that she had a narrow world view. Further, she believes that “every time you travel, you are reminded that the operating system within which you live your life is not everybody’s operating system.”

Sue was an extraordinary team-player throughout the entire trip and was supportive of all group activities. She hiked through the Bamboo forest, tried the spiciest and most unusual foods, and sang rap songs with Malay middle schoolers during the students’ final pedagogical project. She was fascinated by the holistic approach of how that particular Kelantanese musical tradition valued their instruments and the ways in which it is connected to story, culture and spirituality for their culture. As an instrumentalist, she found it deeply meaningful and was particularly inspired by the process of hand making her own instruments. Sue told me, “I couldn’t believe how

important that was to make my own instrument [...] and [I] wondered whether there was a spirit inside." This practice prompted her to think where her own instruments at home might come from, who made them, and whether they too have a spirit. She told me, "I can't wait to come back with my husband, who is a trained chef, and introduce him to the food culture of Malaysia." Sue is planning to travel back to Malaysia with her husband.

Rafaela. Rafaela is a 25-year-old woman born in Spain. She hails from the heart of Mediterranean Spain and is currently pursuing a master's degree on a Fulbright scholarship in the United States. She had just finished her first year when she joined the study abroad program in Malaysia and has one more year left until she graduates. Rafaela is the oldest child of three and has devoted much of her life to music. She started solfège lessons at age six. She desperately wanted to play contrabass and thus was overjoyed when she could start taking lessons at the local conservatory at age nine.

In Spain, as in many other European countries, taking lessons at the youth division of a conservatory is a lot cheaper than taking private lessons, as the public music schools are substantially funded by the government. Towards the end of her high school years, Rafaela increased her music lessons so that she would attend either a bass lesson or choir on a daily basis. While none of her parents are musicians, Rafaela told me, "I grew up in a house where my parents, especially my dad, only listened to classical music, which doesn't make a lot of sense, because he's not a musician. He just really loved it." Both of her siblings took instrument lessons for many years as well, and occasionally Rafaela still plays with her brother, who is a pianist. Before coming to the US, she obtained her undergraduate degree in bass performance at a conservatory in a major Spanish city. Rafaela's biggest influence was her first bass teacher of 10 years. Similarly,

she recalls her conservatory contrabass professor during her undergraduate studies to be "both a life coach as well as a bass teacher really."

Rafaela has traveled quite a lot, often for professional reasons. In our first interview she was very elaborate and excited to tell me about her musical life and her travel endeavors thus far. She loves to travel and discover new cultures and customs. Through various concerts, workshops, and summer programs she has been able to travel to countries such as England, France, Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Greece, Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary, and Canada. She also went to Portugal with a friend of hers on her first leisure trip without adult supervision. What she likes best about traveling is a certain feeling of freedom, to be in a completely different place by yourself –or with someone– and experiencing new and unknown territory.

Rafaela was the only student-participant who majors in only music performance. In other words, she was not a music education major. In a few informal conversations we had, Rafaela mentioned that she would like to find a professional orchestra position once she graduates. She fancies Europe and possibly even a position in her native country as she misses certain aspects of her home culture.

Rafaela loved to play games. She taught and excited the group to various card and entertaining games. She could always be found in the front row during the many karaoke nights the student-participants organized among themselves. Rafaela found the hike in the Bamboo forest as well as Professor Kamrul's musicianship, overall "electrifying" personality, and pedagogical approach to be some of her most memorable moments. Although coming from a traditional Western classical background, Rafaela told me she

appreciated most that during the group improvisations with the local musicians: “there was no wrongdoing with handmade instruments compared to traditional classical music.”

Michael. Michael is a 25-year-old Malay man born on the island of Borneo. He is the seventh of 10 children and has five sisters and four brothers. Michael is currently in his final year of his undergraduate studies in music education and classical guitar at Mululay University in Malaysia. He had just performed his graduation recital the semester leading up to the Musicking Futures Malaysia program. He also plays the *sapeh*, a string instrument from the lute family that originates from his native region and thus is also called the Borneo Lute. The tuning is different compared to the western classical guitar he explained to me in our interview, and the instrument can be stringed with between four to seven strings made out of fishing line. It is mainly used to play melodic lines as opposed to chordal accompaniment. In addition to the *sapeh* and classical guitar, Michael also plays the *serunai*, another Malay instrument from the wind family and similar to the clarinet; “it is difficult to play and produce sounds” he reveals to me. He was first introduced to the western classical guitar by his older brother who also was his first guitar teacher. Michael told me,

> I’m started at young age. Seven, so my brother taught me music, the guitar. So I was scolded by my brother because having a wrong note, playing guitar then he scolded me, punch me, punch my hands. “This is the wrong note, this is the wrong focus. You need focus on how my fingering is.” So he bought me a book, a chords. So he gave it to me: “Learn this and next week I want to see how it works.”

When he first heard a friend play the “Recuerdos de la Alhambra” a classical composition for guitar by Francisco Tarreega, he was intrigued by the tremolo technique and fell in love with the genre. Michael’s entire family is very musical; one of his sisters

is a singer, another sister plays the guitar as well; one brother is an electric guitar player and another brother plays the bass. His father was a former drummer in the military. Michael also enjoys J.S. Bach and sees classical music more as technical music than what modern music offers to the musician. He smirkingly showed me his long nails that he had to maintain and manicure for his technically advanced recital pieces: “This is why my nails are still so long [laughs].” Michael also likes to listen to jazz but he’s mostly fascinated by his own cultural music traditions.

Michael plays soccer and is a huge fan of FC Barcelona. He likes to go out and drink, he smirkingly revealed to me during a cigarette break. In fact, he was my only smoker companion on this trip. He started his final student teaching practicum the day after we returned from the Bamboo forest. After he graduates, he plans on looking for a music teaching position. Michael is close to his family and the cultural habits in Borneo, which he describes as more open than peninsular Malaysia. Some of his relatives married into Chinese, Indian, and Australian families through which he has been introduced to said cultures. He identifies as a Roman Catholic and explains that Borneo is culturally and religiously more mixed than peninsular Malaysia, which is predominantly Muslim.

Michael has traveled to Singapore with his family where they visited his uncle. He has also traveled to Thailand with his university where they visited schools and taught the Thai students their traditional [Malay] music. What he likes most about traveling to other countries, especially within the context of music, is to see how other cultures use music and dance. He specifically mentioned how this [the music] pertains to funerals and spiritual ceremonies. Michael further told me that he values “communing

[communicating] with people. More communication with other peoples, the more knowledge we gain."

As the oldest of the Malay students, Michael seemed to be the big brother and advisor for the younger students. He is forthright, helpful, and a genuine and classy young gentleman. Michael assisted everyone who faced challenges in the instrument making process. He was very interested to hear about other cultures and customs such as the United States and Switzerland and formed a strong bond with the US American student-participants. In the near future, Michael would like to obtain a graduate degree in music education preferably at an institution in the United States.

Aqil. Aqil is a 24-year-old Malay man born in the northern part of Borneo island located in the Malay Archipelago. He is pursuing a bachelor's degree in music education majoring in voice at Mululay University and is currently enrolled in his penultimate semester. Aqil is the oldest of three children and has two younger sisters. He told me that he chose to study at Mululay University

> firstly, because it's much cheaper, is the first one. Secondly, I have my, what do I call, like cousins...I have cousins here. Yeah. Yeah she go to the same school. Diplomas and degree, Bachelor's degree in music education. So she's now teaching and my parents let me to study music because they want me to be like her, so yeah.

He received his first musical experiences both from his mother while also being exposed to church music. He sang in the choir of his Seventh Day Adventist church throughout his entire youth.

Aqil's mother is an avocational singer and to this day sings occasionally at local weddings in their hometown. Nonetheless, his parents were not fond of his idea to pursue a music degree. However, he told me that "my parents let me to study music because they

want me to be like my cousin" who now has a permanent teaching position. Aqil told me that coming to peninsular Malaysia from Borneo is not always easy as mainland Malaysia still perceives Borneo to be underdeveloped. The mainland presumes, he says, that "we still go to school in a boat and ridicule our 'indigenous' clothing style."

Aqil loves to sing and listens to all kinds of genres such as classical, (US American) pop, jazz, instrumental, and EDM (electronic dance music), depending on his mood. He believes that music is a "universal language" that connects people of all backgrounds. Aqil, who appears rather shy in his demeanor, showed a lot of interest in the customs of other cultures and thus was always the first to ask both the US students as well as myself about socio-cultural phenomena and school systems in our respective countries. As we talked about my doctoral research, Aqil told me that he is currently also working on his own research project, which is a requirement of his degree program. He proudly, yet humbly, explained to me that his final thesis consisted of a qualitative study that inquired about the stress level of fellow students in the music education department at Mululay University.

Aqil has traveled extensively with his university choir, participating in several choir competitions. He has visited Greece, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, Thailand, and Japan. His choir won gold in every competition they participated in and Aqil recalled excitedly that "everyone in Europe was really open and openly accepted us. If they like your performance they will come to you and say, 'you guys were good'; that would *never* happen in Malaysia." He was equally impressed with the order and precision he encountered in Japan and Germany: "people stand on the right side of the escalator and leave the left lane for people who are in a rush, that is great!" Aqil is a

rather shy yet a genuinely intrigued young gentleman who has seen remarkable personal benefits as a consequence of his many travels abroad. He confessed to me that "going outside of the country and interacting with people from foreign cultures really changed my attitude and communication skills, and I gained more confidence."

Sophia. Sophia is a 22-year-old Malay woman born in a major metropolitan city in Malaysia. She was the only participant originating from Peninsular Malaysia. She identifies as Muslim and is the oldest of five siblings. She has two younger brothers and two younger sisters. Sophia mentioned on several occasions that she is a "city girl." Not only was the Bamboo forest excursion a completely new experience for her but also the customs and traditions both religious and cultural seem to be quite different from the metropolis to the more rural places in Malaysia. Sophia just finished her second undergraduate year at Mululay University in music education majoring in classical violin. She wants to become a music educator because she wants to prove that music can connect people; Sophia strongly believes in the force inherent to music.

Sophia did not get involved in music until she was 14 years old, when her parents sent her to a governmental supervised choir. The way she described her choir experience in our interview sounded quite intense; they had numerous performances often in front of the minister president of Malaysia. While the repertoire varied, it was always from the traditional Malay catalogue of course when they performed for the prime minister, she reaffirmed. During her high school years, she also worked as an accompanist for a children's musical theater. Since studying at Mululay University, Sophia joined both the classical orchestra as well as a traditional music ensemble that plays *keroncong*, a popular music style from the regions nowadays known as Malaysia and Indonesia. She explained

to me that *keroncong* itself is also an instrument most similar to the ukulele. Sophia's traditional *keroncong* ensemble consists of a cello, a double bass, violin, and voice.

Sophia likes to listen to K-pop though laughed when she told me and said that only recently has she found a liking of the genre. She also likes to listen to ballads and western pop. However, she does not enjoy Malaysian pop music that much, a genre that has been growing in recent years. Sophia always appeared to be in a good mood, often smiling and ready on the spot when it came down to helping with the dishes or any kind of cleanup efforts especially during our Bamboo forest sojourn. I could see that she was always willing to give her input raising her hand although often feeling impeded due to the language barrier, at least in her perception. She actively participated in the focus group discussions and was excited to share her experiences partially also in a genuine attempt in wanting to help with my research.

Sophia has traveled to Aceh, Indonesia, before with a volunteer program after their devastating tsunami in 2004. While in Aceh, she was intrigued by the performance of local children who sang traditional Indonesian songs although it was "complicated to understand the music," she recalls. It was the first time that she saw a live performance from a different culture. In 2018, Sophia traveled to Thailand with her aunt and unexpectedly witnessed a traditional Thai dance performance. She was amazed by the elaborate handmade dresses that the performers wore and was captivated by the dancers and the music. Of all her travels, she liked Thailand the best and what I found noteworthy was her revealing to me that her encounters with these two foreign cultures really made her want to inquire more about the Malaysian culture.

When I asked her in the interview what prompted her participation in the Musicking Futures in Malaysia program, Sophia's eyes lit up. Given that the Bamboo forest part of the study abroad program happened exactly during Eid al-Adha, the holiest holiday in the Muslim religion, she did not expect her parents to allow her to participate. However, when her parents told her that "just go, you should get this experience […]. [Sophia:] really?!" She could not believe it and was ever so happy about the opportunity to explore other parts of her own home country. Sophia was the only one wearing a *khimar* in the group. She had never been in nature before and was excited when her friends told her that she will be able to "go to the forest, jungle-trekking, and hiking."

Sophia's main desire to participate in the program, however, was to meet people from different cultures as she heard from her friend Hannah that there were going to be US students joining the program. Further, she was both interested in exploring her own culture in Northeast Malaysia as well as thrilled by the idea to hand make her own instruments. Sophia concluded our interview by saying that "we excited to show you about our culture, our food, our favorite things, and Durian [laughs] – a fruit much used in Malay cuisine."

Hannah. Hannah is a 22-year-old Malay woman also born and raised in Borneo. She is currently in her junior year at Mululay University pursuing a bachelor's degree in music education majoring in classical piano. Hannah is the middle child of three and has an older and a younger brother. She has wanted to become a teacher since she was a child and said that she may have been influenced by the fact that her mother is a teacher, too. She describes herself as empathetic and someone who likes to help others, certainly a

fundamental predisposition for a career in the field of education. Hannah identifies as a Roman Catholic and recalls her first musical encounters to have been in her church.

Her father is an avocational pianist who plays in a wedding band in their hometown. The band's repertoire is a mix between traditional Malaysian songs and Western music. However, it was her mother who encouraged her at age eight to start piano lessons. Hannah told me, "Well, first I play. I sing along with my family and then my mother took me to the class, doing a personal class." Shortly after she also started to play the guitar. In addition to piano and guitar, Hannah sang in the church choir for nearly 18 years. She told me in our interview that "actually, our choir is not depends on the note or score pieces. We only just hear." In other words, they learned their entire repertoire aurally by listening only. The choir's approach to memorizing music allowed her to join the choir without any prior musical knowledge.

Hannah likes to listen to R&B, jazz, and ballads. However, she does not really like classical music except Claude Debussy. Her dislike for classical music causes some difficulties in her piano lessons with her teacher she laughingly admitted in our interview. Hannah was rather reserved especially during the first few days of our trip. She feels as though she isn't fluent enough in English and thus perceives it as an impediment to communicate with people in English. This very fact however prompted her mother to encourage Hannah to participate in the program. She told me that "when I asked my mom if I can join the program, I told her that there are students from America coming. So she said, 'oh good, nice. This gives you an opportunity to speak English more." In addition to seeing an opportunity in exercising her English fluency, Hannah voiced her belief that "going out of your comfort zone and meeting new people will broaden your horizons."

Further, they were going to receive a certificate for attending the program, which Hannah told me was beneficial to have on your CV when applying for jobs.

Hannah became more accessible as the trip went along and the students started to bond. She was especially amused by the card games both the US American and Malaysian student-participants played and taught each other. She could also often be found on the microphone on their many karaoke nights. Hannah's only international travel experience was a trip to Aceh, Indonesia. She participated in the same volunteer program as her friend Sophia. In this program, a mix between music and physical education students from Mululay University worked with children from Indonesia aged seven to twelve by teaching them songs and spending time outside in nature. Hannah recalls that she liked best working with the local community in Aceh because "they were so happy when we went there working with them […], the children, their mind it's okay, you know, there's no complicated what minded think."

As she reflected on the experience in our interview, her eyes lit up and she told me it reminded her why she wanted to become a teacher and how she blossoms when engaged in helping others. While Indonesia was not really culturally that different given the same Islamic religious traditions, it did nonetheless awake a desire in her to wanting to explore new cultures and travel to other countries. Hannah was often caught on her cell phone and she attended social events much more enthusiastically than our academic morning classes. She was often absent, which in turn made it difficult to gather data from her for the present study.

Nayla. Nayla is a 22-year-old woman born and raised in northern Borneo, an island located in the Malay Archipelago. She is currently in her second year at Mululay

University pursuing a bachelor's degree in music education majoring in classical violin. Nayla started playing classical piano when she was four and took lessons until she was 15 only to give way to substantial preparations for an academic exam in school. Nayla also sang in the church choir growing up, at the time she was a Roman Catholic and thus in a Christian church. In the meantime, Nayla and her family have converted to Islam. Her mother, also a music teacher, exerted wide influence on Nayla. She studied classical flute and music education herself. In high school, Nayla joined an Indie-Rock band as the keyboardist. Music plays a salient role in Nayla's relationship with her mother. Nayla told me

> My mom is a music teacher, so that's why, that's why she influenced me a lot. She asks me to join music... and I join... the music club [...] in my school, there were curriculums or curricular activities and I joined.. at the time, they were like battle of the band. So I joined as a keyboardist [laughs].

Growing up, Nayla played the *sompoton*, a mouth organ made from gourd with bamboo pipes developed in northern Borneo, which she taught herself. She also played the *kulintangan*, an instrument similar to the Malaysian gamelan but closer to a xylophone, which her grandfather taught her. In her leisure time, Nayla likes to listen to metal, metalcore, indie bands, Malaysian indie rock, and Japanese bands. In general, Nayla is fascinated with Japan; their culture, traditions, and she specifically mentioned the kimono. She would love to visit Japan one day.

As far as her travel experiences go, Nayla has been to Thailand with her family and twice to the Java Jazz Festival in Indonesia. She loved the people in Thailand, "the culture is different from Malaysia, the languages, and especially the food!" She perceived Thailand to be more open and shared with me that "Malaysia is like... hm... can I say

this? (laughs) Not that open." Interestingly enough, she also described Malaysian music as too mainstream. Her trips to Indonesia with friends was the first time she traveled without her parents. Nayla alluded that Indonesia is, in her opinion, more socially and musically open, or perhaps pluralistic, than Malaysia. She told me that, particularly in regard to religious affairs, Indonesia was more progressive. For example, people in Indonesia can marry a member of a different religious group whereas in Malaysia intermarrying is not allowed. When I asked her whether her prior travels had changed her, she revealed that it made her a better musician. Nayla likes the diversity she perceives in Indonesian music and particularly pointed out their composition style.

Nayla admitted at the beginning of our interview that her primary motivation to participate in the program was that the course was credit bearing. Furthermore, she was intrigued by the idea of hand making an instrument out of bamboo, yet was concerned whether her English skills were sufficient to communicate with the US American participants. At the time of our interview, about halfway into the program, she said somewhat relieved that "everything is going smooth."

Nayla seemed rather guarded on a first impression as I observed her hardly participating in any class discussions initially. Though during both our interview as well as the focus group, I felt as though she needed to tell a story. Similarly to Hannah, she felt the language barrier to be an impediment at first and thus appeared rather timid. However, towards the end of the program she was a lot more approachable and wished that Mululay University offered more such exchange programs. When I asked her what she liked best about the intercultural exchange and time spent with the US American peers, Nayla said, "I enjoy showing others my culture."

Dr. Naismith. Dr. Naismith is a 42-year-old Caucasian man born and raised in a suburban community on the east coast of the United States. He was the main organizer and program director of Musicking Futures in Malaysia. Dr. Naismith currently teaches at Central University where he serves as the associate director of choral activities. He started his musical activities by taking drum lessons at age nine, though he did not do much with it until he joined a band and was a drummer through both middle and high school.

At age 12, he started formal piano lessons and later also studied composition intensively for four years during high school with his piano teacher's husband. He recalls laughingly that he still liked rock better than classical music at that time. Nonetheless, his path led to an undergraduate degree in composition with a concentration in piano. After working a year on orchestrating a musical for Princeton University post-graduation, he quickly realized that "it was so lonely, I didn't have it in me to be with myself for 12 hours a day alone." As he always loved choral music and wanted to remain in that realm, Dr. Naismith eventually obtained a master's degree in choral conducting and finally a DMA in choral conducting. A brief teaching appointment during the final year of his doctoral studies as a middle and high school music teacher made it apparent for Dr. Naismith that he was called for higher education.

After graduating with his DMA, Dr. Naismith moved to the United Arab Emirates where he taught theory and served as choral director for six years. During our interview, he recalls the UAE to be a true eye opener insofar that he realized how much of his teaching was rooted in Western classical music. Four-part harmonies and the notion of a choir as we know it in the west is a foreign concept in the Arab curriculum: "At the

beginning, the students didn't even know what a 'choir' was and why they were there [...]; chorus is not in the Arab curriculum." The UAE was an invaluable learning experience though Dr. Naismith recalls (sighing) "it took me about six years to digest what I was really doing there. When I left, I felt like I had really colonized the curriculum, colonized those kids, actually."

Albeit all his degrees were obtained in music performance, perhaps to no surprise, Dr. Naismith found his way to music education through both personal experiences and research. He is an avid proponent of the social justice movement and particularly investigates how this narrative may be applied to music education. Accordingly, much of Dr. Naismith's work in his (Midwest) community is attempting to perhaps restructure music(king) and music education in a more socially just way. Indeed, he sees himself, in his words, as "a social justice music professor." This informed his shaping of the course he taught and the study abroad program overall prompting "critical reflection on the ways in which culture and music intersect in an increasingly trans-cultural world." Dr. Naismith was initially influenced by a similar study abroad program in music that took place two years prior in China. His wife and I were both participants in this program and that is where we first met. As he reflected on the collaborative work we did in China during our interview, he recalled,

> I think that going away and coming back together is a huge part of human bonding. When you feel sort of out of your, what, zone of proximal development or whatever, like your way outside of that comfort zone, it's a time for opening. Where I think a lot of people simultaneously open and are open to each other more than just in the regular day-to-day.

In preparing the course curriculum for the Musicking Futures Malaysia study abroad program, Dr. Naismith intended to emphasize cross-cultural collaboration through

musicking and to put dialogue and critical examination with an aim at adopting a more socially just perspective as his core objective. Hence, he was understandably disappointed, as we all were, by the many unexpected cancelations of music classes and events that were planned to take place with several Malaysian professors. However, given both his prior experience in the UAE and also having worked with the Malaysian culture for two years at that point, he was able to understand and accept the circumstances better perhaps than some of the US American student-participants were.

Dr. Naismith recalled the bamboo project as his personal highlight of the trip. His eyes lit up as he reminisced about the local musicians who taught our group how to build the instruments and who were with us for the entire Bamboo forest project. Perhaps the most salient personal musical experience for Dr. Naismith was the group improvisations on which he elaborated that

> I think the improvisation thing, like just in terms of doing music, taking the sociology part out of it, the improvisation thing was just such an opening for me. I had been the recipient of those situations, but I always thought it was sort of magical and that I couldn't do it, and I feel like I can now.

When prompted on most memorable moments of the study abroad program, Dr. Naismith recalled

> Sitting around eating and eating and eating with everybody, all the nice conversations, I think that was amazing. Informal karaoke, that was fantastic. That was musicking as well. I think all of this, all of the music moments, we did learn some technique from Professor Kamrul. We learned how to play the drums. We learned how to think about how many things we could do with our instruments.

Equally as important and perhaps his most salient highlight was Dr. Arshad, the Malaysian professor, simply as a human being. He told me in our interview

> This might be something that you want to focus on is that he spent 10 years in the US. So he was this culture bridger in that sense. He could really like, "Oh, you guys in the US, you do it this way, but Malaysians, we do it this way."
>
> It's not just a [his] reliability. It's like he's really putting himself forward. The way he treats his own students, okay, he has them carry his stuff sometimes, but then he's buying them coffee and, you know what I mean? Really taking care of them and making sure that they're engaged in class: "I want you to get a lot out of this, so let's do those readings." Really kind of being a parent.

Although leading the program was often challenging and visibly discernible in Dr. Naismith's demeanor, he was incredibly proud and pleased about the program's outcome. This manifested in a noticeable relief during our last night's festivities where Dr. Naismith danced and mingled with all the participants. He can be best described as a well-considered and reflective person genuinely concerned for what is right and just in the work he does for both his students and himself.

Dr. Arshad. Dr. Arshad "technically and politically" identifies as a Malay man. In many ways, this (his own) very description speaks a lot about his character in that he is particular, extremely funny, and charismatic. He was born in a state in northern Borneo that at the time was under the federation of Malaysia, with its own legal system, though not yet proper Malaysia. He emphasized the distinction because he grew up under British rule and attended school within the British system. However, Dr. Arshad said in our interview, "I don't believe that I'm a total Malay, because my grandmother is Chinese, my grandfather is Indian; we also have Portuguese origin; from the Dutch, so I'm a mixed person."

He started his musical journey at age seven by taking classical violin lessons. However, after a year he decided that it was not his instrument, not only because they

didn't have smaller size violins for children at the time but also due to his "lack of patience" (laughs). Consequently, his father decided to send him to piano lessons instead. Soon after Dr. Arshad switched to the electric organ and continued with lessons through his entire schooling. Although his first college degree was in engineering, he soon decided to become a music teacher and it did not take him long to enroll in a teaching college in Malaysia. After graduating with a music education degree in elementary teaching, he started his first teaching job in a public school in a rural state in northeast peninsular Malaysia.

Dr. Arshad detailed the political climate under the past government, which apparently was strictly in line with Islam and thus resistant towards music and music education. Indeed, music is considered impermissible under strict interpretation of religious (Islamic) texts. This religious notion led to an interesting conversation during our interview about the definition of what is considered music amongst the great Islamic thinkers and the fatwa council, the highest governing body ruling over Islamic law. Ultimately, he wasn't happy in his position as music wasn't deemed 'important' and parents requested their child not be attending music class. Dr. Arshad lamented the parents' decision recalling it "seeing a few of the students (sitting out) at the back of the class really made me sad […]. Everybody deserves music." Interestingly, this experience prompted a personal quest for Dr. Arshad of wanting to get to the bottom of

> what is music in Islam, is it permissible or not permissible? So I tried to find the answer, and I couldn't find it there in the community… they questioned whether I was Muslim… whether I knew how to read the Quran… because I was "just" a music teacher (simpers).

He added that in his estimation, “the arts and humanities, those two are the foundation of a great civilization!”

He quit his job, received a scholarship from Yamaha Foundation Japan and took the opportunity to further his studies with Yamaha. He ended up being a music instructor with Yamaha music, teaching piano and the organ within their curriculum. However, Dr. Arshad recalls that “still, at that point, I was still searching for what is the status of Islam? What is the status of music in Islam?” At the same time, he was contacted by a professor from the music department at Mululay University inquiring whether he was interested in pursuing a bachelor’s degree in music education. This decision eventually led his career path to the US where, after receiving his bachelor’s degree in Malaysia he obtained a master’s as well as Ph.D. degree in music education at a major institution on the East Coast.

