

July 2023

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Recommended Citation

Lee, J., Kobia, C., & Son, J. (2023). Improving global competence in classroom-based experiential learning activities. *Journal of Global Education and Research*, 7(2), 131-145. <https://www.doi.org/10.5038/2577-509X.7.2.1116>

Improving global competence in classroom-based experiential learning activities

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to develop learning activities to improve global competence for a classroom-based course in the field of clothing and textiles and explore how those activities affected the global competence of college students. To achieve this goal, the researchers proposed the following objectives: (a) develop learning activities on global competence and (b) explore the influences of newly proposed learning activities on the global competence of college students. The authors analyzed students' reflective essays to identify themes through constant comparative analysis. The authors found participants learned about the Japanese culture through diverse aspects of global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions— throughout the semester via these learning activities. The authors also found informal writing could work as a starting point, where students were slowly exposed to a different culture, and reflective essays worked as a final summarizing phase where students could think further about their learning process related to global competence. This research is significant in terms of providing an empirical example of how to increase global competence in classroom-based courses. Additionally, scholars and teaching practitioners can gain insights from this study on how to improve global competence for the future workforce in a global economy.

Keywords

global competence, experiential learning, Japanese culture, curriculum development

Revisions

Submission date: Jul. 10, 2019; 1st Revision: Feb. 27, 2020; 2nd Revision: Sep. 3, 2020; 3rd Revision: Jun. 22, 2021; 4th Revision: Nov. 8, 2021; 5th Revision: Apr. 4, 2022; Acceptance: Apr. 8, 2022

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Improving Global Competence in Classroom-Based Experiential Learning Activities

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to develop learning activities to improve global competence for a classroom-based course in the field of clothing and textiles and explore how those activities affected the global competence of college students. To achieve this goal, the researchers proposed the following objectives: (a) develop learning activities on global competence and (b) explore the influences of newly proposed learning activities on the global competence of college students. The authors analyzed students' reflective essays to identify themes through constant comparative analysis. The authors found participants learned about the Japanese culture through diverse aspects of global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions— throughout the semester via these learning activities. The authors also found informal writing could work as a starting point, where students were slowly exposed to a different culture, and reflective essays worked as a final summarizing phase where students could think further about their learning process related to global competence. This research is significant in terms of providing an empirical example of how to increase global competence in classroom-based courses. Additionally, scholars and teaching practitioners can gain insights from this study on how to improve global competence for the future workforce in a global economy.

Keyword: global competence, experiential learning, Japanese culture, curriculum development

Introduction

Due to the ever-growing global economy and businesses worldwide, there is an increasing need for a workforce with high global competence—an ability to interact with people in various intercultural contexts (Hunter et al., 2006). The importance of a workforce with high global competence has been particularly high in the United States because of its dependency on foreign markets for its economic success. For example, 40% of the profits for U.S. firms in the Standard & Poor's 500 stock index came from outside the United States in 2010 (Newman, 2011). As a result, many universities incorporate various learning opportunities to increase students' global competence, such as study abroad programs (Salisbury et al., 2013) and foreign language courses (Byram et al., 2013), which have resulted in numerous studies about increasing global competence through these programs (Byram et al., 2013; Massaro, 2022; Salisbury et al., 2013). However, there is a literature gap for

understanding how to increase global competence for students who have not sought out study abroad programs and foreign language courses as a part of their curriculum (Deardorff, 2011; Schenker, 2019).

The clothing and textiles field has always been one of the most globalized industry sectors in the world (Karpova et al., 2011). This industry sector “operates within an interdependent global system” (Jin et al., 2011, p. 171), where employees are required to interact with people from different countries and cultures daily. Therefore, employees’ global competence determines the effective interactions with people from other cultures holistically based on the understanding of various cultures (cognition), the sensitivity of other cultures (affection) with proper behaviors (Deardorff, 2011). Consequently, individual workers’ global competence in the field of clothing and textiles highly affects the success of their businesses (Jin et al., 2011). However, scholars believe there is still a lack of classroom instruction to help increase those various dimensions in global competence in the field (Jin et al., 2011).

Based on previous studies (Byram et al., 2013; Hunter et al., 2006; Kolb, 1984; Lee et al., 2008; Salisbury et al., 2013), the purpose of this research was to develop learning activities to improve global competence for a classroom-based course in the field of clothing and textiles and explore how those activities affected the global competence of college students. While achieving the purpose of this research, this study proposed the following research question based on the previous literature: What are the influences of newly proposed learning activities in a classroom-based course on the global competence of college students in the field of clothing and textiles?