The same colleague who at the time had called him to apply for the bachelor of music education program at Mululay University, pursued her doctoral studies inquiring about “the status of music in Islam” in the U.S. as well. The findings finally provided an answer for Dr. Arshad’s ongoing quest on the matter. Indeed, music was permissible when in line with the Islamic teaching. In other words, music is not considered haram (forbidden) by itself but impermissible only if used in a way that is not coherent with Islam. For example, if listening to music makes you feel aroused or forget what your responsibilities are as a human, as a person, it is not considered to be coherent with Islam. As with many topics, especially pertaining to music and education, Dr. Arshad passionately and proudly narrated this very insightful story and its consequences to his question that lingered with him since his first teaching job.

Today, he is in his 50s and serves as the associate dean for student affairs as well as professor of music education at Mululay University. Dr. Arshad can be best described as having a fighter attitude. He laughingly admits that he made himself "a few enemies within the University hierarchy" by relentlessly fighting to improve the music education department and the experience for his students. Dr. Arshad is invested in his students' holistic development as human beings and while some of his students might describe him as a strict disciplinarian, he is very good hearted and empathetic.

When prompted about his most memorable moments of the study abroad program, Dr. Arshad recalled the facial expressions of us visitors when we first tried the durian fruit: "It was hilarious, the look at your face, I mean, I would have recorded your face (laughs out loud)." He cherished seeing other people experiencing his culture and their reactions in circumstances foreign to them.

He took great pleasure in seeing his students open up and interact with the visiting [US] students. Dr. Arshad expressed early in our interview that while he likes to think of himself as a mixed person,

> I think I'm a global person 'cause I've been everywhere, living in other places…I had my first experience being an American, truly being American when I did my Master's and Ph.D. in Miami […]. In the meantime, I have traveled the world.

Concluding, Dr. Arshad was the mastermind on the Malay side in organizing and shaping the program to what it had become while also serving as a father figure, both academically as well as a life coach of sorts, to his students – and a great entertainer to all of us!

Chapter V

MUSICKING FUTURES

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. To carry out the purpose of this study, I addressed the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the benefits and challenges for students in partaking in a music study abroad program?
2. What role does music play in achieving cross cultural understanding?
3. How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?

This chapter presents a detailed description of my research sites. In the following sections, I describe the various locations we visited from my observer's perspective. I begin with a description of the study abroad program as advertised to participants followed by the planned program itinerary to provide further context to the reader. The following section depicts gives my impressions traveling through Malaysia with the participants as well as elaborate descriptions of each of the research sites. Throughout the chapter, quotes from my interviews with the participants will be woven in with site descriptions.

Malaysia

The Federation of Malaysia is a country in Southeast Asia inhabiting parts of the Malay Peninsula, also called West Malaysia, and the majority of north Borneo island, also referred to as East Malaysia (Bee et al., 2020). The 11 states located on Peninsular Malaysia gained independence from British rule in 1957 ("Malaysia Information, Income Tax Malaysia, Agriculture Malaysia, Malaysia Import, Malaysia Export & Malaysia Employment Information," 2006). The states of Sarawak and Sabah, both on Borneo Island, as well as Singapore joined the Federation in 1963 to form Malaysia. However, Singapore left the Federation again in 1965 to become an independent republic and thus today the Federation consists of 13 states. Malaysia's population was reported to be 32.68 million at the end of the fourth quarter in 2019 (Federal Government Administrative Centre, 2020). The capital city is Kuala Lumpur, counting a population of 7.78 million in Greater Kuala Lumpur (United Nations, 2020).

The country counts over 70 identified ethnic groups, not least due to its location being at the nexus of one of the world's major maritime trade routes and thus having long been the meeting place of peoples from various parts of Asia (Bee et al., 2020). The ethnic groups however are generally classified into four major groups namely Bumiputera (inclusive of Malay and Indigenous; 60.3%), Chinese (22.9%), Indians (6.8) and Others (including non-Malaysian citizens; 10%).

The state religion is Islam with which more than 60% of the country's population identify followed by Buddhism (19.8%), Christianity (9.2%) and Hinduism (6.3%). Malays are officially defined in part by their observance to Islam unlike the other ethnic groups of Malaysia (Bee et al., 2020).

Malaysia is a federal constitutional elective monarchy, closely modeled on the Westminster parliamentary system, a legacy of British colonial rule ("Malaysia Information, Income Tax Malaysia, Agriculture Malaysia, Malaysia Import, Malaysia Export & Malaysia Employment Information," 2006). Since the constitutional amendment of 1994, the head of state, a monarch, has only a ceremonial function (Bee et al., 2020).

The education system in Malaysia consists of six years of compulsory primary education followed by three years of what they call lower secondary education, two years of upper secondary education and finally a two year pre-university secondary track (Clark, 2014). Following secondary school, students then may enter tertiary education. However, students have the choice to enroll in a technical or vocational school for their second segment of secondary study instead of pursuing a strictly academic track (Bee et al., 2020). If pursuing the pre-university stream, students choose between a humanity or science focused track (Clark, 2014).

Musicking Futures in Malaysia

Study Abroad Program Description

This three-week course took place at Mululay University, in a city just 20 minutes from Kuala Lumpur; in Georgetown on the Malaysian Island of Penang, and Kelantan, in northeast Peninsular Malaysia. The study abroad program was open to all Central University students regardless of major. The course emphasized collaborative music-making through exposure to traditional (indigenous) Malaysian and North American formats. Students and professors from Central University co-learned with Mululay

University students and professors, to explore various cross-cultural concepts of music, including making instruments from "scratch" and learning about their role in society. The course was designed to prompt critical reflection on the ways in which culture and music intersect in an increasingly trans-cultural world. Through development of creativity, students co-composed a musical drama, reflecting their socio-cultural and personal backgrounds. Selected readings and dialogue intertwined with music-making and provided critical discourses. These discourses (verbal, written, and musical) considered constructive strategies for inclusive and diversity-affirming musical and societal relationships.

Part of the course took place in the Kelantan Rainforest and consisted of gathering materials (i.e., cutting down bamboo), making instruments with local musicians, and co-composing music together as a class with Malaysian students.

Table 2

Program Itinerary (Excerpt from Syllabus, May 2019)

Weekday / Date	**Morning**	**Afternoon**	**Evening**
Monday Aug. 5		Flight to Kuala Lumpur	Flight to Kuala Lumpur
Tuesday Aug. 6	Flight to Kuala Lumpur	Arrive in Kuala Lumpur (purchase sim cards at the airport!)	Dinner with students from Mululay university
Wednesday Aug. 7	Free time	1pm-3pm, Introductions / -Our "Funds of Knowledge" / -Discussion of DiAngelo & Sensoy (Intro. and Chapter 1). Overview of course	4 pm National Museum Central Market and Chinese Night Market

Thursday Aug. 8	9-noon, class: DiAngelo & Sensoy (chapter 2); and Kok article. Dr. John Perkins "Colonialism's footprints and erasures - anti-colonial musicking." Listen to TedTalk: https://www.npr.org/2013/11/22/245958414/are-there-any-universal-beliefs-and-truths	1-3 pm, Class: Malaysian Traditional Instrumental Lessons - Prof. Kamrul Hussin	
Friday Aug. 9	Bus leaves to Kelantan - 9 am	Class on the bus! (After lunch) Discuss Yosso article and chapter 3 of DiAngelo & Sensoy	9 pm arrive to Kelantan Travel Day
Saturday Aug. 10	**"Bamboo Project" day 1**	Free time	DAY 1 Briefing on experience by facilitators
Sunday Aug. 11	**"Bamboo Project" day 2** Iduladha (Muslim holy day) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eid_al-Adha Zikr Optional Iduladha activities	Free time Class by the stream - "Religion and philosophy - how do we perceive our culture's practices and beliefs?"	DAY 2 Culture Experience Barbecue by the river

Monday Aug. 12	**"Bamboo Project" day 3** Instrument making workshop		DAY 3
Tuesday Aug. 13	**"Bamboo Project" day 4** Musicking -		DAY 4 Cultural performance
Wednesday Aug. 14	**"Bamboo Project"** **9 am depart back to Shah Alam**		TRAVEL DAY to Shah Alam
Thursday Aug. 15	class 10 am: **Alim and Paris:** What is culturally sustaining pedagogy and why does it matter? **Yosso-** Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth.	Music pedagogy	Free time
Friday Aug. 16	Class: Alim & Paris article: **Allsup** "The compositional turn in music education: From closed forms to open texts."	Flight to Penang AK 6116, KUL - PEN, Depart 3:45 pm; Arrival 5:00 pm.	Travel to Penang
Saturday Aug. 17	Explore Georgetown (3 hour tour - 9-noon)	Visit Penang House of Music And free time	Explore Jetty area - Ghost performances?
Sunday Aug. 18	9am - 11 am - Colonialism and "Creolizing" **Hess** "Musically Creolizing Subjects: Re (envisioning) world music education."	Lunch w/ ethnomusicologist, Dr. Tan Sooi Beng: Bangsawan	Free time

Monday **Aug. 19**	Free time	Travel back: (AirAsia) AK 6119; Depart PEN at 3:10; arrive to KUL at 4:15	Free time
Tuesday **Aug. 20**	Class: **Applebaum -** "Comforting discomfort as complicity: White fragility and the pursuit of invulnerability"	Class and small Group Pedagogical rehearsals	Free time
Wednesday **Aug. 21**	10 am - small Group Pedagogical lesson rehearsal What frameworks (lenses) can we employ as we speak to the students? What were some of the values that came forth from the readings that we may prepare as we organize the music pedagogy?	Class and small Group Pedagogical rehearsals	Visit Batu Caves (Hindu temple with natural "high ceilings")
Thursday **Aug. 22**	certificate ceremony with Dr. Dean Tazul and Dr. Rithaudin	Visit to High School (Section 16) or Class 2-5 pm	Free time
Friday **Aug. 23**		Friday prayers Transition to Kuala Lumpur, The Face Suites	Free time
Saturday **Aug. 24**		Free time	Final Dinner with large group. Music sharing
Sunday **Aug. 25**	Return flights		Arrive in USA

Pre-trip Interviews

Two months before embarking on the trip, in June 2019, I flew out to the Midwest to both participate in the pre-trip meeting as well as to conduct my first round of interviews with the US student-participants. Due to an air traffic debacle at New York's LaGuardia, I arrived late but just in time for the actual meeting and presentation given by Dr. Naismith, the US American professor who would also be the trip leader. I remember it feeling rather awkward. The meeting was held in one of the university music department's classrooms filled with only six adults and two children while one prospective participant joined the meeting via zoom. It seemed as though everyone sat as far apart from each other as possible. Hardly anyone asked any questions, much less spoke a word at all. I recall wondering how this experience was going to unfold and also remember comparing it to my last study abroad experience as a student myself. However, everyone, to my surprise, without hesitation agreed to participate in the study, which I appreciated very much.

Arriving in the *Foreign Land*

First Impressions

Two months after the pre-trip interviews and much preparation for this present study, the adventure finally began. After a 14-hour flight from Rome's Fiumicino airport through Switzerland via London's Heathrow, I finally landed at Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Malaysia. I had been here before but wondered what my perception and experience would be this time through a researcher's lens. Along with Hong Kong and Singapore, Kuala Lumpur is one of the major hubs in Southeast Asia and

emanates the grandeur of a modern and high-tech international aerodrome especially, shall I say, in comparison to US airports. Malaysia's state religion is Islam and the 2010 census (UN, 2013) reported 63.7% of the country's population as Muslims, 17.7% Buddhists, and 9.4% Christians. The transition from southern Italy still noticeably embedded in Catholic culture, to a more refrained and predominantly Islamic Malaysia was, while not foreign to me, noteworthy and striking. I was greeted rather indifferently by customs and immigration; however, the process was a lot smoother and humane I shall say compared to US immigration procedures these days.

The weather, at least in my estimation, was hot (92F) and considerably humid (94%). The very second you left the overly air-conditioned airport building, your sunglasses would film over with the unbearable humidity hitting you like a slap in the face; but then I'm originally from Switzerland, so what do I know about unbearable humidity. On my hours long taxi ride from the airport to my destination, I was confronted with an ambivalence of modern skyscrapers of Kuala Lumpur looming on the horizon, and glimpses of a Malaysia exuding hundreds of years of history. The intermittent rather desolate landscape was dominated by long droning cement motorways. I was left wondering how some of the participants from the Midwest of the US, who had never traveled much outside their own state, would perceive this very first impression of Malaysia.

Destination 1 – Shah Alam

Our first destination was Shah Alam, a smaller-scale city nestled on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur. The university (Mululay University) we collaborated with is headquartered here. We were to reside here during the first four days of our three-week

program and returned again for a few days at the end of our second week. Our hotel faced one of the largest mosques in Southeast Asia. The view was breathtaking and the mosque's appearance especially during sunset was monumental. To the right of our hotel was a mall, rather generic in nature, with familiar US fast food chains. The discrepancy between the mosque to the one side and the shopping mall to the other could not have been larger, two worlds clashing, if metaphorically, within the same corner of the eye! I wondered again how the US student-participants would experience this?

After checking in and dropping off my luggage, I met the rest of the study abroad group at what appeared to be a Malay chain restaurant. Most of them landed earlier and had already gathered in the restaurant where we all convened for the first time and had a welcome dinner with some of the Malaysian student-participants and the dean of Mululay university. The restaurant was located in another mall.

Research Sites

Mululay University – The Classroom:

The music department is located on the 11th floor in one of the Mululay University's buildings on one of the Shah Alam campuses. I was surprised by how old the building was and even more surprised that it appeared to be suffering from severe decay. The elevator worked one day and not on others. The walls in the classroom were dark grey on the sides and front, and light brown in the back with mounted blackboards. There were what seemed to be nine brand new iMac desktops. There were three rows of desks made out of fake wood with dark legs and a light tabletop. One side of the wall was painted grey, the back of the room hosting the blackboards was painted in an orange-

beige. The room felt fairly sterile, no pictures, posters, or any decoration for that matter on the walls. The floor was covered with big white and grey sprinkled tiles. There was an old-style white board on the front left from the teacher's desk. Blue plastic chairs with metal legs filled the room. The teacher's desk was equipped with a Roland A-500 Pro keyboard, two loudspeakers, and an iMac. There were industrial fluorescent ceiling lights, somewhat typical classroom lighting apparently, that imposed a rather cold and unnatural white lighting in my estimation.

To my surprise, given the decaying signs all over the university buildings indicating the premises' age, there was a handicap/ wheel-chair ramp as you opened the door into the classroom evidencing a handicap friendly environment. Thinking that the US American Disability Act (ADA) only passed into law in 1990, I wondered what the Malaysian equivalent to the ADA was. The hallways were mainly deserted as it was summer break at Mululay University with no classes in session. However, there were exams being taken, so on certain days, some classrooms were filled with students taking traditional aural skills and music history exams; from what I could hear rooted in the western classical cannon. There was a flat screen TV in front of two white boards behind the teacher's desk. There was one green plastic plant sitting on one of the filing cabinets to the right (stage right) of the teacher's desk, perhaps the closest approximation of some other "life" in the classroom. There was a fire extinguisher in the corner to the right of the entrance door. The windows along one side of the classroom offered a view over Shah Alam with the recognizable silhouette of Kuala Lumpur's skyline in the distance. The view right outside the window shed light on the campus buildings sitting in front of the taller standing main university building.

In this particular classroom, Dr. Naismith taught his class on music education through the lens of social justice. The class met every day during those days that we sojourned in Shah Alam, which was intermittently on three different occasions during our three-week stay. The music and music education department's administrative offices are located in this building as well while other classes, or workshops as the Malay students called them, such as Traditional Malaysian Instruments are taught on another campus across town. In the afternoon on the second day of the program, Prof. Kamrul taught a class on traditional Malaysian instruments, rhythms, and performance practices. While this class was supposed to take place several more times over the course of our three-week program, unfortunately, Prof. Kamrul had to cancel all subsequent classes due to a family emergency.

The Classes

Dr. Naismith's class served as both a platform to debrief and plan the trip together within the group as well as discussing texts based on the curriculum he designed for the course. Literature by Alim and Paris and DiAngelo was a means by which to facilitate class discussions about power, privilege, racism, and what a culturally sustaining music teaching paradigm might look like. Students drew from their own experiences as students, teachers and performers to interrogate status quo belief systems within music teaching and learning both in the United States and Malaysia and to reimagine a broader and more socially just approach to music teaching. Students discussed how characteristics of culturally sustaining pedagogies might be applied to rehearsals of a symphonic orchestra.

In our first class, participants introduced themselves by answering a set of questions posed by Dr. Naismith. The questions were the following: 1) What were our first musical experiences: 2) What type of music was that? 3) Who encouraged us towards musical experience? 4) how much time did you devote to practicing music before college? 5) What do you value most about music; and 6) At the end of a musical journey each semester, your ensemble, your lesson, your class, did you come closer to your musical value? Although these questions seemed to be simple, they allowed for a more in depth introduction, exploring some of the participants' musical upbringing and influences in their lives. Students shared how their most influential music figure wasn't necessarily their conservatory teachers.

Guest speakers like Dr. Arshad led discussions on spirituality in music education and the ways in which a Eurocentric music epistemology limits teachers' understanding of Malaysian indigenous traditions and value systems. Another discussion focused on the ways in which music teaching might empower students by incorporating students' musical funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, 2002). The speaker further elaborated on how using the students' own interest and cultural background helped to inspire them to inquire about their own musical and cultural heritage.

While we did not have any classes during our stay in the bamboo forest, as several more workshops were canceled, the students did convene to debrief and discuss their experiences up until those moments. Students shared their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in the instrument-making process as well as their impressions of living in a bamboo forest.

For the participants' final project, the goal was to create a lesson plan that would empower middle school students by eliciting their cultural and musical values. Student-participants formed groups with the middle school students and collaboratively prepared short performances based on the middle school students' choices. Subsequently, students discussed their song choices, investigating their song choices. Interestingly, every group chose a song from the Western canon, ranging from a rap song to Billy Eilish, and from pop songs to Shawn Mendes. Through these activities and discussions the student-participants intended to prompt the middle school students to reflect upon their musical and cultural values. The middle school students came up with a variety of values such as community, excitement, happiness, calmness, and tradition. After the participants' discussions with their middle school student groups, Sue taught everyone a Native American song about unity, which resulted in what some student participants described as a "really unifying and spiritual experience".

Professor Kamrul's Classroom

Across town was the official music campus with visibly decaying buildings. The dean informed us that they had been fighting for years to get funding for a substantial renovation including a new concert hall, but thus far nothing had been approved. I entered Professor Kamrul's classroom, which appeared unassuming from the outside. The walls were painted in a lime green whereas the back wall was covered with ocean blue panels. In front of the panels was an array of traditional Malaysian instruments. There were nine *kompangs*, a membranophone instrument, two *canangs*, from the idiophone family; three gongs, three *rebanas*, also a membranophone; a *gendang* drum, and three bamboo marimbas. There was a white door in the back right corner that suggested some

sort of storage room. White square tiles, similar to the ones in the classroom across town, covered the floor. There were two ceiling fans joined by a hanging microphone that I assume was mounted to provide the opportunity to record performances within the room itself. Fluorescent ceiling light literally shed light onto the otherwise rather dark room given that there were only a few small windows on the top of one wall facing the exterior. Except for one claret-red chair, there were no other chairs in the room. This made sense given that as soon as class started, we were all asked to sit down on the floor. Upon entering the room, everybody took their shoes off. The entire class proceeded with us playing and taking notes sitting on a rug in the center of the room. In the front of the room was a white board on wheels, which Prof. Kamrul used during class to notate rhythm patterns, namely the *Mak Yong* Ensemble, for the different instrument sections.

After teaching each percussion instrument's specific rhythm pattern, Prof. Kamrul had the students take turns to try out each instrument and practice the assigned rhythms. At the end of the class, the students with the guidance of Prof. Kamrul put together the ensemble, which included improvisatory segments for particular instruments.

Bamboo Forest– Northeast Malaysia

After completing our first four days in Shah Alam, we embarked on a 14-hour bus ride from the southern Malay Peninsula across the country to the Bamboo forest in Northeast Malaysia. We spent four days in the Bamboo forest where each of the participants built two traditional Malay instruments from scratch out of bamboo. We were instructed by local musicians who were masters in the field of Kelantan traditional instrument making. Most participants made a *gendang kecapi* as their first instrument,

while the second instrument was chosen from the flute family and consisted of either a form of traverse flute or a pan flute. The *gendang kecapi* is a percussion instrument that plays an important role in keeping the tempo of the music. Usually, the *gendang* player is the one who gives a signal to the other musicians to show the start and the end of song and also the change in tempo.

Besides the actual cutting down of the bamboo, which the facilitators did in preparation for our arrival, participants hand made the instruments themselves. Occasionally, the local musicians helped with their expertise, especially when it came down to a crucial drilling that would fundamentally impact the instrument's sound production. Compelled by the inescapable and endless bus ride, I observed the Malay and US student-participants interacting and mingling with each other. They took turns teaching each other games and listening to each other's music playlists. I even heard them singing choruses of Top 40 radio hits together. It seemed as though the bonding began.

We arrived late at night and were greeted not only by the team of local musicians that was going to work with us during our stay, but also a variety of eerie animal sounds in somewhat intense sound patterns. It was pitch dark and we had to walk a few minutes from where the bus dropped us off to the compound. I did not know what to expect and thus was rather surprised to see several houses, the first one being a huge open air dining area with a roof on top. I wondered again, how are the US American students experiencing this moment? Entering a pitch-dark Bamboo forest for the first time, much less thousands of miles away from home? We were greeted in what looked like a mix of a performance hall with a stage in the front, and a gym. Following a brief welcome speech

by the dean of our collaborating university, we were served a multi-course welcome dinner by a lovely local woman before moving into our rooms in a house adjacent to the common area. Admittedly, the first impression of a modern and very spaciously built compound was a bit tainted once we saw the sanitary facilities. Luckily, and very much unexpectedly, there were air conditioners in each dormitory. The dorms on the second floor, where we resided, were connected by a long and narrow hallway. The walls were painted in a light yellow and the floor covered in marine blue tiles.

The dormitory as well as the performance and conference buildings' facades were painted yellow with a terracotta trim. The open-air common lounge where we convened for meals and to socialize, was painted in earthy colors again in a shade of terracotta. Parts of the path leading to the compound were tarred, intermittently interrupted by gravel. Most of the forecourt surrounding the facilities were tarred as well. While the forest surrounding us was wild, the landscape around the property seemed manicured. The Rainforest exuded a lush green. There were flowers popping out here and there. Exotic versions of butterflies in a warm golden yellow paid us a visit. It was extremely hot and humid, at least in my estimation, both during the day as well as at night. Although sweltering hot throughout our entire stay, the weather for the first few days was grey and nebulous. There was a constant sound tapestry of animal sounds. Every morning at dawn, we could hear what we learned to be gibbon monkeys, sing – or converse?

Overall, it was a peaceful and tranquil site that invited contemplation and engagement with nature. I observed all of the US student-participants to whom this environment obviously was quite foreign, to be fascinated especially by the eccentric monkey sounds. Accordingly, many of them woke up at dawn every morning to

experience the morning mood and atmosphere in the Bamboo forest. It was especially during our Bamboo forest sojourn where the Malay and US student-participants bonded the most. Long after all the locals, trip leaders and us educators went to bed, we could hear the student-participants engage in karaoke, accompanied with *much* laughter, until the wee morning hours.

It was interesting to observe the Malay students who knew some of the US pop songs and lyrics better than the US American students did. It was evident that our time in the Bamboo forest was a –if not *the*– highlight of the entire program. Especially the ways in which people bonded and engaged with both each other as well as the surrounding nature. For most participants who hadn't traveled much outside their home country, or even province, venturing out in the middle of the Bamboo forest across the other side of the globe was just as foreign as the "humors, manners, customs, politics, theology, and Jurisprudence" (Montaigne, 1581/1877) of our host countrymen and women.

As word of our arrival circulated the Bamboo forest, Dr. Arshad was approached by locals who then invited us to attend a "high-profile" wedding. On the hottest of mornings pushing 95 degrees Fahrenheit at about 80% humidity, a (thankfully air conditioned) bus picked us up and drove us through different parts of the Bamboo forest to the wedding. As we left our premises, we were informed by the driver that there are wild lions residing not far from our compound! I had been running earlier that morning out in the adjacent wilderness and was shaking in my boots hearing of our "new neighbors" while being eternally thankful not having made their acquaintance. Yet the forest, vested in a lush green, emanated a certain tranquility and seemed unperilous that morning. Long sequences of tree lines were interrupted by swamplands.

Not knowing that we were going to be attending a wedding in advance, most of us improvised trying our best in putting the most appropriate attire together for the event. Only as we drove up to the gate of the property were we informed that it was the former secretary of state's niece who was getting married! Quite amused and oddly enough honored by the news, we exited the bus and entered the incredibly hot sauna we encountered outside. My first impression and sight of the venue can be best described as varicolored. The women's dresses were especially bright and colorful. One specific group of women, perhaps closest to the western concept of bridesmaids, all dressed in pink on one side, and multicolored on the opposite side. These women received the bridal pair standing in front in a V-shape as the bride and groom were walking out of the house. The groom himself was dressed in a traditional wedding gown all in white wearing a turban and a pair of Ray Ban sunglasses – for some reason this put a smile on my face. The bride was also dressed fully in white with a dress decorated in manifold embroideries. The outdoor venue was elaborately decorated with lots of white fabric and a green carpet leading up to the altar. The setting was perfectly manicured with lots of flower arrangements across the premises.

The local musicians who worked with us in our Bamboo camp were also the musicians playing for the wedding. During one of their improvisations, based on the same base rhythms and patterns we had learned in Professor Kamrul's class, they invited us to play along. However, timidity and also in respect of their cultural traditions, we respectfully declined the offer. After the brief ceremony, there was an abundance of equally multicolored food offered in a buffet style. We were warmly greeted by the former secretary of state and invited to indulge in the food. While none of the other

wedding attendees engaged much with us, we were all welcomed and treated very warmly. After another musical interlude accompanied with dancers, we bid farewell and our bus brought us back to our camp.

After our five-day adventure in the Bamboo forest, we trekked back south on yet another, this time, 13-hour bus trip to our first destination near Mululay University. We passed by miles and miles of palm oil trees surrounding the main road on both sides going from the northern part of the peninsula all the way down to central south Malaysia. We learned that Malaysia was the second biggest economy in the world producing palm oil. We also had a medical emergency with one of the US American students while on the bus, which luckily turned out to be minor. Interestingly, this prompted a discussion amongst the student-participants comparing the Malay healthcare system with the US "healthcare" system, all while we attended a day clinic with the student who fell ill. Summa summarum, we surely had quite the adventurous bus ride crossing more than half of the country.

Georgetown – Penang Island

Following two days of classes at our home base – Mululay University in Shah Alam – we embarked on a trip to Georgetown on Penang Island, which could be described as our "vacation" time within our study abroad program. Due to several unswayable circumstances, both the Malaysian students as well as Dr. Arshad were, unfortunately, unable to join us to Georgetown. Some Malay students started their student teaching internship that same week while others had to go back to work, and Dr. Arshad had unexpected family matters to take care of. Mululay University was technically on

summer break during the time the study abroad program took place. Thus, aside from departmental certification exams there were no other classes held. The Malaysian students essentially shortened their summer vacation by participating in parts of the Musicking Futures program.

Around noon on said Friday, we taxied to the airport located quite far away from our hotel. The actual flight time was under two hours and we made it safe and sound to Penang Island's Georgetown airport. Already in the taxi to the center of town, I saw and felt that Georgetown was a completely different vibe from the prior two destinations where we spent our first two weeks. Based on the billboards, ads, and people on the street it seemed like a very multicultural and in some sense cosmopolitan city. Furthermore, I recognized (western) tourists for the first time in over two weeks since leaving Kuala Lumpur airport upon my arrival. I remember Sue mentioning that "I didn't feel out of place in Georgetown [as a woman] not only not wearing an abaya but walking around with a short haircut." I had to admit that this did not occur to me before and I was left wondering how Sue must have felt in all the places we lived and had visited before.

Historically, Georgetown on Penang Island used to be a major port town crucial for the east-west trade route. Consequently, Thai, Chinese, and Malay people had been living alongside each other for centuries and thus influencing each other's cultures.

During our extended weekend in Georgetown, we met with a renowned Malaysian musicologist for an afternoon session in one of our apartments. Dr. Sooi Beng presented her Music of Sound project during an informal talk. Her project aims to expose children to traditional Malay music through what perhaps might be called culturally sustaining pedagogy (Good-Perkins, 2018). She provides children from under-resourced

and diverse religious backgrounds the opportunity to experience and play traditional music with each other. Dr. Sooi Beng described the project to our student-participants, how it came about, and what her larger pedagogical goals implied. The project's vision is to foster relationships and help these students realize the importance of traditional music and instruments in the hopes to keep the traditions alive. The program's alumni later become mentors for the younger students. Therefore, the program also supports a mentorship aspect.

The day after our arrival, we toured the city of Georgetown in the morning visiting Buddhist and Hindu temples as well the famous historic colonial center. In the afternoon, we visited the Penang House of Music, explored the famous markets at the docks of Georgetown, and were given free time for the rest of the weekend. Everyone seemed excited about the long awaited down time and while some used it to catch up on sleep, others took advantage of exploring the town without "adult supervision." We were split in three apartments: Marisol, Jackie, and Rafaela stayed in an historic townhouse apartment in the "hustle and bustle" of the historic city center. Sue and I, who shared an apartment, as well as Dr. Naismith and his family were in a modern apartment in a different district, outside the historic city center. Our apartments resided in a modern skyscraper overlooking the harbor of Georgetown. Based on the furniture and appliances this was perhaps the closest to a western concept of a modern apartment we encountered on our trip. Minimalistically decorated in a sleek white and grey tone, our apartment tower also had a rooftop pool and a gym; certainly a stark contrast to our Bamboo forest housing.

Towards the end of our stay on Penang Island, I conducted the second round of interviews with all four of the US American student-participants. During both my observations and informal conversations with participants as well as during the interviews, I could sense some fatigue and perhaps discontent from some students towards the study abroad program. Due to unexpected circumstances, several changes inevitably had to be made to the program schedule as well as the itinerary, which resulted in the cancelation of a number of music classes. In addition to that, students felt that their promised free time was compromised by often last-minute changes, which caused some frustration. Some raised critique about leadership, itinerary structure, and the handling of particular situations. Due to participant protection, I won't be able to further detail the event. At the same time, interestingly enough, one student affirmed that she really enjoyed the trip despite the criticism raised. Lamented, understandably so as is often the case, at least in my experience with similar adventures such as camps, holiday trips, or study abroad programs; about two thirds in, one seems to reach a low point of some sort – or maybe just exhaustion. Given that the group was together essentially every day at most hours, some student participants perhaps needed some alone time.

However, on the bright side, students seemed to thoroughly enjoy Georgetown: experiencing the street food culture, wandering through the city, and hiking to the surrounding mountains. Perhaps just in general the different quotidian course of events, room for personal experiences and, conceivably, the reflection and observation of oneself confronted with new situations.

On Saturday night, Marisol turned twenty and we met for a celebratory birthday dinner in a "fancy" restaurant. We all agreed that we miss our Malaysian friends and first

introspective reflections happened across all participants present in Georgetown as evidenced in the interviews I conducted over that weekend. After what seemed to be a rejuvenating and relaxing extended weekend, we traveled back to Shah Alam for our final week of the study abroad program.

During our final days in Shah Alam, the student-participants prepared for their summative pedagogical projects for which we visited a secondary school in Shah Alam, the Kuala Lumpur metro area. Reunited with our Malaysian peers, the student-participants taught a lesson to the students of the music class at said secondary school.

Upon arriving at the government school, as it is called, with a school bus from Mululay University, we were formally greeted by the music teacher and given a brief tour of the campus. Subsequently, we were invited to visit her music class. The music room was large with many gamelan ensemble instruments such as gong-chimes, xylophones, and drums as well as a piano, guitars, and a western drum set. We were warmly welcomed in a rather formal and what seemed like a well-rehearsed procedure. Dr. Arshad gave a brief speech explaining the purpose of the visit as well as introducing all of us to the Malay middle school students.

We started out performing a piece on our handmade instruments we had learned and practiced in the Bamboo forest. Afterward, Sue taught a native American song in the oral tradition to get the entire group singing. In return, she asked whether the music students would teach us a song that we could all sing together. After this introductory sequence, one of each, a Malay and a US student-participant, paired up and together led a group of middle school students through the activities they had planned as their final project. Each group was to rehearse a song that they chose followed by a discussion about

how music is part of their lives, their community, and why they chose this song and whether the lyrics shared some of their values they hold.

At the end, each group performed their song and shared a summary of their discussion. We culminated the afternoon singing the songs we had learned at the beginning as a whole group and then said our goodbyes. While the experience was positively received on both sides, we concluded that the time spent with the students wasn't nearly enough. Initially, it was planned that we would spend two full days in the middle school. However, last minute changes only allowed for an afternoon visit. This project concluded our time in Shah Alam. On our last night in Shah Alam, I conducted my focus group with the Malay student-participants.

Kuala Lumpur

For our last weekend of the Musicking Futures in Malaysia program, we moved to the city center of Kuala Lumpur in order to provide the participants a concluding urban experience. While classes and final projects for the student-participants were completed, I conducted my third and final round of interviews with both the US American students as well as Dr. Naismith, the US American music professor.

Minutes away from the world-famous Petronas Towers, once the world's highest skyscrapers as they surpassed New York's World Trade Center at the time of their inauguration in 1999, the Musicking Futures study abroad program culminated in exposing the travel group to yet another face of Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, a megacity and concrete jungle of its own, portrays a picture of modern skyscrapers, with many new towers currently under construction, and technological forwardness. Mega malls,

markets, urban lifestyle, and many recognizable western chains. It surely was a stark contrast to the Bamboo forest and other parts of Malaysia we had visited.

In order to celebrate a proper farewell, the US students invited the Malay student-participants to stay the weekend over at their hotel room. It was symbolic for, and a confirmation of the friendships they had built and how much they had bonded over the course of the past three weeks. We all had a celebratory final dinner at the hotel's rooftop restaurant followed by more social time, games, dancing, and laughter in our hotel rooms. Our multifaceted study abroad experiences came to an end. The next day, we all continued our journeys with the majority of the US participants returning back home to the Midwest.

Chapter VI

FINDINGS

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. To carry out the purpose of this study, I addressed the following:

Research Questions

1. What are the benefits and challenges for students in partaking in a music study abroad program?
2. What role does music play in achieving cross cultural understanding?
3. How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?

Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings obtained from 20 semi-structured and open-ended interviews, as well as field notes, and informal conversations with the participants. I include a focus group conducted with Malaysian student-participants. Over the course of three weeks, I conducted the following: 1) field observations, 2) two semi-structured interviews with each of four US American student-participants, 3) a semi-structured interview with each of the five Malaysian undergraduate music and music

education student-participants as well as 4) a focus group with the five Malaysian undergraduate music and music education student-participants 5) one in-depth interview with each a US music professor and a Malaysian music professor who is also dean of the music school. In addition, I conducted 6) pre-trip interviews two months prior to embarking on the study abroad program with each of the four US student-participants. Throughout the study abroad program, I also kept a journal. Given that we were together every day for most of the day, the nature of the trip provided many opportunities for informal conversations. Additional background information on students and teachers as well as detailed descriptions on each of the research sites can be found in Chapter 6.

Just as I am starting to report the findings here, I am sitting in a cafe in the old part of town in Lisbon, Portugal, chatting with an elderly man from Portugal, his friend from Brazil, and a young gentlemen from Buenos Aires, Argentina (who flew in for Madonna's concert, which apparently is taking place tonight in Lisbon); a random compilation. The elderly Portuguese man tells us historical information about Portugal and the country's development over the last several centuries, to which the Argentinian shares his view prefacing it as coming from the "new world." Afterwards, the topics of conversation changes to Madonna and music – it turns out that all of them (independently) were attending the concert that same night – what a delightful encounter! I am not sure I would have enjoyed such an experience and personal (historically valuable) tales first-hand from a "mere bookish learning" – this reminded me of what Porges (2017) meant by "travel is an experience that only the participant can experience" (p. 9).

The findings from the interviews, the focus group, and observations are organized under three major categories that emerged from this study:

1. Benefits and challenges encountered during the study abroad experience
2. What is the role of music
3. Perception of culture, own and another, and notions of Global Citizenship

Within each category, I grouped the findings in several subcategories reporting them from the highest to the lowest frequency.

Benefits and Challenges of the Music Study Abroad Experience

Within the first broad category, the benefits and challenges that participants perceived from the Malaysia study abroad experience, the following subcategories surfaced: 1) personal benefits and life skills; 2) bonding and friendship; 3) first-hand, face to face, and hands-on experiences; 4) culture; 5) impetus to further travel; 6) absence of technology. While the majority of the abovementioned subcategories in principle fall within the broader category of personal growth, I decided to subclassify them in order to stress and shed light more distinctly on the nature of the various benefits.

The first sub-category, personal benefits, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about their own personal growth and the life skills they reported they had acquired. These personal benefits ranged from reevaluating one's quotidian routines and how breaking such habits broadened their horizons and outlook on life, to appreciating other cultures' customs and perspectives by interacting with the 'other' participating students. The second sub-category, bonding and friendship, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about the many bonding moments and friendships they

formed as a result of this experience. For an overwhelming majority of the participants, these bonding moments were the highlight of the trip and can be ascribed to the intense time spent together over the course of the study abroad program. A crucial finding was that these bonding experiences were a highlight experienced across age groups. These bonding moments further provided a basis for sincere engagement with the other culture and its customs. Participants reported that most of their learning about the "foreign culture" occurred during these many hours spent together. The third subcategory, first-hand and hands-on experiences, pertained to the ways in which the participants spoke about how beneficial, and perhaps more authentic, it was to live and see another culture and places through direct experience. The fourth subcategory, culture, pertains to the ways in which the participants spoke about experiencing cultural aspects, differences, and traditions as a beneficial outcome of partaking in the Malaysia study abroad program. The fifth subcategory, impetus to further travel, pertained to the ways in which the participants felt inspired to explore and discover other cultures as a consequence of their lived experiences and participation in the Musicking Futures study abroad program. Participants reported how being confronted with other people's habits and norms both piqued their curiosity to learn more about other cultures as well as made them more open to other traditions and ways of being. The sixth subcategory, the absence of technology, pertained to the ways in which the participants spoke about how being disconnected from devices and social media was both conducive to socializing and engaging with other participants as well as liberating.

Personal Benefits and Life Skills

Jackie mentioned on various occasions during both interviews and in informal conversations how being taken out of her familiar quotidian routines fundamentally changed her approach to life, first and foremost in learning how to let go. My field notes reflect a similar sentiment. This is what I recorded in my notes during the first couple of days upon our arrival: "constantly checks time and gets anxious if something is off schedule." Here is her account:

> I definitely learned how to let go. That is the most chill I've ever been. (...) I'm a little bit of a germaphobe, and I'm also very on schedule... I like to have a solid plan or foundation and I can let go of that sometimes, but I like there to be structure and for there to be with solidness to the day. The bamboo forest, the biggest thing I'm going to take away was that I learned how to let go. (...) The biggest change for me has just been coming back here actually, after being there. It also might have just been because it was summer but people were so much less totally stressed out and you didn't have to use every single second. (...) You didn't have as many pressured obligations, if that makes sense.

While a simple wrong turn by the taxi driver would throw Jackie off during the first few days in Malaysia, upon returning home she told me how her worldview has shifted and her focus on life has changed describing her college journey as follows:

> So when I came in as a freshman in college, it was like, "I'm going to graduate with three majors and a 4.0 and an honor thesis and all these things." And now I'm like, "I'm going to graduate, it's fine." So I've been slowly learning to let go but definitely being in Malaysia, I learned to let go drastically faster because before it had been kind of slow and then being in Malaysia is kind of like, "You know what, I'm done with the negative." It kind of made me see life, it's so much bigger than just going to class and making sure you pass your classes. There are so many other things that I want to do with my life and if I... You know, it's not the end of the world. I'm very much re-centering what my priorities are, if that makes sense, what I value.

Often occurring last minute schedule changes, involving wait periods of sometimes several hours, proved to be quite challenging for Jackie. Though she learned to deal with what was to her a rather foreign concept of time – at least while on the trip. Interestingly, she mentioned in our last interview: “It means I can [let go]. I’m definitely probably going to live the same way when I go home, but at least it’s possible that I can let go.” Jackie was a lot more relaxed and unconcerned toward the end of the program. She may have even forgotten to adhere to an assignment deadline!

Much like Jackie, Aqil experienced a noticeable change in both how he saw himself as well as how he perceived the world around him. During the focus group, he shared how he opened up to engaging with other people describing himself as “usually a shy guy” before participating in the exchange program. Interacting with people from different backgrounds further broadened his horizons about the world as such insofar as to how to appreciate other peoples’ customs and perspectives. Here is his account:

> It definitely changed the way I see myself, and how I see the world. It give me a lot, it has broaden my perspective on the world because without this experience I would still be like the shy guy who would not talk too much. Who would not have a conversation with people. (...) I mean (it) improved (my) social skills. We are now more confident in socializing with foreigners, yeah. I think I’ve become more the type of person who, more open for other culture. I’m more accepting of other people and I’m more, I have better tolerance with other people. I can accept why people are behaving like this, why people are behaving like this. Probably because their culture or vice versa.

In experiencing certain behaviors of student-participants from a different cultural background, Aqil was able to better grasp their conduct. Specifically, he alluded to a conversation he had with Jackie about the drinking and clubbing age in the US and how he now was better able to comprehend the approach and conversations around US

Americans and their take to drinking. As a consequence, he reported to being more accepting of comportments that were previously unfamiliar to him.

Similar to Aqil, Michael reported that interacting with the visiting students allowed him to open up and "be himself" once he realized the group had established a basic trust amongst each other. Being surrounded by people with different customs incited him to fully speak his mind. He recalls,

> Yeah, so we didn't talk... I just thought I'm shy so what I'm going to say. I don't know. I'm scared about... Maybe I might offend you guys so I was like okay, I'll just keep low, keep low. So when we arrived there so at night, the next day, so we're getting to know each other. So I can say whatever I want. I'm sorry, I'm this type of person. So they went, "I don't care. I don't care. Just be yourself." So I can be myself there, so I can just speak anything.

Like Michael and Aqil, Marisol reported that interacting with the students compelled her to express herself by coming out of her shell and by being more open to other perspectives. As she put it,

> Just being more open (...) because I don't like public speaking or anything but I feel like after this (...) like I was able to express more and actually open up because that's how people get to know you is actually, you saying things. So I'm just sitting back and just observing or just listening. I guess that's a big thing.

In discussing personal benefits of study abroad programs in music, Rafaela too alluded to the notion of being taken out of your comfort zone and mentioned that much about the experience is primarily getting to know oneself better as opposed to the program's content. Though being a participant in the Musicking Malaysia program, Rafaela is currently also considered a study abroad student in the US for her masters. She compared the experiences and replied to the question on whether participating in such programs is beneficial with the following:

> Yes, all the time. Because it takes you out of your comfort zone. You learn a lot of things that you didn't know. And... I don't know, I thought I was going to the U.S. to study double bass, but honestly I learned more about myself than about the bass and I'm like, that's fine, I'll take it.

For Marisol the study abroad program appeared eye opening in many aspects though she reported how, in particular, she was able to see herself in a different light through interactions with the *other*, the Malay students. For it seemed that through recognizing one's differences one also realizes similarities. She said,

> because it's eye opening. You get to see what other people like, how they live and what they do in a normal life. And really understand your differences, similarities and get to experience something you probably won't experience ever, unless you can take the chance to do so [by participating in study abroad programs].

In the same vein, though pertaining more to her professional identity, Sue reported that the study abroad program, in particular the texts read during classes, was beneficial to her insofar that she saw her work in a different light. Given that she never obtained a degree in music education, she did not perceive herself as a music educator though this experience shifted her perception as a professional. She said,

> Oh, I think [the Musicking Futures Program] was positive in lots of ways. I think I have a perception of myself more now as an educator which I've not had. I just haven't framed it that way, although that's what I do. But I don't teach it that way. I'm not articulating it that well. I would never have called myself a teacher or an educator, although that's part of what I do. What I'm trying to educate is actually less about concepts and themes as opposed to values, right? Joy, community building. Those are the things I'm trying to teach. Connection, making really deep connections, catharsis of emotions. That's still education, maybe (...) To me it's very much the core of our humanness. But it's also education. So I've been able to sort of lay over this academic framework on top of what I do in a more interesting way. And I feel like I've gotten a new language to think about how I work.

Sue is a strong advocate for community building through music and told me how well she identified and felt drawn to the concept of community building that seemed inherent to her in the way it was expressed in the traditional Malay music making praxis. Many of our group "musicking" and improvisations, especially in the rainforest, were predicated on the concept of community and displayed in a circle eliminating any perceived forms of hierarchy, and trust.

As a participant himself, yet from an educator's perspective, Dr. Arshad mentioned that he gained both personal and professional benefits by observing other music educators teach similar content in a different style. Given that he obtained both his graduate degrees in the US he was no stranger to the culture, especially US higher education. However, he was curious to see how the guest instructor taught his classes. Furthermore, he was interested to see how his students reacted to these different instructional practices and environment and how it affected their thinking. He said, "I learn a lot about my students also doing this. Looking at other people's approach, the same class with a different approach, that actually teaches me a lot." The Malaysia study abroad program provided a great platform -or encounter- for the music educators to share practices and each culture's and institutions' modus operandi.

Bonding & Friendship

The second most frequent theme within benefits was the subcategory bonding and friendship. All participants reported experiencing numerous bonding moments, which they described as one of the most powerful and worthy of experiences during the study abroad program. Friendship and making connections was a broadly used description and many of my field notes reflect the sentiment of the group spending time together often

unrelated to class activities. The students met during their free time to go visiting markets, shopping areas, a mosque, and sometimes simply spent time together in our hotel rooms. During the last weekend of the trip, the US American students invited the Malay student participants for a sleep over at our last hotel stay where they seemed to enjoy every minute of those 48 hours wandering through the city, singing songs as a group, and playing games into the wee morning hours. Especially the time in the bamboo forest proved to be conducive to getting to know each other, connecting on a deeper level, and spending significant quality time together. Interesting, and as reported later in this chapter, the lack of internet and social media connectivity, mentioned by many as beneficial, contributed much to the bonding experience.

Marisol told me in various informal conversations how forming these new friendships was her favorite part of the trip. Her eyes always lit up during the interviews when prompted to talk about the connections she made with the people around her. Here is her account:

> And then we went to the Bamboo Forest in... Kelantan, which was life changing. Because there, that's when we really bonded with the other students. Because we were literally together for four days, all hours of the night. So we got to actually do stuff together (...) singing and playing games and actually getting to know each other, stuff like that. It was awesome. And then making instruments, which was also amazing to do with the people helping us. That was my favorite part [the bonding we got at night]. Yeah. Like if we could spend more nights just like that, all of us together and just bonding.

Musicking and the instrument making part in the bamboo forest further helped facilitate bonding moments as evidenced by many of the participants reflections as well as my own field notes. While the role of music in particular will be discussed separately later in this

chapter, Marisol described how it served as a catalyst in bringing the group closer together. She recalls:

> Well, through our instruments first because I think that's what we started with is making instruments. And we helped each other and they helped to translate for us and helped us understand. And then later that night we played... Oh, well and also karaoke. We did a lot of that because they love karaoke. I didn't know that. Yeah. But I'm like I love karaoke too. So fun. Yeah we did karaoke a couple of times and then dancing too. We can have karaoke and dancing. It was so fun. And we played games, played a lot of games. The werewolf game.

Much like Marisol, Aqil reminisced about the same moments on the trip when prompted about bonding moments. He told me in our interview,

> we just played cards, (...) the karaoke, the dancing (...) and we just talking to each other from morning till night, and that was really fun. That was really fun for me. For me, this one of the highlight of the whole trip. I mean everything is the highlight but... but for me, that's the fun part.

For Rafaela, it was similar as she highlighted that even the most mundane activities such as long bus rides, which inescapably compelled students to engage with each other, provided extensive bonding time. Moreover, she appreciated the conversations and genuine interest from the Malay students to find out what "life is like" in the US. She put it as follows:

> Oh, I think in every way [was it a bonding experience]. Just starting with like the bus ride. It was like having to spend so much time in this limited space. Yeah. And just, I don't know, it was like an exchange, like I feel that like, for instance, Aqil, was very curious about, like, American life. He ask a lot of questions. And he asked specifically like, numerically questions, like "How much do you spend per month on this and that and that?" Like he really wanted to know, I don't know, like deep things. Oh my God, he was not intrusive, he was just like would you mind if I... like how much is a Master's? How much is a degree? That kind of things.

Speaking of friendship, Marisol further emphasized that through the friendships she made with people from the region, she also established a bond to some extent with the local culture and the places we visited. She recalled,

> I guess in making new friends here and having at least somebody to come back to visit. I guess, the appreciation of their culture and understanding. Because, I knew, I didn't even know where Malaysia was. I'm one of those people I didn't even know. I'm like, I know it's over here (...) now we know Malaysia and we know all the little space and places. So, I guess appreciation of where they are and who they are and their culture. And being able to bring a little piece of that back home with our instruments.

Sue mentioned the friendships and bonding experience as one of her highlights as well albeit the significant age gap between her and the younger student group. Hence, the theme of human bonding and forming relationships occurred across the age spectrum. Prompting as to what she treasured most about the rainforest and the musical performances we experienced there, she recalls:

> I just thought that [final performance in the bamboo forest] and being with the kids, those were my two highlight experiences. Because again, that's what connects to my values. All of us together, making something gorgeous, having a fun, joyous time, playful. Both of them with huge playful elements, very much collaborating and making something, very spontaneous, dancing happening at the final night in the forest, it was just really precious.

Sue told me in many informal conversations we had over the course of the study abroad program (we were roommates in various locations throughout the trip) that collaboration and connection is what she centers her professional work on.

First-hand and Hands-on Experiences

The third most frequent theme within benefits was the subcategory first-hand and hands-on experiences. An overwhelming majority of the participants reported that

experiencing another culture and interacting with peers from the other side of the globe was invaluable. Exchanging stories, experiences, and ideas face to face appeared to be an irreplaceable benefit and a fundamental pillar of the study abroad experience. Marisol recounted on various occasions how experiencing these exchanges first hand were so much more valuable to her than simply reading about it. Here is her account:

> We're here to get to know a new place and the country and yes, we're also here to learn about their music and their history because I feel like, like I said, that's all together. You can't learn one without the other. I feel. You can learn from a textbook, but it's not the same as your experience and we're here. That's why we're here to actually experience and dive in (...) I'd rather my students get hands on experience rather than just reading about it. It's not the same. It's never the same. You get a lot more different emotions and feeling when you are actually doing it or experience it rather than just, Oh, this is cool reading about it. It's not the same.

Marisol drew a comparison with an on-campus class (global history studies) in which she had studied various topics about Asia, to experiencing the history, culture, and geography "on the ground" during the study abroad experience. She lamented about the dis/connection that was lacking within the format of the former. In her words,

> I had a class where we talked about Asia. It was my GHS [global history studies class], the one that I hated so much. Yes. That we talked a lot about Asia, and in this area in Asia, like China, all these places. But I slept a little in my class. It was boring, because all he did was talk to us and we read, talked, read, read paper. And that's it. And it's not, there's no connection, it's just words and words coming out of their mouth and it doesn't mean anything to me. Now I'm like, I see, okay, I understand, and when we talk about history here, it made sense. I'm like, oh one went to the museum where we really got to see their history and like, oh, I remember now what my teacher was trying to say. (...) That's what I always think. I think always hands on, first-hand experience is always better than reading or watching something. Because you won't know until you experience it, I think. Yes, you can read all about it, but, it's still, it's only going to be like a voice in the back of your head. Like, just research basically, all you're going to know is research, and even when you read books, they're still secondhand from their experiences. It's never experience from that person.

In an informal conversation, Marisol reemphasized and elaborated further on her argument essentially comparing theory (reading about it) with praxis (experiencing it). I noted in my field notes: “Interacting with people [from other cultures] first hand is a lot more valuable than reading about them from a book. All your *senses* are involved, it makes your *emotions* and (other) perceptions and reactions more real.”

Through both my own field notes as well as conversations with the participants, Marisol’s remarks found support and were reflected in other people’s sentiments insofar that they valued face to face encounters over “reading about it” through vehicles such as the media. Much like Marisol, Michael reported:

> Yeah, I read newspapers and the news about Americans, some things, sometimes, so I didn’t expect this people from America and sometimes when we see... and obviously, in television shows about Americans sometimes, in this way, so when we met with student from America, so we know, okay, it’s not like this, they were not…

In the same vein, Michael emphasized the value of face to face encounters as opposed to “reading about Americans in the newspaper” because nuances that can be picked up and occur during in-person discussions are not possible by simply reading an “article about it”. Michael further expressed that the more direct interaction with people [from different cultures] we have, the more knowledge about said culture one can gain: “Communicating with people. More communication with other people, the more knowledge we gain.”