To achieve this goal, the researchers proposed the following objectives to (a) develop learning activities on global competence and (b) explore the influences of newly proposed learning activities on the global competence of college students. The authors analyzed students’ reflective essays to identify themes through constant comparative analysis. This research is significant in terms of exploring how to increase global competence in classroom-based courses. Additionally, scholars and teaching practitioners can gain insights from this study on improving global competence for the future workforce in a global economy.

Literature Review

The importance of global competence has been emphasized by many scholars in the context of the global economy (Deardorff, 2011), resulting in many different measures to define and achieve global competence reported in Table 1. Several researchers identify the core definition of global competence as an ability to adapt personal interactions with cultural commonalities and differences during intercultural encounters (Bennett, 2011; Dejaeghere & Cao, 2009; Gill, 2007; Rathje, 2007; Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor, 2008). Other definitions emphasize skills required in “economically oriented applications that emphasize efficiency” and use the meanings of economic activities with an “education-based perspective that emphasizes human development” (Rathje, 2007, p. 256).

Scholars believe three dimensions comprise global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral (Graf, 2004). The affective dimension, intercultural sensitivity, includes “curiosity, cognitive flexibility, motivation, and open-mindedness” (Bennett, 2011, p. 3; Graf, 2004). Curiosity is “a special type of the broader category of information-seeking” (Kidd & Hayden, 2015, p. 449) and “is the desire for new knowledge, information, experiences, or stimulation to resolve gaps or

experience the unknown” (Grossnickle, 2014, p. 26). Cognitive flexibility is “the ability to change behavior such as thoughts or actions in response to situational demands” (Whiting et al., p.268). Motivation is a “certain level of readiness to take action” (De Brabander & Martens, 2014, p. 17). Open-mindedness is a mindset that is “(a) willing and (within limits) able (b) to transcend a default cognitive standpoint (c) to take up or take the merits of (d) a distinct cognitive standpoint” (Baehr, 2011, p. 199) seriously.

Table 1. Definitions of Global Competence

Author	Definition
Bennett (2011, p. 3)	a set of affective, cognitive, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts
DeJaeghere & Cao (2008, p. 438)	his or her perceptions and responses to cultural difference and the capability to shift cultural perspective and adapt behavior to cultural commonalities and differences
Uso-Juan & Martínez-Flor (2008, p. 161)	the knowledge of how to interpret and produce a spoken or written piece of discourse with a particular socio-cultural context
Gill (2007, p. 176)	the capacity to make a more quantitative judgment about the nature of intercultural encounter and experience
Rathje (2007, p. 292)	the ability to bring about the missing normality and therefore create cohesion in the situation

Based on a cognitive part of the learning process, the cognitive dimension includes “cultural self-awareness, culture-general knowledge, and culture-specific knowledge” (Bennett, 2011, p. 3). Cultural self-awareness is an ability to “understand and apply subjective cultural elements to their own lives” (Dejaeghere & Cao, 2009, p. 439). Cultural specific knowledge means “an ability to tell differences between two particular cultures” (Bennett, 1998, p. 5). Culture-general knowledge means an ability “general cultural contrasts that are applicable in many cross-cultural situations” (Bennett, 1998, p. 6). The behavioral dimension relates to intercultural behaviors individuals perform (Graf, 2004), including “relationship-building skills, behavioral skills, listening and problem-solving, empathy, and information gathering skills” (Bennett, 2011, p. 3). Empathy is “the attempt to consider the perspective of the other person(s) in a communication event” (Broome, 1991, p. 236). Each of these three global competence dimensions affects the others, and all are critical to improving overall global competence in learners (Deardorff, 2011; Graf, 2004). For example, a learner increases only a limited amount of overall global competence when they only utilize the global competence cognitive dimension, such as the historical, political, and social contexts of a culture (Deardorff, 2011).

Global competence is considered an important factor for an individual’s career success and, ultimately, the business’s success in the global business realm. It is because individual workers’ global competence determines “effective management of business operations” in global settings (Morley & Cerdin, 2010, p. 805). Global businesses require individuals with high global competence due to a variety of cultural and institutional complexities in business operations (Morley & Cerdin, 2010). Furthermore, the inclusion of global competence education is considered crucial in some countries, especially the United States, because of the increasing growth of diversity within social and cultural contexts in its nation (Deardorff, 2011). The improvement of different cultures and personal development through global competence growth could be applied to current social and cultural contexts where people learn to understand and adapt to the cultural diversity of society (Dejaeghere & Cao, 2009).

Some researchers found that global competency can be instructed in classroom-based instruction in college (Liao et al., 2019; Zhou, 2022). Liao et al. (2019) found that international-related projects and assessments satisfied business-majored graduate students’ engagement in global educational

experience under limited financial and time resources. Especially interactive learning activities are favored to increase understanding of global competence by the students. In addition, undergraduate students in diverse majors proposed personal and institutional comprehensive internationalization of global competence through contextual and verbal knowledge and cognitive strategies, activities and performances, motivations and goals, and attitudes (Zhou, 2022).

In the context of clothing and textiles, researchers have investigated how to improve global competence through various curriculum development projects (Karpova et al., 2011; Jin et al., 2011). For example, Karpova et al. (2011) developed virtual learning activities based on global teams and analyzed students' experiences with these learning activities. They found students could discover new knowledge, acquire new skills, and achieve personal development through learning activities transferable to working in the global workplace (Karpova et al., 2011). Jin et al. (2011) developed and infused four modules to increase global understanding using Chinese case studies. They found that the number of correct answers related to global understanding increased by 15% across modules after completing the modules. Scholars, however, believe more curriculum development is needed to increase global competence to help meet the demand from the textiles and apparel industry sectors (Jin et al., 2011). However, the effort to increase the global competence in the clothing and textiles field has been limited (Karpova et al., 2011). Therefore, based on previous research on global competence (Deardorff, 2011; Liao et al., 2019; Zhou, 2022), the following research question is proposed: What are the influences of newly proposed learning activities in a classroom-based course on the global competence of college students in the field of clothing and textiles?

Methods

Using Kolb's experiential learning model, classroom-based experiential learning activities were developed in 2014 as a component of a senior-level core textiles and apparel course on the social and psychological aspects of clothing at a land grant university in the southern United States. Kolb's experiential learning model is one of the most famous learning theories in education and has been used in many studies for decades (Kolb, 1984; Lee et al., 2008). Scholars believe Kolb's model is "a holistic, multilinear model of the learning process" that explains how people learn through real-world experiences (Lee et al., 2008, p. 161). Experiential learning considers learning "as a process whereby concepts are derived from and continually modified by experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 26), where "knowledge is continuously derived from and tested out in the experiences of the learner" (Kolb, 1984, p. 27).

Scholars believe it is crucial for colleges to incorporate day-to-day learning activities to help extend global competence education in addition to school-wide global competence experiences, such as study abroad programs and foreign language courses (Deardorff, 2011; Mansilla & Chua, 2017). However, many school-wide programs only serve a limited number of students due to high costs (e.g., study abroad programs) or initial interest in different cultures (e.g., foreign language courses; Deardorff, 2011). For day-to-day learning activities to increase global competence, incorporating various cultural learning activities related to a subject matter is essential for students to "see from multiple cultural perspectives" that differ from their own (Deardorff, 2011, p. 69; Kjellgren & Keller, 2018). Possible global competence learning activities to incorporate include interactions with international students, scholars, faculty members, and experiential learning activities in their community (Deardorff, 2011).

In this study, the authors developed experiential learning activities to increase students' global competence using Japanese culture, specifically Japanese traditional and contemporary fashion, as a primary cultural context in a face-to-face class. Fashion is considered an example of a larger phenomenon that involves the creation and attribution of symbolic meanings of national culture (Crane & Bovone, 2006). Furthermore, because of its close association with self-perceptions, clothing is particularly well-suited to showing the relationship between personal values and values attributed to material goods in a culture (Crane & Bovone, 2006). Additionally, because of the growth of the Japanese fashion market in the 2000s and its cultural uniqueness in contrast to the U.S. fashion market, there is a strong need to understand the Japanese culture for U.S. fashion businesses (Lee & Son, 2017). Using the Japanese culture reflected in the Japanese fashion as a primary cultural context in the curriculum development, the authors simulated real-life experiences of understanding and interacting with a culture where participants have less knowledge about but have a high probability of interacting in their future careers.