Similarly, Aqil reported how his communication skills improved both by interacting with the US American peers as well as his trips outside of his [home] country he had taken with his university choir. When prompted on what he believes he benefited most from interacting face to face with people from other cultures, he recalls:

> My communication skills, I guess. Yeah. I was shy to communicate with people before this, but because of the choir changed me. Because going outside, yeah again more confidence I guess. Yeah. Like getting to know each other, I mean we can practically read everything about the states but not... But now we get to hear it from a real person that's living there, so it's really an...interesting experience, yeah.

In the same vein as both Marisol and Michael, Aqil emphasized the benefit of face to face experiences over reading about the information online. He further implied that simply reading someone's "journalism" about a place may not be representative of people actually living there. In his words,

> because, you can read, but... I'm sorry. But, usually, when you are reading someone's writing it may not be the real representation of the situation in the US but when people who have been living their whole life and they came here and we got to ask about the question that currently going on in the States like the health care [system], how presidents are doing. Yeah. So, we get a deeper understanding of the current situation from their point of view (...) so that's really interesting to have to know someone from the States instead of us making an assumption from what we read online.

Throughout my informal discussions with Aqil, he reiterated how important it was for his personal development to intermingle with students from other cultures, to inquire about their very lifestyle, customs and conventions. Aqil was particularly curious and investigative, he asked me questions about the Swiss [music] education system and how my worldwide experiences helped shape my current pedagogical vision and perspective on things. He mentioned during our final focus group, that the experience with, and the details he learned from the US American exchange students: "changed how we think about the United States."

Interestingly, Rafaela somewhat expanded on the importance of face to face or rather first hand experiences in stressing the importance that one may not hear about

certain events that are not reported on mainstream media if one doesn't get out – even in such an interconnected world that we live in today. In her words,

> because, I mean, especially today, the world is no more just what happens around you. It is everything is so connected, and everything has repercussions in other places that you don't even know about it. So I think it's very important in all the history and things that are going on. You don't even know about them sometimes if you don't get out. Because, honestly, we never get any news about Malaysia. How would we know of [...] that corruption scandal that's going on. There's no way I would know about those things if I'm not here.

Culture

The fourth most frequently mentioned subcategory within benefits was how culture was experienced specifically through actively participating in the Musicking Futures study abroad program. In other words, how by engaging in and experiencing another culture *with* people from the culture in question proved to be a paramount and invaluable benefit.

A majority of participants, both students and educators, reported how beneficial the study abroad encounter was in providing an opportunity to understand, perhaps more authentically so, the "other" culture. Living together, if for a short time, inevitably provided an insight into other people's customs, routines, and beliefs.

Dr. Arshad emphasized the importance of working with other people [from different cultures]. Given his personal background having been an exchange student for many years himself, he drew from both his personal experience as well as his observations during our Musicking Futures trip. Dr. Arshad made an interesting point in highlighting the fact that collaborating with other cultures helps you to understand *their* understanding of (y)our culture. In other words, one must understand the counterpart

[looking at you from a different cultural lens] in how they are understanding our own culture in order to interact perhaps more truthfully with one another. I noted in my field notes after an informal conversation with Dr. Arshad: "most important thing that they look at things differently from the US American point of view," pertaining to how he thought his [Malay] students should attempt to understand their "US American peers" from *their* point of view. Here are his words:

> You need to understand their culture: work culture, social culture, and also how they think about this (...) do not try to impress them, do not try to please them, but try to *understand* them, because once you understand your guest, you don't feel forced to make your guest feel happy, and being accepted.

Dr. Arshad elaborated further on this notion by stating that through such intercultural encounters one can develop what he calls "soft skills": intrapersonal and interpersonal benefits. Although this could arguably fall under the first subcategory depicted earlier in this chapter, (personal benefits), I decided to report it here as it ties said benefits (soft skills) to [interacting with a different] culture(s). Dr. Arshad calls these soft skills: 1) communication, 2) understanding. 3) empathy, and 4) diplomacy. Through direct interaction with other cultures, one can develop and fine tune one's communication skills. This reminds me of what Aqil alluded to earlier in this section. Moreover, through better understanding the other person and their culture you can develop empathy towards your counterpart. Here is Dr. Arshad's account:

> Communication, understanding, empathy; empathy towards other people. Of course, the definition of soft-skill is more like interpersonal, interpersonal between people, and how they communicate. The diplomacy, but if you don't understand your other people, you cannot be diplomatic.

However, according to Dr. Arshad, this can only occur by engaging with the other culture and spending valuable time experiencing adventures *together*. He added the following saying while delineating his thoughts:

> I don't want my students to be like a frog under a coconut shell. His point of view is only under the coconut shell, but if you take out the coconut shell, suddenly, he realizes that there's a lot bigger world outside of his coconut shell.

Similarly, Jackie spoke of the benefit in engaging with local people on a deeper level and how it was unquestionably more impactful in gaining insight into the Malay culture. She alluded to the crucial difference between simply "touring landmarks" and interacting with locals on an intellectual level for an extended period of time by comparing her prior travel experience to the Musicking Futures study abroad program. Here is her account:

> The one that's been sticking out most to me is just how different travel is when you know people who live there. I've done a fair amount of traveling in my life (...) I've been to Europe twice, although the first time doesn't really count because it was the little baby ambassador group where they micromanaged everything you do. So it doesn't really count; and I've been all over the US, and it was always fun but being here is a vastly different experience because I actually have Malaysian friends now. I don't know, but it just makes such a big difference. I'm thinking about it and if I was just here touring the cool landmarks, I would not get it. And even if we tried to find authentic cuisine, that does not substitute actually knowing people on a deeper level than just your tour guide who's showing you around. So that has made this experience just way more impactful than any of my traveling that I've done before.

My field notes reflect a similar sentiment as those expressed by Jackie: "perceives this trip as the first authentic experience in the ways of actually getting to know another culture due to the intermingling with the Malaysian [local] students." I further noted that, "She mentioned that especially spending all day for several days together with the Malaysian peers allows her to immerse herself into the Malaysian culture."

Jackie further shed light on the importance of going out in the world and breaking out from your quotidian habits. To experience "otherness" by confronting and dealing with cultures that are different than yours – because you don't know what you don't know. Such experiences and appreciation of difference however can only occur by stepping outside *your* box, or as Sophia put it, "out of your comfort zone," by messing about with what is unfamiliar to you. Jackie put it this way:

> I do think that it's important for you to go somewhere other than where you have grown up and where you were born because the world is so much bigger and there's so much that you can't understand unless you go see it, you know? There's always a bigger picture that you can't possibly understand unless you're there to see it. (...) if you go and you don't really talk to many people that might be different or if you go to a culture that's similar to yours, I'm sure it's going to be life changing but not in the same way.

Jackie's thoughts reflect a similar sentiment as those expressed by Dr. Arshad and his metaphor of the frog under the coconut shell. It appears to be a recurring theme that actual engagement with people from a different culture is key in trying to understand others' "humor, manners, and customs," in short, the bigger picture as evidenced by Jackie's statement. Inevitably it will broaden one's horizon some way or another.

Another benefit reported predominantly by an overwhelming majority of the Malay student-participants was the awakening interest of exploring other cultures as a result of this experience. In other words, not only did the encounter allow insight into, in this case, US American and Spanish culture, but collaborating with a previously unknown culture opened their mind and prompted them wanting to further explore. This is how Aqil put it:

> So in a way, it has helped us to open our mind and be open to other cultures and be acceptable, be learning about each other cultures so that we are more (...) yeah,

> so it has... the opportunity of being in this program has opened our mind to other cultures.

My field notes reflect a similar sentiment as those expressed by Aqil. The curiosity and thus inquiry about other cultures' habits increased with every (informal) conversation we had. Several of the student participants, though in particular Aqil and Michael, enthusiastically inquired about cultural customs of my home country, Switzerland. I noted in my field notes: "was very curious to know about the Swiss education system particularly as it pertains to music education and music-teacher education."

As students were compelled to immerse themselves into different and unfamiliar daily routines, particularly the US American student participants noticed cultural or perhaps habitual discrepancies. In other words, it seemed to be beneficial to the student-participants to see various cultural differences and accordingly, in some cases, appreciate more one's own customs, often unconsciously, established "at home." In comparison to "others." all things become relative. Marisol told me: "I think one of the big things that I would tell people is, the appreciation and understanding of your privileges over others." As this was more reflective of her own culture, she further elaborated in relation to the Malay culture and what [benefit] she would take away with her: "So, I guess appreciation of where they are and who they are and their culture. And being able to bring a little piece of that back home with our instruments."

Impetus to Further Travel

The fifth subcategory in order of frequency within the category of benefits was the impetus to further travel sparked by the Musicking Futures study abroad program. In other words, discovering unknown places and cultures lead to a hunger to explore and

experience other countries and traditions. Similar to the sentiments expressed by student participants in the subsection above, experiencing the Malay culture and vice versa US American customs and habits, inspired the participants to travel and explore still other cultures and parts of the world.

Sue spoke about how easily one gets trapped in his or her routines and, *a fortiori*, the value of experiencing unfamiliar concepts and ways of being. Here are her words: "I just think it's easy to get stuck. I have always, I think, thought it was important to travel but this trip gave me a certain urgency to it." Throughout my discussions with her she revealed to me that she was planning a trip with her husband as a consequence of her experience. She said, "yeah, a trip for my husband and I (...) built around food and arts and culture. That would be a dream trip for us!"

Similarly, Marisol told me that this trip sparked an interest in her in wanting to explore more places as we reflected on the experience: "[the world] is a lot bigger you know. The world in, from the US, Canada, Mexico, you know, just a little area over here. There's so much more to see and so much more to do, and I want to experience it all."

In the same vein, Jackie described what a successful trip for her would look like based on her experience in Malaysia and thus how this has sparked or rather informed her vision of future travel. Here are her words: "Just recreate going somewhere and making such close friends and shifting my worldview as much as I did. Any one of those things have... recreating would be a successful travel journey."

The Absence of Technology

The sixth subcategory in order of frequency within the category of benefits was the absence of technology. Several participants reported the absence of technology as we

experienced it in the rainforest due to lack of internet coverage as liberating. This was a crucial finding especially in light of the digital age we live in. It appeared as though less distraction through social media led to an increased desire to socialize and interact with others. In other words, social media and the constant distraction we experience through electronic devices and gadgets has a desocializing effect on us. While social media, as the name implies, supposedly "connects" us or so we are made to believe, it in fact provokes the contrary. All those hours usually spent on social media "updating one's status" both throughout the day and especially in the evening, the participants instead spent together by engaging in musical activities or simply conversing and sharing stories. Dr. Naismith remembered it as: "It was a really beautiful time, just getting away from technology, getting away from our computerized technology, creating new technology… bamboo technology." He elaborated further saying that although conventional [linguistic] communication wasn't always possible, body language or simply raw human and musical interaction [free of technology] took place instead. In his words,

> Being with someone, a couple of practitioners, we couldn't communicate because I didn't know Malay and they didn't know English, but they could show me everything. There was a lot of smiling going on and a lot of body language. Communicating that way was just somehow really wonderful.

My field notes reflect similar observations as the sentiments expressed by Dr. Naismith: "there is no internet in the rainforest, participants are sitting at the dinner table laughing and playing card games. The Malay students are teaching the US Americans a "detective" card game." Later at night, the "younger" participants engaged in informal Karaoke until the wee morning hours.

Sophia not only expressed similar sentiments, but her thoughts implied an awareness that technology in the form of electronic devices, the internet and social media, indeed have a negative effect on today's society. She inferred that if the program had taken place exclusively in a city, concentration or rather distraction through social media and electronic devices would have been inevitable and influenced human interactions accordingly. In Sophia's words,

> Yeah, internet… we have a problem with the technology, with the internet. So in the forest, when we're doing this kind of program in the forest, we're just like okay no signal, we just put away our phone and technology and we focus on what we wanna do. But if the program doing in this city or in Shah Alam [city], we're just like okay, everything like we want to just listen [to our device], they don't concentrate with that.

Similarly, Marisol mentioned that "not having the internet forced us to actually communicate with each other all the time, which in retrospect was invaluable for the bonding experience."

Challenges

Within the category of challenges that participants perceived from the Musicking Futures study abroad experience, the following subcategories surfaced: 1) language challenges; 2) academic challenges; 3) environmental challenges; 4) organizational challenges.

The first sub-category, language challenges, pertained to ways in which the Malay student-participants struggled linguistically to both understand the class content and the readings as well as to express themselves. While during informal conversations between the Malay and US American student-participants [English] language wasn't an

impediment, it was the participation in class discussions and assigned readings that posed a linguistic challenge primarily for the Malay student-participants. The second subcategory, academic challenges, pertained to the ways in which the participants spoke about the difficulties of both the texts they were assigned to read in preparation of class as well as to decipher the expectations that were demanded of them. The third subcategory, environment challenges, pertained to the ways in which one student-participant struggled in the rainforest with the unusual environment and different hygienic standards compared to what they were used to. The final subcategory and least in frequency, time management, pertained to the ways in which student-participants were challenged by the frequent deviation of schedule due to both cultural as well as unforeseen circumstances.

Language Challenges

An overwhelming majority of the Malaysian student-participants reported that the language barrier posed a challenge primarily in class settings. While the concern seemed less of a problem in informal conversations especially as time went by, it particularly caused difficulties in relation to contextual understanding of the assigned readings. The student-participants felt as though they weren't able to express their opinion as much as they wished given the lack of academic vocabulary necessary to engage in class conversations and respond to specific prompts. In addition to the language barrier, the participants reported that the subject matters such as social justice and critical theory wasn't a discourse known in their academic schooling or vocabulary for that matter.

Michael reported that his perceived lack of English vocabulary hindered him in articulating his thoughts. He recalled a specific discussion about critical theory and social justice during one of the classes. Here is his account:

> So they give us those things [readings], and then what do you know about this, I wanted to tell him, but I don't know how to, yeah, to elaborate it, but I don't know how to elaborate it. Maybe I just need to work on my English or maybe... The challenge is my English, I want to elaborate, but I can't. It means that I can explain in Malaysia, but probably it's not, I mean they will not understand, so maybe like you said, person might be helped to solve this problem.

Similarly, Aqil reported that although he understood the gist of the class and the topics explored in the literature studied, he had difficulties communicating his ideas. The Malaysian student-participants reported that they had discussed these language challenges amongst each other and wondered how different it would have been had they had a chance to communicate their thoughts in Malay. Here is Aqil's account:

> Okay, so for me, it's the first one, it's not the class for me. The communication barriers that we have, although we have a good grasp in English, we can speak and we can understand, but still in educational...setting, yes. In educational setting, it's difficult to actually express what we are thinking about. We've been talking about this, because… because we get what the class is all about, what they are talking about, but we are having difficulties in explaining ourself properly in a way that... Because if it's in Malay, we can definitely give our ideas, that's the first thing.

Nayla shared similar sentiments about the language barrier though in particular about how academic English and class context bore a challenge. She further alluded to the difference between the US and the Malay educational system specifically as to the ways in which classes are structured and conversations are held. Nayla said,

> The class, the context of your studies of US standards. (...) maybe the English, the English is like too... complex. Complex. Too hard to understand. We understand, but we cannot answer it like…different standards from Malaysian.

In other words, the open discussion forum as practiced in the 'social justice in music education' class taught by Dr. Naismith was a foreign concept, or 'standard' as Nayla mentioned, to the Malay student-participants. I recall from informal conversations I had with the Malay participants and noted in my field notes how astonished they were about how "freely US American students spoke their mind."

In the same vein Sophia reported on the impact the language barrier had on her. Though she stated further that the language impediment wasn't just an obstacle in expressing her opinion but also how she was afraid at times that what if she said something and it would be misunderstood. Here are her words:

> Only how to communicate. That was my challenge because I think that I'm afraid that I'm giving wrong...wrong information. Wrong information or your different understanding with what I'm trying to tell you. And then you just think different ways. is not, right. this is the challenge.

Academic Challenges

The second subcategory, academic challenges, pertained to the ways in which the participants spoke about the difficulty of the materials and readings they were assigned over the course of the program. Specifically pertaining to the academic level of the texts but also the confusion they experienced about what exactly was expected of them. In Sue's words: "I'm still not totally clear, well I'm clear, but I think that what's been designed for us to happen is really challenging." In speaking of the amount and difficulty, she further added: "I feel like it's a lot of content in a very narrow time, all those academic readings are a lot to wade through," which spoke of the amount of work, in Sue's perception too much, students had been assigned in a relatively short amount of time.

The one academic class taught by the US music professor looked at ways in which the social justice narrative can be applied to music education. Although all participants were music and music education students, either majoring or minoring in music, except Sue who, however, can look back at a 25-year long career in music and music education, an overwhelming majority of the student-participants were not familiar with critical theory and the social justice literature.

For Marisol, most of the literature was new. Being the youngest on the trip, she also reported that the academic level of the readings seemed more, or at times perhaps too, advanced for her. She did however mention that it sparked critical thinking and opened up her line of thinking. In her words: "The readings… the assignment, I mean. Yeah, I mean to me, they feel like more advanced level and more, like open your brain and actually critically thinking like he [Dr. Naismith] was saying a lot." Marisol further reported experiencing a similar challenge amongst the middle school students when the student-participants, Marisol's group, facilitated a conversation around social justice topics during our visit at the middle school: "One thing that I took away from this experience is that it is hard to get the conversation going about social justice issues because a lot of the topics are very foreign to the students and not talked about." Furthermore, for the Malay student-participants, as reported in the first subcategory above, the language barrier resulted in additional challenges in construing and making sense of the literature.

Similarly, yet from the perspective of the educator, Dr. Naismith noticed the difficulty of the literature he assigned to the students though he didn't think it was above their level. He did however observe students' looks that, according to him, were implying

"no, I think you're wrong." In other words, a majority of the students often disagreed with the literature discussed in class. Here is Dr. Naismith's account:

> And the critical theory. Those were tough classes to have. They're tough articles to read, but I don't think above the level of their understanding. I think they could read them and understand them. But sort of the classroom navigation was always a point... We didn't have any fights in this class like I've had in some other classes where people don't fight with each other, but they're like, "No, I think you're wrong." Then they kind of shut down. But I think I got those looks sometimes in class from students. Their looks were saying to me, "I think you're wrong," or like, "here we go again."

It appears as though, not least from my personal observations, that the class content and literature seemed more important to the educator than to the students. In other words, social interaction and out-of-classroom experiences were higher valued by the students than academic classes in considering the overall impact of the study abroad program. Student-participants primarily reported on their adventures out of class and discussed their experiences with their peers and encounters with locals.

Environmental Challenges

The third subcategory, environmental challenges, pertained to the ways in which a participant spoke about the environmental challenges of lodging in the rainforest and having to deal with nature as a much more dominant factor than what we are used to in more developed or rather industrialized environments. These challenges were only mentioned by one student-participant, however alluded to on more than one occasion.

As many of the participants, especially those traveling from the US, didn't know what to expect from our stay in the rainforest, Jackie told me she felt a bit anxious when first faced with the living conditions on the premises. Like many of us, she hadn't thought much about the living situation in anticipation of the trip. Although the

compound overall was in good conditions and looked like it had been built relatively recently, being embedded in the middle of nature, much less the rainforest, of course the environment was vastly different compared to a college dorm in the US. Not only were we greeted at every crack of dawn by compelling animal noises, we also cohabited with some of them. We further had to grapple with, and adapt, our usual routines. Jackie vividly remembered:

> The first night, the ants, if I was at home, I would have flipped out but there's literally no way for you to avoid them. So I had to learn to deal with the ants crawling around on the table by my food and on the floor by my chair and by my shoes and I had to learn how I do not touch. I don't even touch my bed unless I've showered. I do not sit on my bed in street clothes and it's an absolute no no (...), oh yeah, I do not put my head anywhere near my pillow unless I have washed hair. I don't crawl under the covers. Absolutely no street clothes anywhere on the bed (...) And then, we got to the bamboo forest and there were little dusty nasties on the sheets. So that was like I was just going to brush it off and pretend it's not there. I was scared of the bathroom because there was no toilet paper. There were no towels or no soap. The shower just fell on the floor and I was like, I don't know how to process all this right now.

Throughout our stay in the rainforest, I observed Jackie loosening up and adjusting to the environment to the extent possible for her. It clearly posed a challenge to her but it seemed as though she got used to the environmental factors as time went by. Indeed, it was primarily Jackie who got up at the crack of dawn to listen to the monkey sounds as they appeared usually with the first shafts of sunlight. Jackie was compelled to learn and adapt to new ways of "being," or "doing" things; she recalled,

> So I had to learn how to sleep in pajamas even if I wasn't clean and to sleep on a bed that wasn't clean and to share that. So I would shower every other night. I'd go ahead and I'll freak out the next night when I was clean and I do put on my dirty pajamas and sleep on the (...) bed.

The participants' reports show that they experienced numerous benefits as well as a few challenges by participating in the study abroad program. These benefits ranged from personal growth to cross-cultural understanding; from first-hand experiences to bonding and newly formed friendships as well as motivation to further travel. Finally, challenges the participants faced ranged from language to academic challenges as well as environmental and organizational challenges.

What is/was the Role of Music?

Within the second broad category, the role of music and the ways in which participants perceived music to have played a central part in the Musicking Futures study abroad experience in Malaysia, the following subcategories surfaced: 1) music as a conduit to cross cultural understanding; 2) music as a means to bonding; 3) musical knowledge and skills acquired through this experience.

The first sub-category, music as a conduit to cross cultural understanding, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about how music serves as a means to communicate, understand, and connect with one's environment. The second subcategory, music as a means to bonding, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about how music specifically served as a medium of bonding. Perhaps most succinctly described by one of the student-participants as the representation of the function of music "would be glue." The third subcategory, musical knowledge and skills acquired through this experience, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about the various musical skills such as instrument technique, traditional Kelantanese rhythm patterns, and performance praxis that they acquired as a result of participating in this program.

Music as Conduit to Cross Cultural and Multi-Cultural Understanding

During our interview, Dr. Naismith told me while reminiscing a conversation he once had with a former teacher figure in his life that "music is an excuse to be human." I found that quite intriguing and it left me pondering. Dr. Naismith continued saying "I thought [at the time], that's a really very broad general statement. You can't say that all the time, but it's become more real for me in every year of my life." He further elaborated by recalling research that points out,

> how people need an activity to have better dialogue. So dialogue centered around activities that are group related where everyone has to pull together to do a project. So in that way, I think, music is that type of project.

Dr. Naismith was particularly referring to the communication *through* music we experienced as a group between the US American participants, the Malay participants, and the Bamboo forest practitioners who taught us both how to build the instruments as well as various traditional Kelantanese performance practices. In this regard, music offered a space for interaction in which the group communicated without words. In prompting Dr. Naismith to consider how music played a part in the experience, he responded,

> There is an opening with music. There is that... we communicate without words, and sometimes with our eyes and our bodies. Yeah. It's a space maker. It provides a space, and then it's what we do with that space. So I think the space that was provided was like a very fertile garden for us to grow in. That was a big takeaway for me. (...) Being with someone, a couple of practitioners, we couldn't communicate because I didn't know Malay and they didn't know English, but they could show me everything. There was a lot of smiling going on and a lot of body language. Communicating that way was just somehow really wonderful.

Dr. Naismith shed light on the deep relationships that music has created in his perception. He further elaborated that while the course could have been about macroeconomics the relationships formed would have been different. Here are his words:

> I think that it could have happened [relationships amongst students in a macroeconomics exchange course], but I do think that those musical experiences were in the building of musical instruments, all those activities were... I hate that it's undefinable, but there is something undefined that happens that builds oxytocin levels in your body and makes you want to be around those people more. You know what I mean? There's a real scientific part of it as well that they've actually researched.

An interpersonal approximation, or in other words, relation-ship was formed among the participants of various cultural backgrounds, which, however, went beyond cultural norms and national borders. Music was the medium through which rapprochement was initiated. It was the "space maker," or "opening," as Dr. Naismith mentioned.

Similarly, Sue spoke about the ways in which music has served as a gateway into understanding the world and the unknown around her. She explained to me in one of the interviews how *through* music she discovers various facets of life and consequently also culture; both in her life experiences thus far but also as it related to her experience on this trip. Here are her words:

> I think music has been my doorway into everything new. (...) Yeah, music is my door to understanding just about everything. (...) Music is my connection to learning about the history about where those traditions come from. And then I hear something else that I love and I have to, why do they sing like that? And, why is their scale like that? And then that takes me into culture because culture influences all those things. Right? (...) when we were playing with those other gentlemen and we played for them and we were dancing and that kind of thing right there, that's why I make music.

She further shed light on how music for her is a conduit to not only understanding but also connecting with people and to places, and perhaps the self. Here is her account:

> Music is more about how I understand ... it's about connection. It's about connection about me and here, it's about connections with people. It's about connection to place. And it's about connection to source, whatever you want to call it.

Sue elucidated more specifically how music had served as such a doorway for her in discovering Malaysia and its culture(s) by recalling the call to prayer at the Shah Alam mosque for instance, which both intrigued her and made her ponder "why is their scale like that?" In the same vein, Sue was inspired to further explore the cultural customs of how the Kelantanese musicians see their instruments [we made out of bamboo] as being part of a holistic cycle of nature. The way music plays a role in the Malay culture and the way Sue put it, how

> Music is never just the music. Music is with stuff. It isn't on its own. It's part of the theater, it's part of the opera, it's part of the shadow puppets [theatre]. It's not just like over here. And so we don't treat music that way. It goes with stuff here.

It was *through* music that Sue approached and gained insight into the Malay culture(s) and traditions, and through the ways in which music served as a conduit that she tried to understand and became acquainted with their customs.

Rafaela spoke about the ways in which sharing music with others helps her understand her environment and thus, in a broader context, the world. She shed light on how as a musician making music with others compels you both to compromise and to listen to each other. There is a negotiation happening, which implies that you try to understand the other in order to function as a whole [collective] by communicating and reacting. In other words, by engaging, respecting, and collaborating with the 'other', people can come to understand differences and the unknown as well as discern, perhaps unexpected or unforeseen, similarities. Here is Rafaela's account:

> Oh, I think [that making music with others contributes to how I understand the world] in every way. Yeah. It's just, yeah. I don't know I feel, the one you mean to make music together? It's like a compromise in the sense that you have to listen and you have to react and everybody has to compromise on that. So yeah (...) if we did that, in politics. It would be so much better, but we don't, you know what I mean?

In considering how and whether music represented a common denominator, which in return may serve as a conduit to cross-cultural understanding, Rafaela mentioned that [good] musicians intrinsically, if unconsciously, offer a set of values that may bring about such mutual understanding. In other words, musicians share a predisposition that may be conducive to mutual understanding and thus cross cultural understanding. In Rafaela's words: "That kind of like mutual understanding of a set of values that are there, even though if they are unconsciously there (...) people know how to listen, I think, if you are a good musician."