Throughout the semester, participants (a) learned about Japanese contemporary and traditional fashion in lectures and engaged in informal writing assignments (informal writing); (b) participated in a kimono wearing workshop conducted by a university Japanese cultural coordinator (Kimono Workshop); (c) prepared and presented a lesson about Japanese culture and fashion to high school students (lesson plan presentation), and (e) reflected upon their experiences of the learning process (reflective essay). Informal writing assignments included two short reading, reflection assignments (Reading Reflection), and two assignments that incorporated a short writing prompt and a visual image (Wiki Picture), based on the textbook chapters from *Dress as Nonverbal Communication and the Body* (Miller-Spillman et al., 2012). During the Kimono Workshop, a Japanese cultural coordinator—a university extension agent who teaches Japanese culture in the local community—conducted a workshop to teach how to wear a kimono. During the workshop, participants demonstrated wearing a kimono and learned about Japanese culture through their interactions. Two weeks after this workshop, participants, in groups of three to four, created a lesson plan for local high school students about traditional, contemporary Japanese culture and dress. The lesson plan aimed to create an eight-minute PowerPoint presentation for local high school students about traditional and contemporary Japanese culture and fashion to introduce Japanese culture to the local community. The lesson plan included at least five-course concepts and pictures relevant to what they learned and collected throughout the semester. One week after the lesson plan practice, participants presented their lesson plan to local high school students and completed their reflective essays after their presentation. Once they were complete with all learning activities, participants were asked to write a short essay (up to one page) with the following questions relating to the influences of the newly proposed learning activities on their global competence:

- What did you learn from the entire class, especially through the Japanese culture workshop for high school students?
- Explain how you prepared the lesson plan for a Japanese culture workshop to include each learning strategy and evaluate how it affected your learning about Japanese culture and the course content.
 - Informal writing assignments about Japanese culture (e.g., reading reflection and Wiki picture).
 - Kimono wearing demonstration workshop by Japanese cultural coordinator (Kimono wearing lesson plan preparation and lesson plan practice).
 - Japanese culture workshop demonstration for high school students.

- Explain your experiences and challenges during the Japanese culture workshop demonstration for high school students.
- Explain how the experiences of the Japanese culture workshop demonstration affected your learning and understanding of Japanese culture.
- Explain what you would do differently next time you present the demonstration and why.
- Explain how knowledge throughout this class will affect your daily life in terms of understanding different cultures.

Data Collection

The authors analyzed data based on the phenomenological method—a qualitative research tradition to find essences in human experiences through phenomenological reduction and description (Giorgi, 1997). The technique was used to understand the influences of newly proposed learning activities in a classroom-based course on college students’ global competence in clothing and textiles. The authors collected qualitative data through reflective essays—up to one page—written at the end of the semester from twenty-two participants. Reflective essays were used for data collection because they allow respondents to “fully express their responses in as much detail as desired” (Turner, 2010, p. 756). Reflective essays also can provide rich, thick descriptions from respondents (Turner, 2010). The participants described their experiences and interpreted the meanings of experiences in acquiring global competence after going through the learning activities (Giorgi, 1997) in their words through reflective essays where the participants actively constructed interpretations of their experiences in the learning activities (Laverty, 2003). The Institutional Review Board approved this study. All participants were female, and each reflective essay was given a pseudonym after data collection.

Data Analysis

The authors used phenomenological data reduction (Rennie et al., 1988) and constant comparative analysis (Fram, 2013) to analyze the data. Phenomenological data reduction is a recurrent process by which the researcher continuously returns to the horizon of experience to generate new meanings (Gilstrap, 2007). The constant comparative analysis is an “interactive and inductive process of reducing the data through constant recording” (Fram, 2013, p. 3). The constant comparative analysis specifically includes open coding, axial coding, and conceptual mapping to create a conceptual map based on discovered themes (Boeije, 2002). The analysis of the data was theory-driven, where the authors analyzed the data with the concept of global competence by Deardorff (2011) and Kolb’s experiential learning (1984) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). First, the authors used phenomenological data reduction to condense participants’ descriptions of their experience into meaning units to identify key ideas (Rennie et al., 1988). After that, the authors conducted open coding to code each meaning unit to determine the data patterns (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). After open coding, the authors conducted axial coding “to group initial codes along with conceptual categories that reflect commonalities among codes” (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 223). Once categories were created by axial coding, the authors created a conceptual map guided by the notions of global competence where relationships and interconnections among categories were established (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Based on qualitative data collected through reflective essays, this study’s authors built a conceptual map to explain the influences of learning activities on the global competence of college students.