Rafaela further elaborated on her belief that music naturally provides a unifying element and as a musician one holds tenets that are helpful to engage in collaboration and understanding of others. Rafaela said,

> Okay, so I think music is like a unifying factor, in terms of the values that you bring to the classroom. And just like patience, ability to listen, perseverance, like consistency. I think that's, like if you're in music college, you already have that just because you have to have that if you want to schedule rehearsals and like commit to recitals, and that kind of thing. That's just like part of your background, even though you don't even know. So that's there.

In considering the role of music, Jackie spoke about how an inherent connection amongst the participants was predicated on the common interest in music. She echoed Dr. Naismith's thoughts by mentioning research she had read that indicated how making music with others can bring people together. Here are Jackie's words:

> It [music] is definitely a common interest that helps connect everyone; (...) I know scientifically that when you play with other people, you automatically get closer. There's something about it because it's endorphins or whatever because of [making] music. And so that forms closer relationships with your fellow musicians. I've read that kind of stuff.

In discussing how study abroad programs in music might differ from study abroad programs in other subject matters as it pertains to forming relationships among participants and connecting to places, participants concurred with what Jackie mentioned above. It appears as though music has this additional layer or connecting factor amongst people who share music making. Marisol said something to the same effect. Here is her account:

> I think music adds another layer because all of us are musically inclined and we all, at least at that level, understand each other. And at least that's like if nothing we're bonding with at least we know music is something we all kind of like and can do or in some way.

Similarly, Aqil reported how in his experience both music exchange programs and international competitions correspondingly, can provide a space in which sharing music and thereby one's culture may contribute to better understand [the] other culture(s). In Aqil's words: "we get to know other cultures through their music (...) we get to listen to their music, the culture that they bring along with them (...) We get to expose ourself to them to what their culture looks like". In other words, through both sharing one's music and interacting with the [foreign] 'other', people may gain insight, if a glimpse, into these other people's culture - or ways of being. These experiences according to Aqil have prompted him to be more open-minded to unfamiliar practices and "musics"; Aqil said'

> So the music is the music and the competition is a platform for us to share our culture, and get to know about the place that without even being in Indonesia itself. And then we got to see other culture. I mentioned it before, yeah, and thus

> being exposed to all of this culture in one place has improved the way that we see the world, and that in being more open to other culture which we may not actually understand, but we are being more open. We try to understand, we trying to understand and we are being more... We have more appreciate. We appreciate more of the culture that we saw that we learned from interacting and sharing all the music with the people. So yeah, music has a big role.

Aqil refers to the many choir competitions he has attended with his Mululay University choir. Specifically, he referenced their visit to Indonesia. He further shed light on the ways in which music served as a conduit for the US students to understand the Sabah [music] culture. The Malay students taught their western peers the Sumazau dance, which originated in Sabah, Borneo. Using the handmade Kelantanese instruments, they then taught them how to play the [Sumazau] rhythms to accompany the dance. Through listening and learning this particular music the US American student-participants not only learned that particular music style and rhythm but *through* the music gained an insight of some of Borneo's culture by learning the Sumazau dance form and the context within which the dance is performed.

When prompted on how and whether music has changed his perception of the world, Dr. Naismith responded: "I guess it makes it more real. It reifies our relationships and has expanded my tolerance and continues to expand my tolerance for when things go wrong and what's wrong, what's right?" – I thought that was quite compelling.

Music as a Means of Bonding

The second most frequent theme within the 'role of music' was the subcategory, music as a means of bonding. A majority of the participants reported that how sharing their music among each other served as a crucial connecting factor. Throughout the entire trip and especially at the beginning of the program during our stay in the Bamboo forest,

student-participants engaged in several karaoke nights. An overwhelming majority referenced these karaoke nights as momentous bonding moments. Marisol recalled that "sharing our music together, our Western [their] Malay, that's how we bond." In observing the student participants conversing about their karaoke adventures, it appeared that it was equally as exciting to discover new music as it was to realize the familiarity of the shared Western pop canon across the students and thus cultures.

Marisol further reported that "on one of our karaoke nights, they put a lot of dance music. So, we were all dancing together and understanding, how we dance, and what we do when, and then what kind of songs they sing." Much like Aqil, Marisol described how learning the dances and the cultural context within which these dances are performed, provided her an insight into the musical and social traditions of Sabah (Borneo). It was evident that these bonding moments were fundamental to the friendships that formed and the development of the group dynamic that followed. Student-participants casually started singing songs that reminded them of the karaoke nights and the sharing of music further strengthened their bond.

In considering the role of music and the ways in which it played a part in the Musicking Futures program, Aqil provided the following conceptualizing: "Okay, so for me, if I could make it, if I could have one thing to represent the music, it will be a glue, it's the one that kept us together." His metaphor exemplified a compelling analogy. Given the fact that all participants shared the field of music and music education and the profession as the commonality among each other, music was indeed the cohesion, or "glue" as Aqil put it, that provided a bonding foundation. He elaborated further:

> It's the one that sticks us together because we have common interest, we have passionate about music. So through that, we learn our background, our musical

> background, and it's the one that kept us together in the initial part of getting to know each other. So without the music, we might not know each and every one of us that deep. Yeah, because we get to learn about, yeah.

Aqil shed light on the ways in which music as the common interest denominator served as the medium through which the participants got to know each other and consequently bonded.

Musical Knowledge and Skills Acquired through this Experience

The third most frequent theme within the "role of music" was the subcategory, musical knowledge and skills acquired through this experience. Several participants reported that through participation in the program they acquired musical skills ranging from: instrumental technique, improvisation, traditional performance praxis, and creativity, to instrument making skills, listening skills, and ultimately knowledge about traditional Malay [Kelantanese] music styles.

Through the classes taught by Professor Kamrul, student-participants learned various drum techniques on percussion instruments such as the kompang and the gendang, the latter being one of the instruments we would go on to hand make from bamboo in the rainforest, and rhythmic motives typically used in traditional Kelantanese music. In addition to simply learning instrumental techniques in the conventional sense, Professor Kamrul taught the participants different ways to produce unconventional sounds and timbres with their instruments. Dr. Naismith recalled a particular rehearsal led by Professor Kamrul and his eyes lit up:

> His [Professor Kamrul] lessons were very instructive in that, "Here, I could do this. I could turn Dr. Naismith's instrument over and do this. Then what are you going to do with it? Oh." Then we noticed people were playing around with their

> instruments more and really creating music out of nothing, in a way. I think, my god, if all of the students take that away from the experience, and I'm taking that away from my experience as well as a co-learner, that's huge to be able to sit down in a group of people and go, "Hey, what if you tap the desk? What if you do this? We can make some rhythms."

The notably different approach to musicking and the instruments themselves in traditional Malay styles compared to the ways we are taught in Western schools and conservatories was fascinating for a majority of the participants. To give some context to Professor Kamrul's instruction, and in some sense philosophy, here are quotes from Professor Kamrul I wrote down in my field notes: "It's not about failing, playing the wrong notes and you fail, it's about playing with your heart; you can do anything, traditionally, as long as you're happy doing it"; and another quote from a different class reads: "It doesn't matter what sounds your instrument or voice makes, you can make music and sing anyways [with what you have]". In learning traditional Kelantanese performance styles students perceived a sense of liberation; perhaps in the sense that Professor Kamrul mentioned in that "playing wrong notes" isn't necessarily identified as "failing."

Similarly, Rafaela was reminded of certain aspects of her musical training through these improvisatory exercises that also generated a sense of freedom. In her words,

> It's brought me back to the parts of my musical training that I don't usually get to do. So we improvised just hitting things, hitting things like percussion. Yeah. It's been freeing in that way.

As alluded to by Rafaela, a recurring theme was the concept of improvisation. Students learned to become both more familiar and thus more comfortable with the skill of improvisation. Widespread in traditional Kelantanese music, participants were frequently prompted to improvise during the rehearsals of our group performance in the rainforest. It

appeared that the concept was more foreign to students who were trained in only the western [classical] tradition. Dr. Naismith reminisced about the ways in which Professor Kamrul integrated improvisation. He recalled,

> I think the improvisation thing, like just in terms of doing music, taking the sociology part out of it, the improvisation thing was just such an opening for me. I had been the recipient of those situations, but I always thought it was sort of magical and that I couldn't do it, and I feel like I can now, I don't need that instrument to do improvisation. I can just improvise. Professor Kamrul modeled it really well, and I could imagine myself doing more of that in my everyday teaching. I can improvise on the piano, but I don't improvise with people. How do you do that? It's a very different thing, and I haven't had many models of that in my life. So that's pretty great.

Rafaela reported that studying traditional Malay styles and collaborating with both the Malay student-participants as well as the practitioners in the rainforest broadened her horizons in terms of being more open to listening to formerly non familiar music styles. Perhaps overlapping with the notion that experiencing something first-hand sparks both a curiosity while also providing an opening, experiencing traditional music of a different culture hands-on, resulted in refined listening skills. In other words, learning about traditional Malay music prompted Rafaela to be more open minded towards other music she generally wouldn't have listened to before. Here is Rafaela's account:

> In terms of listening, I feel like now I might be more open to things that before were like 'do you want to listen to this CD of like whatever traditional music' and I'd be like 'oh thanks, but no'; now I might be like, okay I'll give it a try. Now that I'm enlightened, I feel that I will be more open to listen to new, different musics.

The participants' experiences show that music had a variety of roles in the study abroad program ranging from music serving as a conduit to intercultural understanding, or simply understanding differences, and music as a means to bonding. Finally, different

musical skills and music historical knowledge were acquired through the study of and engaging with Malay and specifically Kelantanese traditional music styles.

Perceptions of Culture, One's Own and Another, and Notions of Global Citizenship

Within the third broad category, perceptions of culture and notions of global citizenship, the following subcategories surfaced: 1) perception and awareness of one's own culture; 2) perceptions of other cultures; 3) notions of global citizenship.

The first sub-category, perceptions and awareness of one's own culture, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about how experiencing other cultures influenced their sense and awareness of their *own* culture. In both comparing their own to a foreign culture, and analyzing their cultural habits, participants started to see their own customs in a different light. The second sub-category, perceptions of other cultures, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about how this experience influenced their perception of Malay but also other cultures and traditions. Both musical and non-musical customs were touched on by an overwhelming majority of participants. The third sub-category, notions of global citizenship, pertained to the ways in which participants spoke about how the study abroad experience influenced their concept of what a global citizen might look like.

Perceptions and Awareness of One's Own Culture

The most frequently occurring theme reported by an overwhelming majority of the participants was the perception, and the *becoming aware* of, one's own culture. This not only pertained to the US American student-participants who, by definition, did engage in a study *abroad* experience by visiting and collaborating in a foreign culture but

also to the Malay student-participants who remained "at home." All but one of the Malay student-participants come originally from Borneo Island, East Malaysia. Accordingly, these students shed light on the fact that becoming aware of one's own traditions and culture occurred even within one's own country as cultural habits and customs differ between regions; in this case between Borneo Island and the Kelantan bamboo forest region.

In experiencing situations outside one's quotidian parameters, or in other words, by stepping outside one's comfort zone, participants became aware of their own cultural environment. In hearing various languages other than English spoken around herself throughout the trip in Malaysia, Sue realized the homogeneity of her environment at home. She told me in our final interview: "I still see my home as painfully homogenous. And I did hear many more languages spoken around me here. That doesn't happen in Indiana."

Similarly, upon returning back home, Jackie became more aware of cultural traits and customs in her own home environment. We conducted our final interview shortly after her arrival back in the US, and Jackie reported that,

> Since I've been back, I have been faster to spot the more negative tendencies of our culture so like the, I didn't feel okay to take sick days before. That kind of stuff. And then just how stressed out everyone is. And people are obviously stressed out in Malaysia. I remember Aqil said he's literally doing his research on how stressed the music students get there, so that's a universal thing. But it just feels way stronger here [in the US] and I've been picking that up more (...) And then also, this doesn't super-duper relate but since we talked so much about only recognizing Western culture music, coming back to school has been like, "They're right! There's literally nothing else."

Cultural habits about one's own traditions were reexamined by all of the student-participants after experiencing a foreign culture. Jackie in particular reported how it

fundamentally changed her attitude toward certain "givens." As she indicated above she had never taken a sick day in her life before embarking on the Musicking Futures study abroad trip. However, upon returning, she realized that her overall well-being is more important than adhering to the [US] cultural protocol that "taking a sick day" may disclose weakness as she herself would have interpreted it pre-trip.

In the same vein, the Malay student-participants reported how experiencing culture norms of the Malay Peninsula differed from their own [Borneo] cultural background, even though it is technically within the same national borders. In some senses their experiences in the Kelantanese Bamboo forest was similar to the US American student-participants insofar as they encountered traditions, though within their home country, that were unfamiliar to them prior to the Bamboo forest trip.

Nayla shared in our focus group that "because I'm a South Borneo so I didn't know a lot from the Kelantanese culture. We also get new knowledge as the Central University student. [Since we are from] Borneo, yeah, so we have different culture, so we get to know new culture from the content [Peninsula]." Aqil reinforced that "It's not really our culture [Kelantanese] because we are from south Borneo." Similarly, Hannah reported that experiencing different cultural habits within her own country made her realize the rich cultural diversity of Malaysia as she too originally comes from Borneo Island. She further elaborated on the recognition that many Malay people themselves are not aware of the multiplicities of cultures that exist within the borders of Malaysia. Here are Hannah's words:

> I would like to bring... the culture and music...Yeah, to the US. Because Malaysia is lot of culture. And then some of... lots of people don't know culture here. And even Malaysia also don't know (…) Yeah, even [people from]

> Malaysia also don't know, because Borneo lots of [different] culture and their races.

In experiencing and consequently comparing one's own cultural habits specifically within an academic environment with those of the guests' "norms," the Malay student-participants became aware of their own conditioning. In other words, they realized that they were not familiar with the concept of questioning and scrutinizing "taught facts," a thought-process they otherwise would have not been prompted to challenge. Through class discussions held on topics depicted from the literature, the Malay student-participants reported that they were not familiar with the "open discussion" format. An overwhelming majority expressed that the teaching model to this day is still what one might call "teacher-centered" [in the West]. In elaborating further they explained that what they are told [by their teachers] is what they accept as a cultural default. Michael explained it as follows:

> I heard all these different opinions [during class discussions], and I give all this, okay. I was like…we're not used to this at all. Where if you just say, this is the bottle you have to follow, okay, this is the bottle. Dr. Arshad wanted to change that kind of mentality in his class, so we are among the few who actually question stuff.

In other words, the Malay student-participants started to question their own higher education system as a result of being exposed to and engaged with a foreign culture's concept of running class discussions in an academic context the way Dr. Naismith handled it in the class he taught.

Aqil made a similar remark to Michael's point in what he experienced to be a crucial cultural difference between "Asia and the West." He reiterated the notion of what

could be called the absolute truth. For to be told a "fact" one is not to question. Here is Aqil's account:

> (...) the cultural difference in Asian and the Western. Because honestly in Asian culture, when we are told that this is A, we accept it as A. That while in Western, you got to question, why is this A? You can't argue that that… yeah, that's critical thinking. We... and then in class, we are not really used to having a discussion as much as what we had with the [US American students].

In other words, Aqil is referring to what seems to be the notion of critical thinking. A concept seemingly unfamiliar to them as reported by all of the Malay student-participants. In experiencing other models of academic classes and (dis)courses, the participants became more cognizant of their own schooling (conditioning) realizing through the experience of other traditions that there are *other* ways of thinking.

Perceptions of Other Cultures

The second sub-category was perceptions of *other* cultures and how these were influenced. Participants reported how the study abroad program shaped their perception of other cultures by experiencing and observing new ways of being. In experiencing a foreign culture, a majority of the participants described that while recognizing differences they also realized how much similarities there were across cultures. Jackie made an interesting observation about cross cultural similarities. She said,

> It's been really interesting. Just the more we talk to them, seeing everything that we have either in common or less different (...) It's just so interesting to see personalities and yeah, how they are reflected. Because even if we're in different cultures, there are similar personalities across the culture, which is interesting because you're like, "Oh I have friends who have your interests and your personality back home."

The participants noticed through this experience that while there are certainly differences in quotidian habits between the cultures, they also grasped that fundamentally people may not be all that different as often portrayed on various mediums such as mass media.

In the same vein, Michael explained to me his perception of the US culture based on the US participants, drawing upon this very encounter, and how in his experience he identified some sort of a common human trait. Michael sensed a commonality between people that stretched far beyond "identities" assigned to people. Here is his account:

> A lot of people say that different people, different skin, different, so different perceptions. I think for me, it's probably most of people it's same. It's not about the colors, it's not about their status or whatever. We're still a human being so we need to share something. Yes, probably knowledge, to know, to learn and to respect the other people from abroad or from here. So I just told my friends, you need to respect others as well as they will respect us.

In considering the most impactful moments of the study abroad program, Jackie alluded to the many conversations they had amongst the student-participants about cultural differences, which in turn shaped her perception of the Malay culture(s). Hearing about these different traditions from locals in addition to *experiencing* other ways of being firsthand, helped Jackie to better grasp the various customs of the guest country. In other words, seeing a theoretical depiction in practice rendered a more holistic understanding of how other people live. In Jackie's words

> [The most] impactful is (...) any of the times we were talking about the differences between our culture[s] with the Malaysian students. That's always super interesting. Yeah. Just like how other people live. It's so different from Western culture. It's just interesting to (...) see the customs and stuff. I find it the most exciting.

Similarly, Marisol reported how experiencing certain Malay ways of being exemplified through her peers and her own firsthand experiences made her appreciate their cultural

traditions more. Especially compared to reading the "pamphlet about campus life" prior to embarking on the Musicking Futures exchange program. Even though Marisol didn't have an explicit perception of Malaysia before the trip, learning and observing the various cultural traditions *in situ* helped her better understand and shape her perception of their culture. Here is her account:

> I mean it makes me appreciate them more, and I have a better grasp and understanding of at least for Malaysia, like what to prepare for. Because I remember before we were, they were like, oh here's the dress code for this and we go on campus, and here's this place more conservative than this place. And now I get it. I understand and respect their culture here. that's just what they do (...) I didn't know what their culture was before I got here. I didn't even know where that place was we were going (...) I think it impacted a lot musically and non-musically because we got to see who they are and what kind of music they listen to and how that impacts their daily life.

Marisol elaborated further on the various places we visited and how these specific experiences provided an insight into the cultural traditions and thus helped shape her perception of the Malay culture and customs including the Muslim religious practices. In Marisol's words,

> especially going to the different places we went to the mosque to understand the Islamic religion. And then we went to that wedding and got to see that type of culture, I forgot which one it was, but. And then we were in the heritage area also to see that culture and, eye-opening I think.

In the same vein, Sophia shared her experience in how collaborating and being exposed to some possible "US American way of being" both was perceived as beneficial but also helped shape her perception of said culture. Moreover, Sophia indicated how this cross-cultural exchange resulted in newly gained knowledge expanding on her worldview held up to that point. She further mentioned that she realized both differences *and* similarities across both cultural traditions. Here is a quote from Sophia:

> For me is knowledge we can know the new things, and then we learn the new things and we will remember the culture, the new culture that we learn and that we share and it's just like we have a new knowledge that we can... If people ask me about what is this culture, so when we involved [with the other culture], and we know and we share, we can explain to them about this culture.

Notions of Global Citizenship

As we were discussing concepts or perhaps characteristics of a potential global citizen within the context of this study abroad program, Dr. Naismith mentioned the following to me; which I deemed to be a very interesting description or rather angle to approach what could be a notion of global citizenship. He said,

> Global citizenship is part of a long, ever-continuing process of shedding what we think we know as important (...) maybe not shedding it, but seeing it more objectively like there's this thing that Americans do all the time and we don't question it, but there's this thing that Europeans do that's also really good. (...) I need to be questioning the way my relationships are with non-Westerners and everybody really.

According to Dr. Naismith, a global citizen shall therefore attempt to hold a position of objectivity when encountering [especially unfamiliar] customs and habits of other cultures. Moreover, a global citizen should not only scrutinize his or her own being in the world but by putting it into perspective, becoming aware that one's own beliefs are not better than others, perhaps just different yet equal in value.

Dr. Naismith further elaborated that people may need a point of reference connected to other cultures and their customs in order to relate to a foreign culture and [to give it] context. Once one can associate a story, or better, a personal experience with another culture, one has a reference point within which you can both locate context as well as establish a personal liaison.

Dr. Arshad suggested that a global citizen must both be comfortable wherever he or she travels to as well as understand the culture, their work culture, and *ethics* to approximate the concept of what we might call global citizenship. In Dr. Arshad's estimation, programs like the Musicking Futures in Malaysia provide such a platform to foster global citizenship through collaborative music projects.

Jackie reported the function music can play to serve as conduit in achieving cross cultural understanding but more specifically, perhaps, a conception of what global citizenship might look like. She described how listening to someone else, in other words a stranger, playing music can spark an interest in wanting to understand them and their culture more profoundly. By trying to make sense and explore said person's conception and values, this may inform your worldview which you have inhabited thus far. Consequently, it has the power to expand your perception beyond your assumptions by realizing that there are other ways of being out there. In Jackie's words,

> It's like if you hear music from another group of people, like anywhere, you automatically become interested in the performers and then that encourages you to ask questions to look deeper into their lives, if that makes sense. (...) Yeah I would say it just reminds you that there's a bigger world than just the bubble you live in.

Put another way, a global citizen might exhibit a disposition to wanting to understand other cultures' way of being whilst being aware that one's own way of thinking isn't *the* (only) way of thinking but *one possible* way of thinking and being in the world. In Jackie's notion studying music abroad by engaging and collaborating with a foreign culture helped approximate this concept for her.

In the same vein, Sue described the advantages of traveling outside one's comfort zone. Similar to Jackie's notion, Sue illustrated that experiencing other ways of being

makes one realize that there is a multiplicity of living life, of conceptualizing the world; and that global citizenship perhaps means to be fully aware of that. Furthermore, the realization that *your way* isn't necessarily the only or rather "superior" way. Here is Sue's account:

> So I feel like it's so good to, especially for Americans. We are not number one. There are a lot of ways of thinking and doing and being in the world that are every bit as valid as the way we have chosen to think and be and do. And we don't get enough opportunity I don't think. (...) There are many ways of being in the world, of thinking. There are many conceptions of time and what's important about time or not about time. And the fact that there are no phones or clocks in any of the hotel rooms we stayed in. It's not art. That's the first thing I noticed (...) But I'm just like, right there. As Americans, we have clocks everywhere! (...) So it's good to remember that there are a lot of different ways to be in the world and yours isn't just necessarily the right way. Especially students from a Midwestern ...where it is more homogenous than [in] a big city.

In realizing that there are a variety of modes of living through experiencing other cultures and thus ways of being, a majority of participants described the ways in which studying abroad can help foster such a change in perception. In other words, if global citizenship entails the realization that there is a multiplicity of ways to exist in the world, and that finding compromises to live alongside such diversity, study abroad programs, then, might help to influence the notion of becoming a global citizen.

Similarly, Rafaela described how musicians naturally are compelled to navigate the landscape of compromise insofar that a musician who wants to play with others always has to find a compromise. In the same way, according to Rafaela, a global citizen has to be able to understand the "vis-à-vis," to find compromise, and to acknowledge the various customs and habits of doing things. Here is what Rafaela said:

> It's like compromising, but not in a negative way because sometimes people are like, Oh, I compromise is like both parts lose. Well, no. A compromise is like, I

> give you this, you give me that, and then we'll make this together. That's how I see it. And if you don't compromise, if you just do what you think you have to do, then you can't play music with people. Because someone is going to have a different opinion or way of doing things.

The participants' experiences illustrate both how they became more aware of their *own* cultural habits and traditions as well as how their perception of *other* cultures and customs was influenced by participating in this study abroad program in music. Finally, findings showed how participants perceived these experiences as having sparked notions of what global citizenship might look like.

Summary

This chapter provided the findings from both the Malay and US American student and professor interviews, the focus group conducted with the Malay student-participants, and my personal field notes, organized under three broad categories. The first broad category presented findings that demonstrated benefits and challenges of participating in study abroad programs in music. These included the various benefits experienced ranging from personal growth and acquired life skills, bonding and friendships, to experiencing culture and motivation to further travel and explore other cultures. Challenges the student-participants faced were the ways in which language barriers can impede both conversations as well as academic tasks, and how unfamiliar environments and hygiene standards confronted a student-participant with testing situations. The second broad category of findings demonstrated how the students perceived the role of music and how music both served as a conduit to cross-cultural understanding and as a medium for bonding (understanding differences?). The third broad category examined the ways in

which students perceived both their own culture and the culture of their peers as a result of this study abroad experience. The third broad category also illustrated how notions of what a global citizen might look like were influenced by participating in the Musicking Futures in Malaysia program.

Table 3

Analytic Categories for the Impact of Study Abroad Programs in Music

Analytic Categories for the Impact of Study Abroad Programs in Music		
Research Questions	**Finding Statements**	**Analytic Category**
What are the benefits and challenges for students in partaking in a music study abroad program?	All participants described benefits ranging from personal growth to building friendships while some participants also experienced language and academic challenges by participating in this study abroad program	Personal growth and building friendship
What role does music play in achieving cross cultural understanding?	A strong majority of participants described how music served both as a conduit to cross-cultural understanding as well as a medium for bonding	Music as a primary conduit for understanding differences
How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?	A majority of participants indicated that becoming aware of various modes of being as a result of experiencing other cultures can help foster the notion of global citizenship	

Analytic Categories

In the attempt to gain greater meaning from the findings for analysis, I aligned each research question with the major findings statements and then proceeded to answer the central question of the study: What is the educative impact of study abroad programs in music? The answers to the central question became the analytic categories that were used to frame the findings for analysis and interpretation. The findings revealed that the benefits of participating in this study abroad program in music, Musicking Future in Malaysia, are: 1) personal growth (intrapersonal); 2) building friendships (interpersonal) – Analytic Category #1. Music served as a primary conduit for understanding differences – Analytic Category #2. Findings were analyzed through the abovementioned analytic categories, which are depicted in Table 3.

Chapter VII

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Purpose

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. By exploring both students' and educators' perspectives and experiences, I hoped to shed light on the ways in which this music study abroad program impacted the participants and helped form a sense of what global citizenship could look like. To carry out the purpose of this study, over the course of three months, I conducted 20 semi-structured interviews, field notes, and informal conversations with all participants, as well as a focus group with the Malaysian student-participants.