Trustworthiness

The following criteria for credibility, transferability, and dependability, and confirmability were used to increase the trustworthiness of this study's naturalistic inquiries (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). The criteria included (a) prolonged engagement and persistent observation by rereading of the data for credibility (Braun & Clarke, 2006), (b) thick descriptive data gathered by open-ended questions for transferability, and (c) peer debriefing (Marshall & Rossman, 2016; Schoenberger, 1991) for dependability and confirmability. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasized the importance of rereading the data after data coding as it provides prolonged engagement and persistent observation (Lincoln & Guba, 1986). This process increases the credibility of the data analysis process. The authors read the collected data multiple times to ensure that they were not missing any themes, and unnoticed themes in the first data analysis were added to increase the credibility of the data analysis. Scholars also believe open-ended questions can increase transferability by "encouraging or forcing the respondents to think things through" (Schoenberger, 1991, p. 183). Using peer debriefing, one of the authors and a colleague in the field discussed emergent themes and a coding map to determine whether the coding map was grounded in the data to increase dependability and confirmability (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Through that process, the coding map was determined to be grounded to the collected data. To further address this study's dependability issue, the authors followed Shenton's (2004) protocol; hence, future researchers can replicate this study. Shenton's protocol emphasized a detailed explanation of research design and its implementation, along with the operational details of data gathering (Shenton, 2004). This research included sections of the learning activity design and implementation and the data gathering procedures in the methodology.

Findings

Many participants in this study did not have extensive previous knowledge about Japanese culture. Most of the participants also did not have much interest in learning about Japanese culture when starting this curriculum. One participant said she "actually felt like I did not know anything about Japanese culture until this workshop" (Dagmar), and another said she "had a basic knowledge of the Japanese culture" (Sarah). Some participants even mentioned they had stereotypes of the Japanese culture (Francine) or were not interested in learning about the culture (Cecilla). Another participant mentioned:

Much of what I knew before taking this course and preparing the workshop for the high school students was stereotype information that I had gleaned from movies, talking with other people, and little bits I would read—which was not always accurate (Francine).

Only one participant in the study reported she always loved Japan, stating, "Preparing the lesson plan for the culture workshop was easy to do because I was putting together a PowerPoint for a country I've always loved" (Elisa).

First Step to Learn About a Different Culture

As a first step for preparing students to present their lessons, the authors implemented informal writing assignments throughout the semester. This research found that the first informal writing assignment was an introduction to the Japanese culture, and through subsequent writing prompts, students slowly learned more about Japanese culture. As a result, they started improving their cognitive flexibility about the Japanese culture, creating a perspective about the Japanese culture,

which they “had not had before” (Adell), and “started becoming motivated to learn about the Japanese culture as well as plan for making an interesting lesson plan presentation for high school students at the end of the semester” (Lindsay). Additionally, students could formulate their own perspectives about Japanese culture by researching and completing the assignment. For example, Adell said “while preparing for the lesson plan, my previous reading reflections/wiki pictures helped me create my perspective about Japanese culture” and Lindsay added “when I prepared for the lesson plan, the writing assignment helped me because I had to really research my topic. Researching is the best way to learn about something.”

Along with the growth of the affective dimension of global competence, in cognitive flexibility and motivation, participants started gathering culture-general knowledge based on “learning about the course concepts about different cultures” (Sarah) and culture-specific knowledge such as the “differentiation of traditional and modern kimono styles” (Dagmar) and the “visual recognition of the Japanese culture” (Adell). They also started acquiring information gathering skills, where they learned to research different cultures using social media (Elise).

Expanding Affective, Cognitive Behavioral Dimensions of Global Competence

During the second learning activity, a Kimono Workshop by a Japanese cultural coordinator, participants expanded all dimensions of global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral from what they acquired during the informal writing assignments. During the workshop, participants actively experienced material artifacts of the Japanese culture by touching and seeing authentic kimonos. This experience made them “surprised about the culture” (Lindsay) and became “more appreciative of the culture” (Elise). The cognitive dimension of global competence also improved during the workshop because students could “clarify confusion in the course concepts that they learned during the class” (Paulita) and deepened culture-specific knowledge, such as what is important in Japanese culture, specific information related to kimonos (Cecilla), symbols (Francine), materials (Francine), and types (Laurine). Students referring to the kimonos stated “(I could learn) what symbols represent, for example, the red crane, a sign of prosperity” (Paulita) and “... the elegant beauty and quality of its construction and materials used, like the luxurious silk Kimono...” (Francine). Behaviorally, participants learned how to wear and handle a kimono (Cecilla) and behave while wearing a kimono (Adell). These students stated, “I learned a lot from our in-class presentation of how to wear and fold the kimonos” (Cecilla) and “The Japanese Outreach Coordinator taught us how to present ourselves while wearing a kimono” (Adell).