Of the student participants, two were Caucasian Americans, one was Mexican-American, one was from southern Europe, and five were Malay, out of which four were from Borneo Island and one Malay participant from peninsular Malaysia. One of the professors was Caucasian American in his early 40s, and one from Malaysia, born in Borneo, however with both Chinese and Indian heritage. The interview data and field notes from the observations were coded, organized, and analyzed into categories and subcategories based upon the following research questions:

Research Questions

1. What are the benefits and challenges for students in partaking in a music study abroad program?
2. What role does music play in the process of trying to achieve cross cultural understanding?
3. How are perceptions of global citizenship influenced by studying music abroad?

These three research questions were largely answered by the findings which I presented in Chapter 6. In Chapter 6, I presented the findings from the interviews, observations, and focus group in categories that best represented the research in a narrative format. The three major findings uncovered from the interviews, field notes, and focus group were as follows:

Findings

1. All participants described benefits ranging from personal growth to building friendships while some participants also experienced language and academic challenges by participating in this study abroad program in music.
2. A strong majority of participants described how music served both as a conduit to cross-cultural and multicultural understanding as well as a medium for bonding.
3. About half of the participants indicated that becoming aware of various modes of being as a result of experiencing other cultures can help foster the notion of Global Citizenship.

This chapter attempts to provide analytical and interpretive insights with respect to the findings that were presented in Chapter 6. I am aware that the data captured during the interviews, field notes, and focus group is limited in scope, and represents a mere snapshot of what the educative impact of study abroad programs in music could be. This reminds me to reiterate Doerr's sentiment (2019) who emphasizes that,

> every study abroad experience is different, even for the same person. One's stage in life, destination, the goal of the stay, the context of the stay, the group one goes with – all these affect the experience

and accordingly, the educative impact (p. 9). Similarly, Porges (2017) cautions that travel is an experience that only the participant him or herself can experience.

Whereas the findings chapter provided data in small narrative formats that were tied to the three overarching categories and aligned around the individual research questions, this chapter attempts to integrate the various parts to create a cohesive view of the research study. The following two analytic categories that were introduced at the end of the findings chapter guided this process:

Analytic Categories

1. Benefits: personal growth and building friendships
2. Music as a primary conduit for understanding differences

In seeking higher understanding on how students were impacted by this study abroad program, I framed the discussion in the subsequent section by contrasting the Malaysian student-participants and how they addressed the analytic categories with the US student-participants to shed light on how the two groups perceived the experience and how their background might have influenced the outcomes/findings. While the primary focus will

emphasize the two student groups, a third group consisting of the two educators will be discussed to understand how music educators addressed some of the analytical categories. I have included the most salient quotes from the participants to support my analysis and depict my discussion.

Since I tried to investigate the conceptualization of Global Citizenship in my third research question, I will discuss findings that addressed this notion at the end of the first section, although it does not directly pertain to either of the analytic categories. In the second section, I will conduct an analysis between the groups as well as an analysis between individual group members of both the Malaysian student-participant group and the US student-participant group respectively.

Table 4

Discussion Groupings

Category	**Participant**
Malaysian student-participants	Aqil Michael Nayla Sophia Hannah
US American student-participants	Jackie Marisol Rafaela Sue
Educators	Dr. Naismith Dr. Arshad

Analytic Category 1: Personal Growth and Building Friendships

Out of your Comfort Zone

Wanner (2009) states that, "an overarching aim of study abroad is the discovery of the individual's self through the other and better understanding of the conditions surrounding our existence through contrast with other realities" (p. 81). My study aimed to examine this notion seeking to understand how and what we learn when studying abroad and encountering "otherness." My findings have shown that the overarching effect of this experience was indeed the discovery *or rather the investigation* of the individual's self. Both for my participants as well as for myself.

Rafaela echoed Wanner's sentiment in mentioning that the primary impact of such experiences is

> it takes you out of your comfort zone. You learn a lot of things that you didn't know. And... I don't know, I thought I was going to the U.S. to study double bass, but honestly I learned more about myself than about the bass and I'm like, that's fine, I'll take it.

The notion of being taken out of one's comfort zone was reported by all participants of the US student group. In questioning one's own habits and re-examining one's routines appeared to have sparked self-reflection leading the participants to inquire about their own habits. In Jackie's case, living through a challenging environmentally unfamiliar situation changed her approach to life by learning how to let go. I fundamentally believe that encountering new situations and accordingly constructing new knowledge in its broadest sense can lead to self-development. Jackie's transformation, if temporarily, finds support in the literature as Stone and Petrick (2013) argue that study abroad experiences

can have transformative effects on the participants and shift their worldview. Jackie realized by experiencing other ways of living that the way she had known to live her life and her little routines warranted examination. Her discovery rings true with what Wanner (2009) adds that "study abroad embodied an essential part for self-improvement through knowledge of the other" (p. 21). Further investigation, perhaps in a long-term study, would be prompted by her remark that "I'm definitely probably going to live the same way when I go home, but at least [I know] it's possible that I can let go".

Sue realized how "painfully homogenous" her home state was in being pushed out of her environment and quotidian routines. You don't know what you don't know until you dive into unknown territory. As Gaudelli (2016) put it, echoing other authors (Coryell et al., 2010; Dwyer, 2004; Kissock & Richardson, 2010; Merryfield, 2001), "placing students into situations of otherness will create cognitive dissonance and lead them to an awareness of their perspective and appreciation of myriad other viewpoints" (p. 127). In the same vein, Palmer (2015) states that study abroad experiences can "broaden individuals' personal perspectives, lives, and develop cognitive growth and flexibility." The SYTA (2017) study confirmed the sentiments of this group in regard to being pushed out of one's comfort zone. As they found that students reported "increased willingness to know, learn, and explore more about the "foreign."

Like the US. student-participants, the Malaysia student-participant group also mentioned how being pushed out of one's comfort zone can spark self-development. Hannah shared that "going out of your comfort zone and meeting new people will broaden your horizons." Similarly, Aqil was propelled to engage with the US peers "pushing" him out of his comfort zone. Describing himself as a "shy guy," Aqil realized

that getting out of his shell opened up new opportunities specifically as to how he acts in and perceives the world, which rings true with what Wanner (2009) alluded to by proposing that study abroad offers a space or quest for "self-improvement." Being pushed out of their comfort zone meant for the Malaysian student group also being compelled to speak English, which for a majority of the Malaysian students was the initial impetus to participating in this program. Hannah voiced her belief that "going out of your comfort zone and meeting new people will broaden your horizons" while in her case also helped improve her foreign language skills.

However, a valid question to be raised is whether the argument holds that only study *abroad* fosters such broadening of individuals' personal perspectives (Palmer, 2015) and "self-development"? For the Malay student-participants this experience was not abroad but rather in their home country. Though 80% of the Malaysian student group originally comes from Borneo Island, a culture distinctly different than both Kelantan and Kuala Lumpur, these students participants have shown similar effects of "being pushed out of one's comfort zone." This leads me to Doerr's (2019) critique on whether study abroad must entail "crossing borders" in order to experience difference or whether such experiences within one's own country but with different cultural customs warrant the same legitimization? Similarly, Wanner (2009) stated that "we do not know whether the international dimension is important" (p. 88).

It is however worth noting Palmer's (2015) argument that engaging with difference abroad is unalike from immersion in different cultural customs at home because in the former, students themselves become outsiders in terms of wider institutional and other norms, which have the potential to push them to question their own

assumptions, whereas this does not occur in the latter. Palmer argues: “When abroad, the normative experience of students is often subverted in ways that lay bare the assumptions behind such views and makes possible another world in which to live” (2015, p. 63).

Palmer’s notion reflected my observations during our Bamboo forest sojourn of the trip. While the Malaysian student group also experienced both “being pushed out of their comfort zone” and being confronted with cultural customs different to what they knew, while in their own country, the effect it had on the US student group was deeper. Self-development as it related to intra-personal development seems to be less bound to geographic (or cultural) location, whereas inter-personal development was impacted more by a familiar (for the Malaysian student group) vs. unfamiliar (for the US student group respectively) environment.

The educator group addressed the concept of “being pushed out of your comfort zone” as well. Specifically, Dr. Naismith recalled an experience where said concept lead to an “opening”:

> I think that going away and coming back together is a huge part of human bonding. When you feel sort of out of your, what, zone of proximal development or whatever, like your way outside of that comfort zone, it’s a time for opening. Where I think a lot of people simultaneously open and are open to each other more than just in the regular day-to-day.

Dr. Naismith’s reference to the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that we might find ourselves in an optimum “zone” for development when going abroad, or in this case, out of our comfort zone. As a theory, the Zone of Proximal Development integrates the main tenets of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky’s theory of human development (Eun, 2017). Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of

potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. This has been restated by West (2020): "Vygotskian sociocultural theory recognizes interaction with others as a prerequisite to development through socialization, with a Zone of Proximal Development occurring as a learner is assisted by someone with a higher skill set" (p. 200).

Dr. Naismith raises an interesting point. It makes me wonder, are we *more* open when having an experience together with other people who also, simultaneously, are being pushed out of their comfort zone? Perhaps people might exhibit more openness towards, and accepting of, other people's (ways of being) given that everyone is "in the same boat'? If there is no default mode (of comfort) or known modus operandi to fall back on, do we exhibit more open-mindedness with regard to our immediate environment and people around us?

All participants across nationalities, positionalities, student and professor-groups experienced a transformation and self-development by being pushed out of their comfort zone. As Palmer (2015) states, "Unless a student withdraws completely into herself or flatly rejects the viability of another (...) cultural perspective, her own worldview will necessarily be interrogated in light of the new norm in which she is immersed" (p. 67).

Face to Face

Montaigne (1581/1877) argued that [global travel] not only broadens one's perspectives but that it is difficult to imagine things at their real "grandeur" if it is not personally experienced. The US American student-participant group found profound value in the face to face encounters experienced in Malaysia. The nuances that can be

absorbed when communicating with other people, and the details that can be observed when visiting a site firsthand are overwhelmingly more impactful than "reading about it in a book," or perhaps timelier, liking a photo on social media. Gaudelli (2016) speaks to this concept when arguing that,

> People are able to communicate [through Facebook] with a diverse community of associates, or friends, in ways that are simple, direct and easily accessible across the planet. And yet the sense of connection that people share when they like a photograph, watch a video, or read a posted link is less intimate than talking over coffee, attending a public meeting or participating in a demonstration. (p. 14)

The intimacy Gaudelli refers to are the emotions and feelings that arguably can be evoked to a much greater degree only when experiencing something firsthand, when physically being present, intimate with(in) the moment while observing and reflecting on one's own reaction. Lived experiences can be those lasting experiences that one both visually and physically will remember. Marisol supports Gaudelli's claim with the following reflection:

> We're here to get to know a new place and the country and yes, we're also here to learn about their music and their history because I feel like, like I said, that's all together. You can't learn one without the other. I feel. You can learn from a textbook, but it's not the same as your experience, and we're here. That's *why* we're here to actually experience and dive in (...) I'd rather my students get hands on experience rather than just reading about it. It's not the same. It's never the same. You get a lot more different emotions and feeling when you are actually doing it or experiencing it rather than just, oh, this is cool reading about it. It's not the same.

As Montaigne (1581/1877) said, "A mere bookish learning is a paltry learning." Marisol best summarized this by sharing her experience she had in her Global History Studies class; she recalled,

> We talked a lot about Asia (...) we read, talked, read, read papers. And that's it (...) there's no connection, it's just words and words coming out of their mouth

> and it doesn't mean anything to me. Now I'm like, I see, okay, I understand, and when we talk about history here, it made sense. (...) we went to the museum [with our Malay peers] where we really got to see their history and like, oh, I remember now what my teacher was trying to say. (...) I think always hands on, first-hand experience is always better than reading or watching something. Because you won't know until you experience it, I think. Yes, you can read all about it, but, it's still, it's only going to be like a voice in the back of your head. Like, just research basically, all you're going to know is research, and even when you read books, they're still secondhand from [another person's] experiences.

Marisol's experience also finds support in what Locke (1693/1964) wrote: "[B]ook learning is secondary; primary is modesty, politeness, and knowing ways of the world." The crucial factor to Marisol's experience was the face-to-face involvement with (her) locals (peers) and having these experiences alongside the Malay student-participants.

The disconnection between content taught in classrooms today and the real world [experience] is not new. The US student-participants deepened their experience by *interacting* with their Malay peers and in a broader sense "content." They entered an ongoing (at least for the duration of the trip) dialog with what eventually became newly acquired knowledge. Dewey (1938) spoke to this when he mentioned that "sound educational experience involves, above all, continuity and interaction between the learner and what is learned" (p. 10). The US American student-participants were able to situate experiences in a context and thus make meaning of their experiences.

Moreover, and perhaps in a wider political and cultural discourse, "reading about" an event or hearing about an experience is predicated on secondary or even tertiary sources and thus makes said source the authority of the information. In other words, we only "know" what we are told largely by (mass) media and from hearsay as opposed to firsthand. Even today in an ever-connected world, we are only told what certain

information channels want to be told. Lived experiences as portrayed by the US students therefore exemplify a much more sincere, if personal, truth. In other words, seeking to understand "the world" through one's own experiences yields a more authentically perceived truth than "reading about it." Rafaela confirmed my sentiment with her following thoughts,

> I mean, especially today, the world is no more just what happens around you. It is everything is so connected, and everything has repercussions in other places that you don't even know about it. So I think it's very important in all the history and things that are going on. You don't even know about them sometimes if you don't get out. Because, honestly, we never get any news about Malaysia. How would we know of [...] that corruption scandal that's going on. There's no way I would know about those things if I'm not here [experiencing/hearing about it myself].

Rafaela touches on a sensitive topic, especially given the current climate. What news are we being fed through mass media and what information is being censored? More importantly perhaps, one should question who is to decide what makes the daily news and what reports are being obstructed? In other words, one needed to proactively research particular events occurring in Malaysia as they apparently are not deemed important to get a slot on the world stage of news media. Ultimately, Rafaella speaks to the importance that through firsthand experiences participants are afforded the opportunity to inquire about matters face to face that otherwise would be seemingly difficult to obtain.

Through my various personal travel experiences accumulated in 40 countries, both as a journeyer as well as study abroad program participant, I share Rafaela's point of view. More often than not, I found people and places to be different than portrayed in the (mass) media, which of course often has geo-political reasons attached to the "portrayal." In addition to realizing the blatant misinformation that we are being made to believe at

times, I refer back to what Gaudelli says in that there is a certain intimacy that we are missing out on when "receiving" experiences secondhand.

In comparison, the Malay student-participant group perceived similar benefits from face to face experiences with the US peers shedding light on the fact that the impact of lived experience reaches across nationality and cultural norms. Like their US American companions, the Malay students highlighted how direct encounters and hearing stories first hand provided an insight to the "American experience" as far as it pertains to these four US individuals. Similar to Marisol, Michael expressed that,

> Yeah, I read newspapers and the news about Americans, some things, sometimes so I didn't expect this people from America and sometimes when we see, obviously, in television shows about Americans sometimes, in this way, so when we met with student from America, so we know, okay, it's not like this, they were not [like that].

For the Malay student-participant group, (direct) communication with the "foreigners" was invaluable. Nuances such as facial expressions, ways of being, mannerism and even humor can only be perceived and experienced during face to face interactions. Montaigne (1581/1877) spoke to this nearly 500 years ago when he suggested that,

> Students need some direct adventuring with the world, a steady and lively interplay with common folk, supplemented and fortified with trips abroad. Such contacts with mundane concerns serve not only to put an edge on the learner's faculties; they will appraise him of other people's humors, manners, customs, their politics, theology, and Jurisprudence, their social system, and their public works.

I observed daily interactions between the two student groups, which can be described exactly as Montaigne mentioned above, "mundane concerns with common folk." Moreover, the notion, or perhaps suspicion, that what we read in the newspapers and

what we see on television does not always concur with reality – or our lived experiences – was shared by both student groups.

The (media) portrayal of certain peoples and their acclaimed "behavior" towards, and representation of, others does often not coincide with reality. In my experience, I have on various occasions visited countries whose people were supposedly in conflict with other members of the same nation state, or ethnic groups of neighboring states, which in (my) reality did not concur with my lived experiences and interactions with locals. Similarly, both the US group as well as the Malaysian group perceived each other differently than what they were made to believe or simply assumed based on the (secondary) information fed to them.

To tie back, in a broader perspective, to what Palmer (2015) mentioned, "When abroad, the normative experience [and I would add, perception] of students is often subverted in ways that lay bare the assumptions behind such views and makes possible another world in which to live" (p. 63). In expanding on Doerr's (2019) notion, "In sum, we need to be aware that what we assess is what we value, not something neutral" (p. 168), I would make the case that what we are told (or are shown on "travel pamphlets") is not a neutral depiction, but at the very least a secondary (subjective) perception and information source. Only personally lived, first-hand experiences come closest to what we might perceive as authentic and forthright. In other words, as Porges (2017) put it, "travel is an experience that only the participant can experience" (p. 9), or in Dewey's (1938) eloquent formulation, "an ounce of experience is better than a ton of theory simply because it is only in experience that theory has vital and verifiable significance" (p. 144).

Experiential Learning

Aristotle (ca. 350 B.C.E/2000) already believed that individuals gained education through experience, involvement, and learning by doing. Similarly, Montaigne (1581/1877) reminded us that for an authentic education one should use the world as our looking-glass and to share in the variety of temperaments, schools of thought, opinion, laws and customs. Dewey (1938) emphasized that all "genuine education comes about through experience" (p. 25). All participants of the US group affirmed that *experience* was key and the fundament of their learning during the study abroad. Another central tenet of Dewey's concept of the relationship between experience and learning is that of interaction, Dewey states, "The principle of interaction of experience means that "an experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment" (p. 41).

Much of what lies at the core in Experiential Education, study abroad can foster a conducive space for such learning. As Kolb (1984) delineated in his Experiential Learning model, students are to investigate, take risks, and problem solve. The US student group benefited largely from experiencing concepts such as (taking a risk) living in a bamboo forest, making bamboo instruments from scratch to actually diving into Kelantanese music traditions. Learning by doing, and as such experiential learning, guided many of the students' processes.

While experiencing difficulties with the theoretical concept of social justice in the music classroom, this theoretical framework put into practice became to some extent more tangible in the "learning by doing model." Of course, one will not radically change one's philosophy or concept over a period of a month, however, *experiencing* and seeing

new possibilities in action can lead to developing new perspectives and, ultimately, constructing knowledge.

In the same vein, Jackie's "grappling" with difficult environmental circumstances and to some extent, too, learning by doing, expanded her very (possible) ways of being. Dewey (1938) said that, "growth depends upon the presence of difficulty to be overcome by the exercise of intelligence" (p. 79). Similarly, Luckman (1996) delineates the concept of experiential learning as a process through which a learner constructs knowledge, skill, and value from direct experience. The US student group was challenged at first with the improvisational practices of the Kelantanese music traditions though being immersed with local practitioners and by continuous "learning by doing," the US student group not only improved but it also sparked an interest to inquiring more about it and thus eventually led to newly constructed knowledge. Dewey elaborated on his concept of growth depending on overcoming the presence of difficulty by adding that "the problem [has to] grow out of the conditions of the experience being had in the present, and that it is within the range of the capacity of students, and secondly, that it arouses in the learner an active quest for information and production of idea" (p. 79).

Sue experienced a similar "awakening" in a broader sense, which relates to what Dewey mentioned above. While not necessarily experiencing difficulty but perhaps rather challenge in hand making her own bamboo instrument and learning the Kelantanese traditions, it aroused [in her] an active quest for information, pertaining to the situation, and for production of new ideas. Sue recalled, "I couldn't believe how important that was to make my own instrument [...] and [I] wondered whether there was a spirit inside" prompting her to deeper reflect on the practices of Kelantanese traditions continually

even once we left the bamboo forest. To conclude with Dewey's (1938) words, "sound educational experience involves, above all, continuity and interaction between the learner and what is learned" (p. 10).

In contrast, the majority of the Malaysian student-participant group did not mention instances directly attributable to experiential learning. This occurrence is based on several reasons. First, the bamboo forest experience including the instrument making was not all that foreign to the Malay students. Some of the participants had been to this part of the country before. Further, their traditional instruments as well as performance practices, which they study in depth in their undergraduate program is therefore not new and thus perhaps not a situation of which to construct new knowledge. The performance style, though to some degree specific to the Northwestern area (Kelantan) of the country, is to a certain extent still embedded in their traditional culture and thus familiar to the Malaysian student-participant group. In fact, Dr. Arshad, their professor, is a pioneer within Malaysia working closely with UNESCO to keep the various Malaysian music traditions alive.

Additionally, the students did not live away from home, much less abroad. Consequently, all the (newly) lived experiences that their counterparts encountered of which new knowledge was able to be constructed, for the Malay, was again not new territory. I therefore wonder whether the experiences or activities we face and plow through, must be new to us in order for all the tenets or requirements of experiential learning to be met. This contemplation also speaks against Doerr (2019) who questions the importance of the "abroad," or "border crossing," and is more in line with Palmer (2015) who argues that immersion abroad is different from immersion in another cultural

traditions at home because in the former, students themselves become outsiders in terms of customs and norms, which pushes them to question their own assumptions and presuppositions, whereas this does not happen in the latter milieu. Palmer (2015) adds, within the context of his study but transferable to the study at hand, that "The stark contrast to a normative American landscape that a month in India can provide is not possible by visiting local U.S. [sites] – no matter how hard one tries" (p. 71).

The Malay student-group however did not participate in the preparation of these lessons, which took place during our last week of the study abroad program where they primarily assisted and served as translators during the lesson's implementation. Their absence was due to student teaching and other work commitments as our last week was the first week in their new academic semester. Further, the Malaysian student-group did not join us for our Georgetown excursion on Penang Island, which would have been the most "foreign" to them of all places they visited and engaged in.

Since experiential learning necessitates students to "investigate" (Kolb, 1984), and, as Plato argued, suggests students engage in an "intellectual quest," I wonder whether this could be explained with the general practices inquiry (or lack thereof] of the higher education system in Malaysia. As illustrated by the Malaysian student-participant group, their teaching model is still, nearly exclusively, "teacher-centered." All of the Malaysian student-participants shared Michael's sentiment, when he mentioned,

> I heard all these different opinions [during class discussions], and I give all this, okay. I was like…we're not used to this at all. Where if you just say, this is the bottle you have to follow, okay, this is the bottle. Dr. Arshad wanted to change that kind of mentality in his class, so we are among the few who actually question stuff.

Aqil echoed Michael's point and reinforced my supposition that "intellectual quest" is not necessarily something that is being stimulated traditionally in their higher education system. This notion can be attributed not least to the currently more authoritarian government practices. For to be told a "fact," one is not to question. Here are Aqil's words:

> When we are told that this is A, we accept it as A. That while in Western, you got to question, why is this A? You can't argue that that… yeah, that's critical thinking. We... And then in class, we are not really used to having a discussion as much as what we had with the [US American students].

Does experiencing "Experiential Learning" necessitate, or perhaps even demand, a space for critical thinking?

To *See* more, to *Hear* more, to *Feel* more

An overwhelming majority of the US student-participants felt inspired to travel further and explore other places as a result of this experience. This conception resonates with the literature; the Student Youth Travel Association of the United States' (SYTA, 2017) study found that a majority of study abroad alumni exhibit an eagerness to know, learn, and explore more about other cultures after having participated in a study abroad program. Students specifically feel a desire to travel to and explore more places. Hadis (2005) supports this argument as he found very positive effects on university students' increased interest and self-assurance in continuing global travel. These journeys have two primary benefits: 1) They are an undertaking to new places, a method of knowing and building community; 2) These experiences are the beginning of a lifelong path to becoming better global citizens, multiculturalists, and teachers concerned with justice.

Sue mentioned, “I just think it’s easy to get stuck. I have always, I think, thought it was important to travel but this trip gave me a certain urgency to it.” Once taken out from your quotidian routines and seeing possible other ways of being through different cultural frameworks (Palmer, 2015), this student group felt, as Sue put it, an urgency to discover what other ways of being there are out there. Based on both my experience and through my observations of the participants over the course of the program, a certain curiosity is sparked once you understand that there are *other* ways of “doing things” and that your way is not the only way. In discovering other customs and norms, one feels compelled to inquire what else is “out there.” In a music specific context as illustrated in my findings, this notion can lead to arousing interests in wanting to know more about other musical traditions.

Exploration and “free play” (Dewey, 1938) proved to have been a catalyst for the US student group sparking an interest in examining other ways of being. During their free time in Georgetown, they experienced the street food culture, wandered through the city, and hiked to the surrounding mountains. Perhaps curiosity gave impetus to examine different quotidian courses of events, room for personal experiences and, conceivably, the reflection and observation of oneself confronted with new situations and seeing things through a different cultural frame (Palmer 2015). Indeed, this reminded me of what Gaudelli and Laverty (2015) may have alluded to when speaking about [Global] experiences and how they “should be planned with a view to allowing for spontaneous activities, events, and encounters” (p. 20). And likewise, as Dewey (1938) expressed, such experiences must provide “room for the free play of individual thinking or for contributions due to distinctive individual experience” (p. 48). I felt as though the three

women who shared an apartment and spent the entire weekend together further bonded through these shared experiences.

Similarly, the Malaysian student-participant group overwhelmingly reported an awakened interest in wanting to explore other cultures. However, it was not mentioned in conjunction with participating in other "study abroad programs" as such. Aqil framed it as follows: "So in a way, it has helped us to open our mind and be open to other cultures and be acceptable, be learning about each other cultures so that we are more (...) yeah, so it has... the opportunity of being in this program has opened our mind to other cultures." The emphasis remained on the cultural awakening rather than the notion on study abroad programs. Aqil's experience found support in what Palmer (2015) so poignantly described by "[his] singularity of [his] world opened to multiplicity (p. 71).

While the concept at heart is the same, it is interesting to note the different choice of "terminology." I suggest the reason for this is that the entire study abroad corpus is much "trendier" of a buzzword in the "West" than it is in Malaysia. In considering Doerr (2019), the way the program was framed it was supposed to be a "study abroad program" for the foreigners, not for the locals. Further, traveling among friends at a young age is not a concept as viscerally eminent among Malaysian as it is in the West. This distinction is based on cultural customs and not least family structure and obligations.

Nonetheless, both Aqil and Michael showed an interest, or perhaps an awakening, in wanting to travel once they have graduated from Mululay University. Intrigued by my travel (abroad) experiences and Swiss background, Aqil and Michael voiced interest and inquired about travel opportunities within music educational settings to Switzerland because they want to see more.

The Malay participant group has shown personal growth as a result of traveling - even within their own borders. Dr. Arshad reinforced my observation revealing a similar sentiment as he was watching his students, many who he has known for years, over the course of the program. “I learn a lot about my students also doing this.” Doerr argues that,

> Although we have transformative experiences in various contexts, we tend to highlight those during studying abroad because self-transformation is expected to happen there, and thus many occasions to talk about it are offered (...) we privilege study abroad as the occasion for self-transformation… we ignore self-transformation occurring in other contexts. (p.11)

Perhaps in this context it was less the geographical (domestic) location as it was the engaging with their (international) peers.

In comparison, the educator group experienced a similar spark of interest in further exploration. While it was not necessarily exploring traveling per se, it was focused on the organizational aspect of such programs. This cultural exchange had an impact on Dr. Arshad to the degree where, by the end of our trip, he was contemplating to organize a similar experience bringing his Malaysian students to the US. From an educator perspective, Dr. Arshad benefited from observing other music educators teach music classes from a different approach. In this regard, Dr. Arshad, too, wanted to see and feel more for both his students as well as himself. This belief leads back to his interest and investment in his students’ holistic development as human beings. Lastly, Dr. Arshad’s disposition toward both study abroad and wanting to see more is predicated on his extensive travels both personal and professional as well as his own study abroad experiences. Goneya (2008) claimed that (student) participants who study abroad tend to become more deeply engaged in reflective learning experiences upon their return from

studying abroad. I argue that similarly, music educators tend to become more deeply engaged in *providing* reflective learning experiences upon their return from their own study abroad (experiences).

Dr. Naismith was influenced by witnessing a music study abroad program in China that his wife and I had participated in two years prior to the Musicking Futures in Malaysia. This strengthened his resolve to lead his own program as a music educator for an exchange program to Malaysia. Though fundamentally, both student-participant groups as well as the professors and myself felt/feel a sense similar to what Susan Sonntag's enduring life quest was: "to *see* more, to *hear* more, to *feel* more" (Moser, 2019, p. 237). Study abroad programs in music can awaken a longing for further exploration for both the student as well as the educator and thus give impetus to further travel.

Relationship-Building

For the US student-participant group the greatest pedagogical impact from the entire study abroad program occurred from relationship-building with their Malaysian peers. Although various factors contributed to the bonding experiences, as Goneya (2008) stated, "it is often difficult to isolate the impact on student outcomes [based on study abroad participation] of a single type of experience" (p. 19), out of classroom-experiences seem to have had the greatest influence on relationship-building. Perhaps this finding helps clarifying what Wanner (2009) questions which is that although the benefits and outcomes of study abroad have been researched, it is often unclear whether these are due to travel, interaction with other cultures, formal classroom education, or a combination

and thus creates "difficulty to attributing the desired (vague) effects to a single (precise) cause" (p. 88).

Likewise, Stone and Petrik (2013) state that,

> Learning outcomes have been found from the travel portion of the study experience, and some research found that out-of-class experiences were the most impactful portion of study abroad. Personal growth (...) and increase in life skills (...) result from *independent* international travel, as well as "objective-less" travel. (p. 732)

Stone and Petrik's "objective-less" travel might allude to what Dewey (1938) implied with the notion of "free play." Marisol spoke to the out-of-classroom experiences when she described the following:

> And then we went to the Bamboo Forest in... Kelantan, which was life changing. Because there, that's when we really bonded with the other students. Because we were literally together for four days, all hours of the night. So we got to actually do stuff together (...) singing and playing games and actually getting to know each other, stuff like that. It was awesome. (...) that was my favorite part [the bonding we got at night]. Yeah. Like if we could spend more nights just like that, all of us together and just bonding.

Helsel's (2015) discovery echoed Marisol's description in that he found that such [music] travel experiences bring people together and create a bond. Indeed, Helsel (2015) concluded that it was the relationships fostered during these music trips that served as the foundation and main reason for the performance program retention. In other words, the relationship building seemed to be the most salient outcome and reason for Helsel's participants' future program longevity. Rafaela concluded that while both academic and non-academic "educations" are critical, this experience taught her that she learned just as much if not more from non-traditional (information) sources, or informal contexts, which can be referred back to both the relationships they (she) built as well as experiential

learning experiences. Being able to interact with “true locals” allowed the US American student group to relate to their peers’ experiences or, in other words, their ways of being.

In consideration of my own study abroad travel experiences, the most salient aspect overall suggests the same conclusion. It was only two months ago that I paid a visit to my study abroad host sister in Italy, whom I had met back in 1997. We had also spent time in December 2019, across the globe in Buenos Aires, celebrating a brief reunion. Furthermore, I am also still in close contact with my opera composition members from my China study abroad experience. It is the (human) relationships we build and cultivate thereafter that sustain and preserve our memories of lived experiences; and in some sense, keep them alive through the revisiting of the adventures with our friend(ships) formed during these experiences. I believe it is the reassurance that we share a human “essence” that provides us comfort even, or especially, when engaging with the foreign. In other words, it is trust we seek and hope to rely on in building these relationships.

While one of the educator’s primary goals might have been the teaching of critical theory studies, it seemed that the US student participants’ take away was of a different nature. At least at the time of data collection and according to the findings. Insofar that the class content and readings were not the most salient impact for the US student group except perhaps for Sue. This finding can be attributed to both the age difference as well as her professional endeavors and the fact that one of Sue’s primary reasons for participating in this study abroad program was indeed the (intended) emphasis on the social justice literature and its application to music education. However, in Sue’s own recollection of her most treasured takeaways, friendship too ranked at the top,

> I just thought that [final performance in the bamboo forest] and being with the kids, those were my two highlight experiences. Because again, that's what connects to my values. All of us together, making something gorgeous, having a fun, joyous time, playful. Both of them with huge playful elements, very much collaborating and making something, very spontaneous, dancing happening at the final night in the forest, it was just really precious.

Therefore, the theme of human bonding and forming relationships occurred across the age spectrum and thus implies it was age-independent for all participants of this study abroad program.

Aside from major highlights such as the final performance in the Bamboo forest that contributed to the bonding experience, the US group illustrated that engaging in "mundane" pastime activities (Montaigne, 1581/1877) equally contributed to the relationship building. Rafaela spoke to this when she described the bus ride from Shah Alam to the Kelantan Bamboo forest:

> Oh, I think in every way [was it a bonding experience]. Just starting with like the [14-hour] bus ride. It was like having to spend so much time in this limited space. Yeah. And just, I don't know, it was like an exchange.

While the Malaysian student-participant group did address the category of building friendships, it was mentioned less frequently. My observations do reflect a similar sentiment as those expressed by the US student group in regard to building friendships, however, the Malaysian student group did not explicitly mention it as much. A possible reason for this occurrence can be attributed to language barrier, which, as a result, is partially the reason why I had less data from the Malaysian student group. Unable to express oneself fluently in one's (preferably) mother tongue can constitute a valid obstacle. Another implication of these findings may be because the Malaysian student participants knew each other well and had built friendships among each other before

participating in this program. In comparison, none of the US student participants knew each other before this trip. This might shed light on the fundamental importance for human beings to connect with others and the urgency experienced in wanting to belong to a community. After all, the human being is a social being.

Lastly, participants from both US as well as the Malaysian side, students as well as an educator, mentioned how the disconnectivity from social media and the internet overall had a positive impact on how students spent more time together socializing. Essentially evidencing the negative impact the often called "social media" platforms have on human (de)socialization. My findings were echoed by Akram and Kumar (2017) whose study showed that,

> The additional time the students spend on these online networking destinations, the less time they will go through associating face to face with others. This decreases their relational abilities. They won't have the capacity to convey and mingle adequately face to face with others (...). The compelling relational abilities are critical to achievement in reality. (p. 351)

In conclusion, the Malaysian student-participant group did express "togetherness" and how invaluable they perceived spending time together. To recall Aqil,

> We [were] just talking to each other from morning till night, and that was really fun (...) for me, this one of the highlights of the whole trip. . I mean everything is the highlight but... But for me, that's the most fun part.

Thus, relationship building occurred to be both a recurring theme across both student groups as well as the most pedagogically impactful.

Building Community through Music

The US student group further addressed community building through and within a musical context as a valuable outcome situated within the broader context of relationship

building. The particular emphasis on combining community building with music making and representing the two in a positive light, warrants further investigation.

According to the US student group, these two concepts usually represent a dichotomy. In other words, for US music students the "music college experience" is often predicated on the concept of competition: solo competitions, adjudicators, auditions, etc., and thus inherently yields a certain amount of pressure and rivalry. Music making within the Kelantanese traditions as experienced on this trip provided the students a non-hierarchical "position" within the group and thus eliminated the pressure of competition.

Consequently, the US student group perceived music making together with their Malaysian peers as a means of bonding. Not only the music making as a group but also the sharing of their music(s) contributed to the building of relationships and the community as a whole. Marisol described it as follows: "sharing our music together, our Western, [their] Malay, that's how we bond." The case could be made as to how much this is attributable to the actual "musical activity" or whether any other social (yet non-musical) activities would yield similar benefits.

The Malaysian student group perceived the mutual music making and music sharing as an important pillar for community building illustrating that all participants across nationalities, positionalities, and backgrounds identified music as a connecting factor. Aqil described it as follows,

> It's the one that sticks us together because we have common interest, we have passionate about music. So through that, we learn our background, our musical background, and it's the one that kept us together in the initial part of getting to know each other. So without the music, we might not know each and every one of us that deep. Yeah, because we get to learn about, yeah.

He shed light on how he perceived the function of music within this study (abroad) context by summing it up as follows: “Okay, so for me, if I could make it, if I could have one thing to represent the music, it will be a glue, it’s the one that kept us together.”

Analytic Category 2: Music as a Primary Conduit for Understanding Differences

The primary compelling point of inquiry that guided this research was to understand what role music plays in achieving cross-cultural and multicultural understanding. Specifically, in the context of study abroad programs in music precisely because there is little existing literature that focuses on this intersection. The following subsection tries to fill in the gap in the literature. I attempted to shed light on how my findings reveal music to be a possible intermediary space through which one might explore further aspects of a culture.

Music is an Excuse to be Human

The US student group described music as a gateway to understanding culture illustrating how music lends itself to a connecting force in inquiring about various aspects of culture. Consequently, music can foster a space to examine both cultural differences as well as similarities. Sue spoke to this concept when she said

> I think music has been my doorway into everything new. (...) Yeah, music is my door to understanding just about everything. (...) Music is my connection to learning about the history about where those traditions come from. And then I hear something else that I love and I have to, why do they sing like that? And, why is their scale like that? And then that takes me into culture because culture influences all those things. Right? (...) when we were playing with those other gentlemen and we played for them and we were dancing and that kind of thing right there, that’s why I make music.

Music serves both as an impetus and space through which to construct meaning in the context of cultural habits and norms. Sue made a tangible example by illustrating how listening to the [musical] scale and melodic pattern of the muezzin, the official who proclaims to call for prayer, prompted her to investigate why "they sing like that" and that inevitably is influenced by larger cultural customs. The wider connections that can be implied by such examination can lead to comprehending certain cultural manifestations and thus help reach understanding of differences – and similarities. Sue further noted that

> Music is more about how I understand ... it's about connection. It's about connection about me and here, it's about connections with people. It's about connection to place. And it's about connection to source, whatever you want to call it.

To this effect, music served as a conduit to understanding people and connecting to places.

Rafaela illuminated how the predisposition of a (collaborative) musician implies a certain skill set in order to listen to each other, negotiate, and consequently find a "creative compromise" (Byrne, 2012). Taking this concept further, transcending beyond the [musical] rehearsal space, this notion can be expanded into how music might help achieve cross cultural understanding. Rafaela depicted this perspective as follows:

> Oh, I think that making music with others contributes to how I understand the world in every way. Yeah. It's just, yeah. I don't know I feel, the one you mean to make music together? It's like a compromise in the sense that you have to listen and you have to react and everybody has to compromise on that. So yeah (...) if we did that, in politics. It would be so much better, but we don't, you know what I mean?

Moreover, [good] musicians bring about an understanding of the necessity of collaboration for the common good and how to integrate oneself in the larger ensemble.

Therefore, music(ians) recognize the variety of voices and the need to find consensus. Transcending the analogy once more suggests that music can create a space where cross-cultural dia (or multi) logue can not only exist but be negotiated and invite participants to ponder upon its differences - and similarities.

Rafaela spoke to the skill set of a "good" musician as follows:

> Okay, so I think music is like a unifying factor, in terms of the values that you bring to the classroom. And just like patience, ability to listen, perseverance, like consistency. I think that's, like if you're in music college, you already have that just because you have to have that if you want to schedule rehearsals and like commit to recitals, and that kind of thing. That's just like part of your background, even though you don't even know. So that's there.

While Rafaela poignantly drew parallels connecting the (ensemble) music(cian) concept, or lens, to a possible space for understanding cross-cultural and multicultural differences, it is important to note that Rafaela was the only music performance major of all the student participants on both the US as well as the Malaysian side. The particular identity that one might associate with a music performance major as opposed to a music education major was noticeable with Rafaela in the ways in which she often referenced her arguments within a musician's framework.

In comparison, the Malaysian student group addressed the way in which music can serve as a conduit to understanding other cultures in a similar fashion. Sharing their music [traditions] during choir festivals, competitions, and volunteer music programs, these spaces serve as some sort of interchange to experience other cultural practices. In the same vein to what the US student group shared, for the Malay student group, music can serve as a space through which an eye opening to other ways of being can be sparked. Therefore music can serve as a connecting element in offering a conversation to

ultimately understand both differences and similarities. Aqil describes it based on his experiences as follows,

> So the music is the music and the competition is a platform for us to share our culture, and get to know about the place that without even being in Indonesia itself. And then we got to see other culture. I mentioned it before, yeah, and thus being exposed to all of this culture in one place has improved the way that we see the world, and that in being more open to other culture which we may not actually understand, but we are being more open. We try to understand, we trying to understand and we are being more... We have more appreciate. We appreciate more of the culture that we saw that we learned from interacting and sharing all the music with the people. So yeah, music has a big role.

The Malay student group saw music, and the arts in a broader sense, as a means through which one could learn about other cultures and in an ideal scenario how the arts can give impetus to examine these cultures further with the objective of making sense of possible perceived differences. Observing traditional dances and consequently examining cultural customs provide us a window into the "other" cultures. In this spirit, as Montaigne (1581/1877) has offered some insight: "[such coaction] will appraise [the learner] of other people's humors, manners, customs, their politics, theology, and jurisprudence, their social system, and their public works." Translating the concept into a wider concept, how upon "serious reflection" (Gaudelli & Laverty, 2015), one might reimagine and consider integrating new ways of being (Palmer, 2015) and thus understanding the world.

From the educator's perspective, music was as a space maker and an invitation to communicate and connect with one another. Dr. Naismith portrayed it in the following way:

> We couldn't [verbally] communicate because I didn't know Malay and they didn't know English, but they could show me everything. There was a lot of

> smiling going on and a lot of body language. Communicating that way was just somehow really wonderful.

This was the most critical finding proposing an argument that music study abroad programs may indeed differ from other study abroad programs. Precisely because music *can* create an opening and serve as a space maker to invite conversations and approach amongst the participants. Music seems to provide an additional layer or perhaps force that is conducive to some sort of bond amongst its practitioners. While the investigation of neurobiological processes that occur in the music practitioners' brain whilst musicking is beyond the scope of this study, there appears to be a connection or rather communication that goes beyond language. Therefore, in comparison to exactly the example of a macroeconomics study abroad program as illustrated earlier, nonverbal communication as described by Dr. Naismith would not be possible and consequently makes music stand out above other subject matters.

In conclusion, Dr. Naismith stated how music can reify relationships and thus, perhaps, create a space for communication. He concluded, "I guess it makes it more real. It reifies our relationships and has expanded my tolerance and continues to expand my tolerance for when things go wrong and what's wrong, what's right?"

Becoming Aware

Palmer (2015) suggests that,

> Study abroad experiences function not simply as longer, more intense (…) visits but, rather, as experiences that invert the subject and object of study. The worldview of the student becomes a primary object of study, which is examined, as it were, by the particulars (...) of the cultures" under investigation (p. 63). Palmer further elaborates that "study abroad trips provide opportunities for students to become the strange within a recalibrated familiar. The subject becomes the object and is interrogated by the context of study. (p. 63)

In other words, while the presumption of study abroad might be the "studying of the (host) culture(s), participants actually are confronted just as much with the *self*. This notion in turn can provoke to (re)examine their ways of being and knowing and thus "makes [it] possible [to conceptualize] another world in which to live" (Palmer, 2015, p. 63).

The US student group questioned both their personal habits as well as their cultural norms by being confronted with daily mundane situations. Due to the fact that this group traveled "abroad," known concepts or ways of being inevitably were in stark contrast. For it is only if you see a situation or habit lived *differently* that you might be offered a chance, or consider, to reflect on the ways you have known to be. A continued grappling with concepts previously foreign to the participants revealed as to be imperative to the reframing of ways of being. This conception reminds me again of Dewey (1938), who suggested that "sound educational experience involved, above all, continuity and interaction between the learner and what is learned" (p. 10).

In experiencing their peers from different cultural backgrounds also offered the US student group to actually identify similarities. These similarities manifested, amongst other factors, in the discovery of similar personality traits, suggesting that we exhibit peculiarities that go beyond cultural presumptions and conditioning. Perhaps unexpected as we usually go on a quest to seek out differences when studying abroad. This reminds me of Doerr (2019) who states that if the "project of studying abroad relies on the existence of borders to cross, do we inevitably focus on, or even seek out, difference rather than similarity among things we experience?" Jackie's experience confirms my proposition,

> It's been really interesting. Just the more we talk to them, seeing everything that we have either in common or less different (...) It's just so interesting to see personalities and yeah, how they are reflected. Because even if we're in different cultures, there are similar personalities across the culture, which is interesting because you're like, "Oh I have friends who have your interests and your personality back home."

In witnessing, or perhaps even living, other modi operandi, the US student group became aware of both negative and positive tendencies manifested in their (US) culture. It should be mentioned, that while some positive observations about their own cultural norms were revealed, the negative traits prevailed. This insight can be explained by the fact that everything new at first seems more interesting and often even enticing. In order to draw an informed conclusion on which tendencies ultimately preponderate, warrants a longitudinal study.

Lived experiences also helped reify formerly preconceived assumptions into observed and thus, in a way, validated truth for the experiencer. Specifically tying this notion to becoming actively aware of certain cultural traditions, Marisol mentioned that,

> especially going to the different places we went to the mosque to understand the Islamic religion. And then we went to that wedding and got to see that type of culture (...) And then we were in the heritage area also to see that culture and, eye-opening I think.

Experiencing other heritages such as the Islamic traditions *with* "locals" who practice said religion, as was the case with some Malaysian student participants, helped dispelling stereotypes. In other words, it can facilitate to locate these concepts within a context and thus better construe (its) meaning. Abstraction can be conceptualized and therefore help comprehend our perceived differences.

In comparison, the Malaysian student group became more aware of their own "cultural traditions" than they did about "other" culture(s) compared to the US student group. This occurrence can be ascribed to various circumstances. Firstly, the fact that the study abroad program did indeed take place in Malaysia (and not the US), and thus the Malaysian student group was confronted with Malaysia's way(s) of being. Secondly, for the majority of the Malaysian student participants mainland culture is different from their (Borneo) cultural customs whereas in particular the Kelantanese Bamboo forest was equally a completely new environment. This view raises the question once again in referencing Doerr (2019) who argues whether study abroad must entail crossing (national) borders in order to gain the benefits illustrated in the literature? The experiences as exhibited by the Malaysian student group would speak against that notion. However, the case could be made that the dialects and "cultural norms" as lived in the Kelantanese Bamboo forest compared to Kuala Lumpur and even Borneo are arguably more different than for instance Ohio to Seattle. This conception further gives credence to Doerr's (2019) argument that "recognizing diversity within what is usually considered homogenous is important" (p. 192), insofar that we cannot say "Malaysia is Malaysia."

The educator group depicted becoming aware as a process to both being able to consciously see one's own way of being in the world while also trying to understand how one's vis-à-vis sees you. Trying to comprehend how your counterpart seeks to understand and perceive you helps both discerning yourself and the other, which ultimately can foster understanding of both differences and similarities across cultures. In consideration of the class readings, if I were to speculate as to why the Malay participants did not

mention or provide any reference to social justice, I would conjecture that that was not a familiar term that would resonate within their narratives of experience.

What left me pondering was that some of the Malay students as well as one of the professors told us during informal conversations that issues they may be faced with that counter the government's narrative were strictly prohibited from discussion as they would face harsh punishments in the case of speaking out against the government.

Likewise, the absence of any mention of social justice among the US student-participants, would seem to suggest that this term would appear not to have currency for the students. Furthermore, in light of the discussion in Chapter 2 over the identity and positionality of the traveler, it seems like both student groups are doing what is typical of a first-time and relatively new travelers, which is questioning their identity vis-a-vis their relationship with people from other parts in the world. As I contemplate and reflect on my own study abroad experiences, especially my earlier ones where I was around the same age as the student-participants in the present study, the curriculum and classes seemed to be secondary to everything else.

The development of awareness around issues of social justice are a result of experiences, such as those afforded by travel and interaction, and reflection. While there were no explicit mentions of social justice in the interviews, there was ample evidence of their querying into identity and positionality. Ultimately, this would approach the goals of experiential learning, that is, a sense of social ethics and self-awareness. In order to approach these aims, both students and educators would have to be in contexts where these issues are discussed and reflected upon over time. In fact, the student participants witnessed their very own experience on this matter when they were trying to

facilitate a discussion during their final projects with the middle school students. Marisol reported that, “One thing that I took away from this experience is that it is hard to get the conversation going about social justice issues because a lot of the topics are very foreign to the students and not talked about.”

Global Citizenship

As I was conceptualizing the present study, seeking to uncover notions of Global Citizenship, aside from examining the role of music, was my primary intent. However, the contemplation of possible concepts of Global Citizenship turned out to be a secondary finding. The only group specifically addressing Global Citizenship were the educators. This occurrence can be explained in that I explicitly inquired about their thoughts on what a global citizen might look like in my interview. I did not use the terminology “global citizen” within my interview (protocol) conducted with student-participants.

Of the student-participants who most directly addressed the notion without mentioning the actual term was Sue. This insight can be attributed to the age factor. It is interesting however to note that while Global Citizenship education is a discourse held within undergraduate education, it was primarily both educators and Sue who conceptualized thoughts around the idea of a global citizen. Amongst the younger student-participants, only a few within the US group constructed thoughts that could be tied to the notion of Global Citizenship. This can be further explained in that “Global Citizen” might be more a buzzword, or perhaps construct, in the West and therefore not part of a daily conversation nor vocabulary in Malaysia. And while I question the negative connotation that Bourdieu (1989) implies when he argues that, “contestation of a

term's definition is a political struggle to impose one's vision of the world and merits investigation as such, rather than a designation of one definition as neutral and objective" (p 33), it does indeed warrant investigation as such. However, the concept of "global citizen" was not by any means a term that the students were swayed by, and therefore there seemed to be little implicit coercion to make them into this identity of which they had little conception. Instead, they *made* themselves into more open, more tolerant people, allowing the other members of the group to influence them in mostly positive ways, thereby impinging on their self-understanding as global *something*, but certainly not the oppressive, pseudo-neutral term that Bourdieu frets about.

Of the US student group, Sue mentioned that there is a multiplicity of ways of being in the world, and the realization that your way is not the only way may find a place within the discourse of what a global or perhaps world citizen might look like. Here is what Sue said,

> So I feel like it's so good to, especially for Americans. We are not number one. There are a lot of ways of thinking and doing and being in the world that are every bit as valid as the way we have chosen to think and be and do. And we don't get enough opportunity I don't think. (...) There are many ways of being in the world, of thinking. There are many conceptions of time and what's important about time or not about time. And the fact that there are no phones or clocks in any of the hotel rooms we stayed in. It's not art. That's the first thing I noticed (...) But I'm just like, right there. As Americans, we have clocks everywhere! (...) So it's good to remember that there are a lot of different ways to be in the world and yours isn't just necessarily the right way. Especially students from a Midwestern ...where it is more homogenous than [in] a big city.

Sue's reflection rings true with what Hendershot and Sperandio's (2009) findings show that becoming aware of "different aspects, ideas, and ways of responding to issues was key to developing an understanding of what global citizenship [might] look like" (p. 29).

Furthermore, Sue's disposition also echoes with what Hansen (2011) who describes [global citizenship] as a commitment to a broader moral purpose that goes beyond geographical borders, an awareness of how experiences with otherness can awaken us to wider insight and potentially inform a whole world philosophy.

Jackie reminded us that there is a "bigger world than just the bubble you live in," and with that, perhaps invites us to consider the abundance of other ways of navigating through life and to "look deeper." For Rafaela, attempting to identify with what a global citizen might look like, we should

> compromise, but not in a negative way because sometimes people are like, Oh, I compromise is like both parts lose. Well, no. A compromise is like, I give you this, you give me that, and then we'll make this together. That's how I see it. And if you don't compromise, if you just do what you think you have to do, then you can't play music with people. Because someone is going to have a different opinion or way of doing things.

What does speak to the sentiment of all participants, however, is what Gaudelli and Laverty (2015) describe a global experience to be "an experience standing out as an enduring memorial of an encounter with others" (p. 13).

Even within the group of educators, I recognized that the lingo must circulate more within Anglo-Saxon faculty "conference rooms" than it does in the east. Dr. Naismith perceived the notion of a global citizen as a certain objectivity that one should bring to the table - or to the world. He stated that,

> Global citizenship is part of a long, ever-continuing process of shedding what we think we know as important (...) maybe not shedding it, but seeing it more objectively like there's this thing that Americans do all the time and we don't question it, but there's this thing that Europeans do that's also really good. (...) I need to be questioning the way my relationships are with non-Westerners and everybody really.

The question arises as to whether it is indeed possible to see things objectively given that we are conditioned in some form or other by nature of our upbringing, our experiences, and perhaps ideologies. “Questioning” certain paradigms, however, as Dr. Naismith mentioned, seems an appropriate attempt to consider other perceptions.

Analysis: Across Groups

In this subsection, I present an analysis of why and how the two student groups addressed the analytical categories the way they did. Themes may vary as they are manifested across individuals or might apply in the same way to all members of the sample, depending on both the data and the method (Ayres et al., 2003). The disproportionate amount of data gathered from the US student participants compared to some of the Malaysian student participants merits further explanation. The primary reason may be attributed to the fact that I had the chance to interview the US students on three different occasions over the course of nearly three months. In comparison, I interviewed the Malaysian student participants once individually and conducted one two hour focus group with all the five Malaysian student participants together. Further, due to unforeseen organizational challenges, the Malaysian student participants did not participate the entire three weeks. For instance, they were not able to join us to Georgetown which was a crucial part and salient experience for the US American students.