Teaching as a Global Competence Learning Opportunity

During the third learning activity, participants created and presented a lesson plan to teach Japanese culture and fashion to local high school students. Participants encountered a different setting to demonstrate what they had prepared during the informal writing activities and the Kimono workshop. Participants submerged themselves into the new environment where they “were forced to think outside of their box” (Rosa), which increased their cognitive flexibility because they were “motivated to learn more about the Japanese culture” (Garnett) and “correctly portray the Japanese culture to their audience” (Ester).

Knowing that, I would have to present information on a topic I’m not familiar with to students that don’t know anything about it. That really made me want to learn as much as I could to make sure they would receive correct information (Garnett).

Ester mentioned that “it was also challenging trying to correctly portray this information in ways that others would want to understand and not reject it.” The participants could also improve their culture-specific knowledge by looking at other teams’ presentations. For example, one student stated, “In return though, I was able to learn a lot more about Japan that I didn’t know from other group presentations” (Elisa).

Reflection as a Final Step of Global Competence

Participants reflected on their entire learning experience during this final learning segment and described how their global competence changed within the affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. The researchers found that the participants reflected upon the various aspects of the affective dimension in global competence. The learning process stimulated the participants’ curiosity, cognitive flexibility, motivation, and open-mindedness about Japanese culture. Some participants “wanted to know more about the Japanese culture and wanted to research beyond the textbook” (Evie). Their learning experience was also “eye-opening” (Ester), which led to “learning to accept other cultures as well as the Japanese culture” (Bonnie). The participants were also motivated to “teach more information about the Japanese culture” (Adell) and “behaviors about accepting other cultures” (Ester). The participants became open-minded in terms of “appreciating other cultures” (Sarah), “accepting other cultures” (Dagmar), and becoming “non-judgmental about other cultures” (Evie).

What was distinctive in the reflective essay was that the participants thought about their own culture as well (cultural self-awareness). At first, they recognized “their own culture and the Japanese culture are different” (Ester) but discovered “there are some similarities in each culture” (Lori). They also showed evidence of appreciating and understanding their own culture. Students stated “in the U.S., we don’t realize how much some cultures value their morals and values. It is something the American culture could learn from. I feel like so often, I take our country for granted.” (Lindsay)

In American culture, we are freely allowed to dress however we would like, and although there are trends, there are no limitations and rules set on how to dress, while in certain parts of Japan, they are very strict on how people dress (Ester).

Cognitively, thinking about the whole learning process, the participants gained “general knowledge about the relationship between culture and dress” (Garnett) and more understanding of “cultural beliefs and traditions” (Trinity). Furthermore, they understood the Japanese culture in terms of their “subculture, traditional and modern dress culture” (Evie) and “symbolism in Kimonos” (Elisa).

Behaviorally, the participants responded they increased relationship-building skills, behavioral skills, and Empathy through the learning process. The participants started gaining confidence when “interacting with people from different cultures, while traveling or when they meet them in their home country” (Francine, Lori). They said “It is not just to slap a label on them, but it is to learn about them as an individual. Each day has been enriched” (Francine) and “I think having this knowledge would help me in my future just in case I come across someone who is not of the same culture as myself” (Lori). Participants also learned “things to do or not to do when traveling to Japan” (Elise) and “learned to recognize different cultures” (Paulita). Finally, participants learned “other cultures are just as important as their culture” (Lori).

Conclusions

This research aimed to develop experiential learning activities for a classroom-based course in clothing and textiles and explore how these activities affect college students' global competence. Based on findings from this study, the authors created a conceptual map showing improved global competence through the proposed learning activities (Table 2). The authors found that participants learned about the Japanese culture through diverse aspects of global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions— throughout the semester via these learning activities. The participants were able to increase global competence, “an ability to adapt personal interactions with cultural commonalities and differences during intercultural encounters” as defined in many global competence definitions (Bennett, 2011; Dejaeghere & Cao, 2009; Gill, 2007; Rathje, 2007; Uso-Juan & Martínez-Flor, 2008) through the curriculum that they participated. The participants were also able to learn about a different culture—the Japanese culture— affectively, cognitively, and behaviorally through the learning activities centered around the Japanese fashion, which made the participants be prepared in cross-cultural situations with Japanese culture or other cultures.