In addition, the fact of the language barrier, which did emerge as one of the challenges reported by the Malaysian student participants, contributed substantially to the limited input by some of the Malaysian student participants. While I thought their

command of the English language was commendable, *their* perception was that their English language skill was an impediment at times to fully express themselves. In consideration of their perceived language impediment, we must contemplate how that might have influenced the data. How may these cognitive processes in having to translate one's sentiments first into a language that one does not feel one masters properly influence expressivity and beyond that, accuracy?

Personal Growth and Building Relationships

The concept of being taken out of one's comfort zone was addressed by both student groups. While the US student group arguably may have been pushed "further" out of their comfort zones based on the mere fact that they were navigating spaces completely unfamiliar to them, the Malaysian student group also addressed being pushed out of their comfort zone even within their national borders. Both groups revealed that the process led to personal development on a variety of levels and consequently created a cognitive dissonance (Gaudelli, 2016).

While the US student group predominantly discussed how being pushed out of your comfort zone led to self-reflection and learning about themselves, the Malaysian student group mentioned being forced to speak another language while also reporting having to come out of one's shell resulting in cognitive development. The educator group experienced being pushed out of their comfort zone as an invitation to being more open, which ultimately also resulted in (self) transformation.

Both student groups perceived face to face experiences as invaluable. The US student group cited a variety of reasons how face to face encounters allowed them insight into the Malaysian ways of being. In the same way, the Malaysian student group pointed

out that experiencing their counterparts first hand afforded them the opportunity to gain a more authentic and personal perception of the guests' cultural traits. The most salient argument presented by both groups was how perceptions through mass and social media can misrepresent "cultures" or nations and how face to face encounters helped demystify stereotypes.

The educator group did not directly address face to face encounters as a salient outcome, which can be explained that they did not interact with the student groups as much as the students did amongst each other. Both educators had to tend to family aside from leading the trip so that there was less time left to interact. Experiential learning was significantly more discussed by the US student group. This may be because the Malaysian student group were already familiar with the majority of places and activities and thus were not necessarily prompted to "construct new knowledge" (Kolb, 1984). A recurring theme amongst the US group was the experiences gained in the Bamboo forest predominantly as it pertained to the Kelantanese music traditions. While for some Malay students, the Bamboo forest was also new territory, it ultimately was still in their home country and the music learned and practiced is a subject they study at university on a nearly daily basis.

Additionally, the Malaysian student group did not partake in the entire "study abroad" program, particularly they did not join the US group to Georgetown, which arguably was a major part of the experiential learning experiences reported by the US student group. Both student groups cited an awakened interest in wanting to further explore other cultures. While the US student group emphasized "study abroad programs" and traveling in particular, the Malaysian student group primarily pointed out the mere

fact of wanting to explore more (other) cultures. This may be why the "study abroad discourse" is a much more frequently discussed notion or lingo in the West than it is in the East.

The educator group cited an "awakened interest" in wanting to repeat this experience of a cross-cultural exchange as well but from an educational standpoint insofar that this program gave impetus to considering organizing a similar exchange in the future. They perceived that study abroad experiences for their students were incontrovertibly beneficial. The US student group highlighted building relationships as the most salient pedagogical impact and take away from the entire study abroad experience. While the Malaysian student group did mention friendships as a notable outcome, "togetherness" as in spending time together was mainly their term of choice whereas the US participants explicitly mentioned the relationships they formed across both groups. The student participants across both groups described how music served as a connecting factor to build community. The US student group described a certain liberation in making music in this specific non-hierarchical condition, while the Malaysian student group perceived music to be figuratively the "glue" that held everything together.

Music as a Primary Conduit for Understanding Differences

Participants of both groups perceived music as instrumental in both understanding differences as well as recognizing similarities in ways of being. The US student group addressed it in describing music as a space and gateway serving as a potential catalyst to inquire about the encountered cultures' traditions and customs more deeply. The Malaysian student group described how music can serve as an intermediary space where

cross cultural exchange can happen. The US student group characterized music to give impetus to inquire as to "*why* is their scale and melody like this" for example. Similarly, the Malaysian student group perceived how the arts can bring about a curiosity to wanting to *know more* about "why are their dances like this"?

Likewise, the educators spoke about how music can invite to a dialogue, both verbal and non-verbal, and in this very sense reach across "national borders," cultural differences, and further categorizations such as age, position, background, etc. In sum, music was perceived to be this extra layer of connecting force by all three groups of analysis and therefore making the case for music study abroad programs being different than just any study abroad program.

In terms of how becoming aware about both one's own and other cultures was addressed, there was a difference between the two groups. While US students perceived a shift in how they saw both themselves as well as the "other" culture, the Malaysian student group primarily identified how they became aware of their 'own' cultural norms. The educators cited the importance of becoming aware how the *other* culture sees one's own culture in order to better understand both the vis-à-vis as well as seize the opportunity to self-reflect upon one's own way of being and acting.

Global Citizenship

In terms of how the participants addressed the concept of Global Citizenship, there was a distinct difference between both the US student group and the Malaysian student group as well as the educators in contrast to both student groups. While the US group did speak to a conception that could be linked to Global Citizenship without using the term, the Malaysian student group did not mention either the term nor the concept. In

contrast, the educators both elaborated and defined what in their perception the notion of a global citizenship might look like. The stark difference can be explained perhaps both by how the interview questions were phrased (different for the educators than for the students) as well as how the terminology and concept seems to be predominantly in use in the West.

Analysis: Across Individuals

US Student Participants

For analysis purposes, the US student group includes Rafaela although she was a European exchange student in the US herself at the time. Of the four US student participants, Rafaela was the only, solely music performance major. This manifested itself in various instances but most notably in her fascinating analogy tying the notion of a potential global citizen to the skill sets of what she perceives a fine musician to possess. Her identity as a performing (major) musician materialized further in that she often described her answers within a context for instance of an orchestra rehearsal, a bass player intensive weekend, or traveling from gig to gig as a professional musician. Her perceptions and associations speak to her conservatory upbringing. In addition, she is indeed on a trajectory to becoming a professional bass player. Rafaela also recalled Professor Kamrul's musicianship and the group's instrumental improvisations as one of her highlights. This stood out in contrast to most of the participants within the US student group as they tied their experiences often into a music educational context instead.

Rafaela was able to clearly articulate why and what being pushed out of one's comfort zone entails, at least in her estimation. This can be explained due to her various

prior travel experiences, not least her exchange year in the US she was engaged in at the time. Thus we might conclude that one becomes more aware of the concept and its benefits when repeatedly experiencing situations out of one's comfort zone. I believe however that this doesn't diminish the positive impact one can extract from these situations. Rafaela stated that "I thought I was going to the U.S. To study double bass, but honestly I learned more about myself than about the bass."

In considering her prior international experiences meant that Rafaela had something to compare to, which explained her voicing of some critique about the program. However, Rafaela concurred with all of the other US student participants in that she perceived building relationships as one of the most crucial impacts of the experience. This leads me to believe that the importance of building friendship was perceived across all participants, independent of background, age, and prior international travel experience.

In contrast to the rest of the student participants, Sue did not emphasize being pushed out of her comfort zone as much. This can be attributed to the age difference of nearly 40 years compared to some of her peers. Insofar as life experiences form and condition us so that being confronted with unfamiliar situations may not be as drastically impacting as they are perceived at a younger, more fragile age. Similarly, Sue was also not as influenced by the middle school visit since she had numerous related experiences in her professional career prior to this trip. This does not mean that Sue did not enjoy our school visit, it pertains more to the pedagogical work the students engaged in. In speaking of her professional career, of all US participants, Sue elaborated the most on how the readings and the more academic discourses were helpful to her professionally. Thus, this

leads me to believe that the emphasis and goal for participating in such a study abroad program understandably shifts as we grow older.

However, it should be noted that for Sue, too, building relationships was after all the biggest pedagogical impact. Supporting the argument that the social aspect of the experience, in particular the concept of bonding and forming friendships, does transcend age and prior personal experiences. Moreover, collaboration and connection is, according to Sue, what she centers her professional work on. As mentioned earlier in the discussion chapter, of the student participants, Sue and Rafaela were the only ones describing the notion of what a potential global citizen might look like without actually making use of the terminology. This too can be ascribed to the age difference in that one's occupation with politics and global affairs evolves over time and may differ at an older age. Sue mentioned that, "every time you travel, you are reminded that the operating system within which you live your life is not everybody's operating system." While Sue hasn't had much international travel experience, she has lived in various places within the US and visited Europe, Mexico, and Canada on prior trips.

Of all the participants, Marisol reiterated on many occasions how building relationships and especially spending time with the group was her absolute highlight of the study abroad program. In the same vein, she also indicated how valuable and impactful she perceived first hand experiences to be. In considering that she comes from a large family with nine siblings and thus is often surrounded by a lot of people as she told me, putting her emphasis on spending time with the group in context, may explain her feeling the most comfortable around a large group of people. Interestingly enough, my exploratory study showed similar results on the exact opposite. Insofar that the only

person who was an only child on said (Europe 2014) trip, reported that socializing and spending with the entire group was the most salient and positively impactful outcome of the trip. In a border sense, if I were to speculate, this can be attributed to the fact perhaps that we are indeed a group-living herd animal and thus living and functioning within a social group is a biological presupposition of the human race.

Marisol's rather timid appearance especially at the beginning of the trip may be attributed to the fact that she was the youngest of all participants, had traveled the least, and perhaps was most anxious in anticipation of the trip. Marisol was most excited about trying new foods, meeting and connecting with people, and to examine these encounters in seeking to construct meaning. This reminds me of Doerr (2019), who states that, "study abroad provides narratives to examine our daily experiences and mundane encounters like trying new foods and meeting new people and allow us to analyze and express what they mean" (p. 9).

Jackie was the only other student participant who was majoring in music performance. However, as mentioned in the participant portraitures section, Jackie is triple majoring; in addition to performance, she is also a music education and mathematics major. In contrast to Rafaela, and similar to Marisol, Jackie described and tried to associate pedagogical experiences in a music educational context. Perhaps indicating that her identity is more that of a music educator.

Jackie's initial environmental challenge specifically in the Bamboo forest may be attributable to her character traits and high-strung personality. Jackie's repeated assertion as to the importance of realizing that it is imperative to remind yourself "that there's a bigger world than just the bubble you live in" left me wondering. In thinking that Jackie

originally comes from a small town of only 2,000 inhabitants, this leads me to believe that her own description of "the bubble" was referring to her upbringing.

While all US student participants come from the same state in the Midwest, all of them come from the capital city. Even though it is similarly homogeneous, it still may encompass different ways of being in comparison to Jackie's hometown. Another interesting remark Jackie made was that "it means I can [let go]. I'm definitely probably going to live the same way when I go home, but at least it's possible that I can let go." This raises two questions: whether her perception of knowing that she *can* let go will actually influence both her quotidian way of being in the world and her (re)acting to mundane events. And further, what the long term impacts are of music study abroad programs as it pertains to personal development. I believe that the (self) awareness of the fact as mentioned by Jackie is certainly valuable. However, I wonder whether Dewey's (1938) argument that "sound educational experience involves, above all, continuity and interaction between the learner and what is learned" (p. 10) especially the emphasis on continuity; calls for a longer rupture of one's formed habits?

Malaysian Student Participants

Both Aqil and Michael spoke considerably more frequently during both the focus group as well as the individual interview. In my field notes I noted a similar pattern when I observed them as they interacted with the US student participants. Aqil and Michael were the two oldest participants on the Malay side. Aqil is also the oldest of three siblings. Although self-described as "rather shy," he exhibited an intrinsic predisposition and curiosity to inquire about the customs and ways in which "things are done and lived' in other countries. Of all the Malay student participants, Aqil has traveled

the most internationally and iterated on several occasions how he perceived these travel experiences to have fundamentally changed him. He attributed his English language skills to a large degree to his many prior travel experiences with the university choir. Perhaps his perception of increased English fluency, in turn, prompted him in turn to engage more with the guest students.

Aqil further revealed that building trust and feeling that he can "be himself" invited him to open up and express both more about himself as well as an interest in others. This shows the importance of connecting and getting along amongst all participants is crucial to feeling comfortable (enough) to open oneself up to others. His clear delineation of perceived benefits of cross cultural exchanges may be attributed to his various experiences in interacting with students from different cultural backgrounds. This may also explain his understanding of what he perceives to be the essential cultural difference between the Occident and Asia; that of critical thinking.

Michael had similar experiences like Aqil in terms of both his perception of critical thinking and the discrepancy of said concept between Asia and the west, as well as increased language skills, which he perceived as a positive impact of participating in this study abroad program. Michael comes from a large family and also has nine siblings. Although he is the seventh out of ten, perhaps his "big brother role" may be attributed to the fact that he has inhabited a similar role for his younger sisters. Interestingly, Michael also experienced that the visit from the US group allowed him to open up and consequently fully speak his mind. The question arises based on his statement, "I can be myself there," whether they were "trained," or whether they took it upon themselves that they had to represent a certain role or identity perhaps in front of the visiting guest?

Michael in particular felt compelled to contribute and respond to certain viewpoints and positions that were defined during class discussion, however, he did point out that the language barrier especially in an academic context was an impediment. While the language barrier was highlighted across the Malaysian student group, it especially formed an obstacle to all three female student participants. Of all female student participants, Sophia seemed the most vocal. She was also the oldest of the three women and the only one coming from a large metropolitan city. Indeed, she pointed out that she is a city girl. In comparison to the two other female student participants of which both come from remote villages on Borneo Island, this may explain Sophia's more proficient English language skills. English is commonly practiced in her home city, which has provided her opportunities to practice her English prior to participating in the present study abroad program. Though like Michael, Sophia indicated on various occasions her willingness to contribute to the discussions but felt impeded due to the language barrier.

Sophia is also the oldest of five children, bearing perhaps the responsibility of an oldest sibling. Having never traveled within Malaysia much outside the metro area of her hometown, Sophia was nearly as profoundly impacted by the Bamboo forest experience as her US. peers were. She had never seen rural parts of Malaysia nor had she ever been in nature before. Much less a Bamboo forest as we had seen and experienced in Kelantan. This may explain her fascination with the indigenous music and dance culture she encountered on her trip to Thailand and how this prompted a curiosity in her wanting to inquire more about traditional Malaysian culture(s). Sophia also seemed to be very involved in the instrument making process. In my interpretation, this might be explained

with the fact that she had never been in nature before and was fascinated with the surroundings in Kelantan.

Sophia was particularly surprised that her parents allowed her to partake in the program given that it happened over Eid al-Adha, the holiest day in the Muslim religion. Therefore, she made it a priority to exercise her English as much as she could since her mother encouraged her to take advantage of the opportunity to work with English speaking peers. I could see her excitement throughout the program and believe it was to a large extent because she was so grateful to be able to participate.

Nayla perceived the language barrier as a significant obstacle in her interactions with the guests from the West, especially as it pertained to participating in class discussions but also just communicating with the adults. Nayla conveyed that "maybe the English, the English is like too... complex. Complex. Too hard to understand. We understand, but we cannot answer it like…different standards from Malaysian." Except in our one on one interview, Nayla did not disclose much of herself. She did however confess that her primary reason for signing up to the Musicking Futures program was the fact that it was credit bearing.

It appears that she may have been extrinsically motivated rather than intrinsically; at least at first. If I were to speculate, this may explain perhaps as to why she did not seem to be as involved as her colleagues. In addition, Nayla was amongst the youngest student participants particularly within the Malay student group. I did however notice during the focus group interview that she wanted to share her thoughts. I felt a certain hunger in Nayla to seek something *else* than "home," something more pluralistic perhaps. Of course, these were only my personal impressions.

I wonder whether there were cultural "norms" that perhaps influenced certain behavior. As reported earlier, all three female students seemed to contribute noticeably less than the male students. While language barrier and age seemed to be part of the reason, it appears that there might be cultural and thus related religious habits which may dictate certain behavior and "protocols." Nayla enjoyed learning about the different ways of being from her US peers visiting from the other side of the globe. Based on our interview, the music she likes to listen to, and what had lingered in her memory from her Thailand trip, it appeared that Nayla enjoys diversity both in music as well as in ways of being in the world.

Similar to Nayla, Hannah perceived the language barrier to be a significant impediment. Of all the student participants, Hannah seemed the most reserved. This was reflected in her hardly participating in any discussion we had. Though I did sense that Being the youngest student participant along with Nayla, Hannah also had to return to a job before the program ended and thus could not attend the last few classes. Though in my observations both Hannah and Nayla perceived building relationships as their highlight of the program. When the US students were discussing the last weekend in Kuala Lumpur and how they could invite their Malaysian friends for a sleepover, Hannah was overjoyed.

She could be caught speaking Malay the most out of the Malaysian participants, which made it hard to decipher at times what she was truly thinking, commenting on, and to fully grasp her experience during the Musicking Futures program. However, she did make an effort to attend the focus group at the end of our journey in Malaysia though the language barrier impeded her from expressing in detail how she perceived the program

reflecting on the experience retroactively. This translated in Hannah's often seconding her peers' answers to prompts and discussions we had throughout the focus group interview.

Chapter VIII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this case study was to explore with a group of music educators their perceptions of how the experience of music programs abroad shapes the potential for their students to become global citizens, and with a group of students the program's educative impact. A qualitative single-case study approach was chosen to gain insight into both students' and educators' experiences in order to "investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p. 16).

A total of eleven participants, nine student participants, of which four were American and five Malay students, and two educators, both one American and one Malay educator partook in this music study abroad program. Over the course of three weeks, we traveled and stayed in three different destinations across Malaysia. Data collection from eleven participants consisted of field notes, semi-structured interviews with both students and educators, and a focus group with the Malay student participants. Many conversations with research participants occurred outside of formal interviews and were included as data. Interviews were transcribed and coded for analysis.

Three major findings surfaced from the collected data to address three research questions: (a) All participants described benefits ranging from personal growth to building friendships while some participants also experienced language and academic challenges by participating in this study abroad program in music; (b) a strong majority

of participants described how music served both as a conduit to cross-cultural understanding as well as a medium for bonding; (c) half of the participants indicated that becoming aware of various modes of being as a result of experiencing other cultures can help foster the notion of Global Citizenship.

Considering that the work presented here has come to fruition in the year 2020 and comes to its final form in the early days of 2021, I believe this study reintroduces a value/concept of education that is larger than what we were discussing even a year ago. People are talking about social emotional health, about well-being, kids seeing their friends; this was not a discussion even at the beginning of 2020, before the COVID pandemic. It prompts me to re-envision and re-question the function of schooling. I inch closer to the importance and the valuing of a more holistic approach to "schooling," perhaps along the lines of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), the educator and founder of the Waldorf schools whose headquarters, the Goetheanum, is one town over from where I was born in Basel, Switzerland.

Social emotional health and the development of friendships were two of the powerful effects that we witnessed from our physical, musical, and inner journeys over the course of this study. These were not mere enhancements to a trip abroad but in the context of learning, sharing, and interacting in certain structured ways, these pointed towards a broader and deeper awareness of what we are about as educators, students, and scholars of pedagogy. John Dewey, among many others, has pointed the way to a much expanded conception of education, one in which experience and deep embeddedness in culture unfolds the full social potential of the individual when sincere social interactions and classroom work are contiguous, not artificially separated. In settings and

intentionally designed experiences that merge formal learning, interactions, and the medium of music, we begin to *experience* multiculturalism rather than just talking about it. To close and in consideration of the current times, I can't help but think of what D. T. Hansen said about a global citizen, or rather "a cosmopolitan outlook," which "positions people to sustain their integrity and continuity through the vicissitudes of unpredictable change" (cited in Bogen, 2013).

Conclusions

RQ 1: What is the Educative Impact of Study Abroad Programs in Music?

Participants identified a variety of benefits as well as a few challenges in participating in a study abroad program in music. All participants reported that participation in this music study abroad program had generally a positive and educative impact, possibly outweighing challenges. Both the US as well as the Malaysian participants identified being pushed out of their comfort zone as a catalyst for personal growth, cognitive development as well as a shift in their worldview. Engaging with and living in different cultural habits prompted a (re)examination of both their own cultural norms as well as an inquiry into other ways of being and thinking in the world. One participant mentioned that "I would say it just reminds you that there's a bigger world than just the bubble you live in." Regardless of background, nationality, or age, participants found that experiential learning experiences were both the most salient as well as impactful in investigating and discovering the multiplicities of being in the world.

The participants overwhelmingly felt that the most salient pedagogical impact occurred from building relationships. Out of classroom experiences were reported to have

had both the greatest influence on relationship building but also gave room for free play, which in turn prompted self-reflection and the imagining of the perspective of others.

RQ 2: What Role does Music Play in Achieving Cross-Cultural Understanding?

Participants found music to play a crucial role in understanding differences but also recognizing similarities across and within cultures. Specifically, participants described how music served as a catalyst to further inquire both cultural as well as musical aspects to ultimately construe meaning and put abstraction into context. Participants mentioned how music has been a doorway to understanding the world, a connection to history about where traditions originate from, and a space within which to perceive other ways of being through different cultural frameworks. This is an important way to render difference meaningful.

One participant mentioned how making music in a collective predisposes a skill set that entails the ability and sensibility to listen to one another, to compromise, and to find creative consensus. Musicians encompass an understanding of a necessity to collaborate for the common good. Consequently, participants found that music and the musician can indeed be conduits to achieving cross-cultural understanding.

RQ 3: How are Perceptions of Global Citizenship influenced by studying Music Abroad?

While none of the student participants explicitly mentioned how the perception of Global Citizenship might be influenced by studying music abroad, the educators did speak to the concept of what a global citizen might look like. Some of the student participants conceptualized thoughts around the idea of what global citizenship might entail. One student participant found that “there are a lot of ways of thinking and doing

and being in the world that are every bit as valid as the way we have chosen to think and be in the world (...) and yours isn't just necessarily the right way." Drawing from this notion and integrating it with what the educators perceived how Global Citizenship might look like, participants found it critical to exhibit a certain objectivity when engaging with cultural customs that are not one's own, and to imagine the perspectives of others. Perhaps, looking at this conception more in terms of a process, student participants are *beginning* a notion of global citizenship.

Recommendations for Educators

This study was conducted to primarily capture participants' experiences and gain insight into the educative impact of study abroad programs in music while also seeking to provide future music educators with possible recommendations as to how to foster valuable music study abroad experiences for their students. I suggest the following recommendations, which have crystalized from this study: 1) Since musical experience in cross cultural learning presented itself to the consciousness of the participants as a meaningful means through which to deeply connect with foreign cultures, musical experiences would seem a rich source for furthering emotional/empathic connections in study abroad programs; 2) because music encompasses the psychosocial emotional aspects that further bonding, which can contribute to cross and multicultural understanding, music study abroad appears to offer a distinct space for exploration. Thus educators could purposefully foster such musical engagements by designing meaningful musical experiences that engage the involved participants; 3) more broadly, perhaps beyond music education, the newness of unfamiliar experiences seemed to heighten the

impact for the participants. Studies of proposed curricula abroad thus could heighten impact. Therefore, music educators in designing music curricula, provided that resources are available, might look for places that could heighten the historical imagination and multicultural awareness that could impact student learning related to specific concepts.

This study has demonstrated the importance of cross-cultural musical encounters. Cross-cultural learning is important but music provides a means by which to connect on an emotional/empathic level that perhaps one might not experience when studying philosophy or "book knowledge" abroad. Study abroad programs in music can provide multiple educational opportunities for participants. It is the strategic shaping of the experience that if it "modulates the learner's outlook, attitude, and skill," can have a significant and long-lasting impact (Dewey, 1938).

Limitations

Since this study made use of a qualitative lens for the analysis of the experiences of the participants, findings are not generalizable. The nature of a single case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context" (Yin, 2014, p. 16). The experiences and circumstances encountered are inevitably unique to this very trip. As Doerr said, "every study abroad experience is different, even for the same person. One's stage in life, destination, the goal of the stay, the context of the stay, the group one goes with - all these affect the experience" (p. 9). Therefore, this study does not aim for generalizability as the multitude of factors and circumstances occurred during the study cannot be replicated exactly. However, replication logic (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Yin, 1994) may be used in order to apply general findings beyond the

participants in this study with the attempt to inform future educators about potential impacts study abroad programs in music can have.

Recommendations for Future Research

My personal study abroad experiences have been life changing for me and I have witnessed the same sentiment both in my colleagues and first and foremost in my students. In an ever-growing interdependent society, it is crucial that our young people develop a sense of cultural intelligence in order to better navigate a more complex and delicate world (Antonelli, 2020).

How can we foster experiences that "arouse curiosity, strengthen initiative, and set desires and purposes that are sufficiently intense to carry a person over dead places in the future" (Dewey, 1938, p. 38)? How can such experiences be prompted in study abroad programs in music? With these questions in mind, I propose the following for future research:

1. **Larger sample and longitudinal studies**

Studies including both larger participant samples as well as longer duration of study abroad programs. Longitudinal studies might inform what the educational impact reveals after the first month of excitement vanishes since prior studies show that longer stays may result in higher personal growth, academic performance, and cultural awareness (Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). Though how exactly do factors like distance traveled and amount of travel time affect learning?

In addition, I suggest for both short and longer study abroad stays to interview participants for example one, five, and ten years after the experience to examine what still

lingers with these participants one, five and ten years respectively after conclusion of the program.

2. **Reciprocal study abroad exchange**

Studies investigating programs where both student groups reciprocally visit the other in order to examine whether and how the educational impact varies on the student groups and how that might be explained.

3. **Extended musical activities**

Due to unforeseen circumstances, many musical aspects during the Musicking Futures in Malaysia trip had to be canceled last minute. I suggest conducting a study with a bigger emphasis on extended musical activities to investigate whether and how the role of music might change.

4. **Providing a translator for non-native speakers**

This study revealed that language barriers impeded certain students from expressing themselves more explicitly in specific situations. I suggest for future studies to provide a translator for the participants who do not communicate in their mother tongue to examine whether expression in one's first language reveals more nuanced impressions, feelings, and perspectives of those participants.

Epilogue – Coda

During the writing of this dissertation the irony was/is that there is no (international) travel. How will COVID affect study abroad programs and traveling going forward? How can we reconnect with communities across borders during a time where mandated social isolation seems to disconnect us, and as result, (re)socializing seems to

never have been more crucial? As I reflect upon my own journey both in life and as a facilitator of this study, I have experienced the profound importance of friendships, journeying, trust, and well-being, especially given the current circumstances. I have also become even more convinced of the necessity as an educator, and maybe a global citizen, to foster and encourage such encounters for my students.

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