Specifically, informal writing impacted the affective dimension (cognitive flexibility and motivation), cognitive dimension (culture-general knowledge and culture-specific knowledge), and information gathering skills of the behavioral dimension for global competence. The authors found the Kimono workshop influenced cognitive flexibility and open-mindedness of the affective dimension, culture-general knowledge and culture-specific knowledge of the cognitive dimension, and changes in behavioral skills. Students improved their cognitive flexibility and motivation of the affective dimension, culture-specific knowledge of the cognitive dimension, and behavioral skills, such as listening and problem-solving, the behavioral dimension for global competence during the lesson plan presentation. From the reflective essay, the authors concluded that the entire curriculum influenced the students' affective dimension of global competence through improving their curiosity, cognitive flexibility, motivation, and open-mindedness. The reflective essay also impacted the students' cognitive dimension of global competence through increasing cultural self-awareness, culture-general knowledge, and culture-specific knowledge. Finally, the students' behavioral dimension of global competence was influenced by acquiring relationship-building skills, behavioral skills, and Empathy.

The authors found all the learning activities affected various dimensions of global competence differently (Table 3). Informal writing worked as an introductory phase where participants started building culture-general knowledge and culture-specific knowledge by collecting information about the Japanese culture. As a result, they were motivated to work on the project and slowly expanded their cognitive flexibility about the different cultures. The Kimono workshop further expanded the participants' cognitive flexibility with more open-mindedness about the Japanese culture to deepen their knowledge and understanding. This was the activity where participants could learn how to wear and handle kimonos and gain the behavioral dimensions of global competence. During the lesson plan presentation, students improved their teaching skills and their listening and problem-solving skills related to the Japanese culture and stayed motivated to further their cognitive flexibility. The final reflective essay activity allowed participants to sit down and contemplate what they learned during the experiential learning process. It was also the activity where most elements of global competence were stimulated.

Table 2. Detailed Conceptual Map of Global Competence.

Dimension	Informal Writing	Kimono Workshop	Lesson Plan Presentation	Reflective Essay
Affective	Cognitive Flexibility	Cognitive Flexibility	Cognitive Flexibility	Curiosity
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help to create a perspective about the Japanese culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Surprised to learn about the Japanese culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forced to think outside of the box 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - foreign - want to know more about Japanese culture - want to research beyond the textbook about the culture
	Motivation	Open-mindedness	Motivation	Cognitive Flexibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivate students to learn about Japanese culture - Motive students to make an interesting lesson plan presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appreciative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to learn more because they needed to teach other people - correctly portray Japanese cultural ideas to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - eye-opening - learned to understand other cultures - learned to accept other culture - learned to accept the Japanese culture
				Motivation
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - stepping out of a comfort zone to learn about other cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o wanted to learn about different culture mores o wanted to learn Japanese language and manners - wanted to educate students more about accepting other cultures - wanted to teach more information to students - wanted to research more
				Open-mindedness
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - appreciative of other culture - accepting other cultures - ethical value on why we are learning about a different culture - non-judgmental - increase of global competence
Cognitive	Culture general knowledge	Culture general knowledge	Culture-specific knowledge	Cultural self-awareness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help understanding course concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification of confusion course concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Could learn from other team's presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciative of own culture - Would make children to talk about their culture - Made me understand my own culture - Understanding differences - Strict - All culture is equal - Learned other cultures are different but similar
	Culture-specific knowledge	Culture-specific knowledge		Culture general knowledge
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Better understand Japanese culture and fashion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Can differentiate traditional and modern kimono o Visual recognition of the Japanese culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn what is important in the Japanese culture - Learn kimono specific information (price, symbols, materials, types, the reason for wearing) - Deepen the knowledge about the Japanese culture 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge about the relationship between dress and culture - Felt more informed - Shows beliefs, traditions and what they pride themselves on
				Culture-specific knowledge
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge about Japanese culture - Deep culture - The connection between traditional and modern Japanese societies - Subcultures - Symbolism - Knowledge about kimono
Behavioral	Information gathering skills	Behavioral skills	Behavioral skills	Relationship building skills
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn to research about different cultures using social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn to wear kimono <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Kimono etiquette o Kimono handling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Able to teach about the Japanese culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned about people from other cultures as an individual - Could be used for future travels or encounters with people from different cultures - Could relate people from other cultures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Learned do and don'ts
			Listening and problem solving	Behavioral skills
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Get to use the learned information to build a lesson plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned things to do or not to do when encountering people from a different culture - Overcome racial and ethical division - Learned to deal with other cultures - Learned to recognize different cultures
				Empathy
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learned that other people from a different culture feel the same way - Understood the importance of other cultures

Table 3. Conceptual Map of Global Competence

Dimension	Concept	Informal Writing	Kimono Workshop	Lesson Plan Presentation	Reflective Essay
Affective	Curiosity				O
	Cognitive flexibility	O	O	O	O
	Motivation	O		O	O
	Open-mindedness		O		O
Cognitive	Cultural self-awareness				O
	Culture-general knowledge	O	O		O
	Culture-specific knowledge	O	O	O	O
Behavioral	Relationship building skills				O
	Behavioral skills		O	O	O
	Listening and problem solving			O	
	Empathy				O
	Information gathering skills	O			

The results of this study support Deardorff's (2011) argument that not just one learning activity but various learning activities could holistically increase global competence; no single learning activity could affect all elements of global competence. This is congruent with the recommendations by scholars that all three dimensions should be improved to increase overall global competence (Deardorff, 2011; Graf, 2004). The authors found informal writing could work as a starting point, where students were slowly exposed to a different culture, and reflective essays worked as a final summarizing phase where students could think further about their learning process related to global competence. Furthermore, the study support that the experiential learning activities based on the Japanese culture, specifically, Japanese fashion, can be used to increase overall global competence to understand other cultures better because students could learn the other cultures through artifacts—fashion—that creates and attributes symbolic meanings of culture and conveys meanings of the relationship between personal values and values attributed to material goods in a culture (Crane & Bovone, 2006). This study also supported using classroom-based courses to increase global competence in a college setting as supported by previous research studies (e.g., Liao et al., 2019).

Implications

This study has theoretical, pedagogical, and practical implications for global competence education for college settings. Theoretically, the authors in this study utilized the concept of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) to understand the step-by-step learning process of global competence (Graf, 2004) for college students in a non-language cultural course. Pedagogically, it provided a guideline to create learning activities in partnerships with local communities to increase global competence for students using classroom-based experiential learning activities in the clothing and textile field. Furthermore, other educators can use this study to teach global competence to students in the field of clothing and textiles with rather limited access to resources and little initial interest for study abroad opportunities or foreign language courses. Practically, this research shows that students' global competence can be stimulated by the implementation of various learning activities during a classroom-based course in the field of clothing and textiles where global competence education is necessary, due to the field's global nature where students will be exposed to work in the global context daily basis.

Future Research

In this research, there are a couple of limitations due to the design of the study. First, this research utilized the Japanese culture as a basis of curriculum development to measure the global competence

of college students. The development of a curriculum to improve global competence using various cultures can increase the generalizability of the study more. Second, the study only explored global competence qualitatively using reflective essays. The quantitative measure of the changes of global competence using existing measures for cultural intelligence, intercultural awareness, intercultural sensitivity, cross-cultural adaptability might provide concrete evidence of the effect of the proposed curriculum for the future study. Based on this research, future research can expand the development of classroom-based courses to increase global competence into other subject areas or with another country context. How to multiple learning activities as a course of a curriculum to capture all of the dimensions of global competence—cognitive, affective, and behavioral—can also be a possible research topic as one learning activity is hard to capture all of it effectively. Further research can include quantitatively measuring efficacy in increasing global competence using a proposed conceptual model using a different country context in a different subject area.

Global competence is essential for students to succeed in the ever-growing global economy but has not received full attention in college teaching. This study provided evidence that well-planned experiential learning activities for a classroom-based course can increase diverse aspects of global competence— affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. Moreover, increasing global competence in a classroom-based course can be an important and effective way to increase global competence when physical travels are impossible for many students because of a lack of resources, interests, or possible travel restrictions.

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Acknowledgements

This material is based upon work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, HATCH under Project No. 1005639. This material is also partly supported by the Japan Foundation.