

FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION TOWARD "WORLD CULTURE COURSE" – A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: In the era of increasing globalisation, the world communities cannot sidestep the influence of cultural globalisation. Today's widely perceived globalisation, which is based mostly upon economic aspects, does also bring direct and indirect influences to the nations' culture giving a new shape to their cultural perception. This study is an effort to discuss how an undergraduate course in world culture offered at Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) develops the learning and cultural understanding of its students. The course on global culture, however, provides a unique format for students to learn about other cultures without travelling. Together with their peers at UMT, students from two international partner universities, namely East Carolina University and the University of Namibia communicate each other through live video conferencing and interactive chat technology. Partner universities conduct classes during a semester in a way, so each culture is partnered with two other cultures. Students discuss topics ranging from college life, cultural traditions and family, and the meaning of life and religion to stereotypes and prejudices. With data collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to all 12 students, who took the course at UMT in the preceding academic semester, the study specifically evaluates and analyses their learning and perception toward the course, and discusses the implications of empirical results at local, national, and international levels. Upon collecting data using a random sampling technique, descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation has been calculated for all 22 variables in the original questionnaire. The one sample t-test has then been employed for all the variables to see whether there is any significant difference between the actual and observed responses provided by the students concerning their learning and perception toward the course. However, the empirical results show that this course creates awareness, sense of appreciation and helps students in increasing their understanding and tolerance of global cultural diversity. The study also finds that Malaysian culture offers less freedom compared to USA culture. However, the experiment has shown that undertaking the world culture course does not divert the students from their culture rather it causes a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture as a universal sustainable culture.

Keywords: World culture, learning without travelling, attitude, perception, and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.

INTRODUCTION

Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) is one of the public universities in Malaysia. With the vision to be an institution that generates, disseminates and applies innovative knowledge and a catalyst for the development of progressive individuals and sustainable environment, it was formerly known as University College of Terengganu (KUT) in 1999. It is also committed to going ahead and progress in parallel with the nation's vision 2020. The founding of the UMT, however, can be traced back to 1979 when the Centre for Fisheries and Marine Science of another leading public university, namely Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) was founded in UMT's current place. It was later renamed University Putra Malaysia Terengganu (UPMT). Since its establishment, UPMT has undergone a significant transformation from a branch campus into an emerging and highly successful public institution of higher learning. It is offering a broad range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs as well as excelling in Research and Development in the fields of Management and Economics, Science and Technology, Maritime Studies and Marine Science, and agro technology and Food Science. UMT's campus is strategically located on the shore of Terengganu facing the South China Sea. It now has four faculties such as Faculty of Management and Economics, Faculty of Science and Technology, Faculty of agro technology and Food Science, and Faculty of Maritime Studies and Marine Science. It also has three research institutes such as Institute of Oceanography, Institute of Tropical Aquaculture, Institute for Marine Biotechnology, which are providing nationwide consultancy services and offering postgraduate degrees in their respective fields.

Offered in the Faculty of Management and Economics, UMT's World Culture course provides a unique format for students to learn about other cultures without travelling. In association with two international partner universities, namely East Carolina University (ECU) and University of Namibia (UNAM), students from three universities concurrently communicate with their peers through live video conferencing and chat technology. Partner universities swap in a round robin fashion during a semester, so each culture is partnered with two other cultures, one at a time for seven weeks each. Students discuss topics ranging from college life, cultural traditions and family, and the meaning of life and religion to stereotypes and prejudices. They learn about the values and lifestyles of contemporary and historical cultures throughout the world as a means of understanding diverse approaches to life and as a catalyst for reflecting on their customs and choices. As a result of mutual dialogue and interaction, students become more culturally aware and develop essential skills necessary to becoming a more responsible global citizen. This study is an effort to empirically identify and critically discuss the factors that potentially influence students' attitude and perception toward World Culture course, which was offered in Malaysia in a joint effort by Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, East Carolina University and the University of Namibia.

WORLD CULTURE – A BRIEF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The word "culture" has different meanings in different contexts and environments. In 1952, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn compiled a list of 164 definitions of "culture" in *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions* (Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). As compiled from Wikipedia, however, the word "culture" is most commonly used in three basic senses. These are (1) excellence of taste in the fine arts and humanities known as high culture, (2) an integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behavior that depends upon the capacity for symbolic thought and social learning, and (3) the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize an institution, organization or group. The concept of culture was first emerged in 18th century in Europe while it meant a process of cultivation or improvement, as in agriculture or horticulture. In the 19th century, it came to refer first to the betterment or refinement of the individual, especially through education, and then to the fulfilment of national aspirations or ideals. In the mid19th century, some scientists used the term "culture" to refer to a universal human capacity.

In the 20th century, "culture" emerged as a concept central to anthropology, encompassing all human phenomena that are not purely results of human genetics. Specifically, the term "culture" in American anthropology had two meanings. Such as (1) the evolved human capacity to classify and represent experiences with symbols, and to act imaginatively and creatively; and (2) the distinct ways that people living in different parts of the world classified and represented their experiences, and acted creatively. Following World War II, the term became necessary, even though with different meanings, in other disciplines such as sociology, cultural studies, organisational psychology and management studies. Nowadays, disciplines such as business, economics, and education are increasingly discussing the issues and contents from the perspectives of culture.

CULTURE THEORY

The word 'Culture' refers to the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement collectively or the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society (Oxford English Dictionary). Stacey et al., (2000) speculated the culture as a form of basic processing which enables the correlations and dissimilarities that mobilise the nature to produce a specific effect. National cultures have been described by Prof Dr Hofstede (1973, 1991, and 2010) as six dimensions (6-D). These are: 'power distance (PDI), Individualism vs. collectivism (IDV), Masculinity vs. Femininity (MAS), Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO), Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, 2011)'.

Culture theory is primarily originated from the branch of anthropology and semiotics that seeks to define the practical concept of culture in operational and/or scientific terms. In the 19th century, "culture" was used by some to refer to a broad range of human activities, and by others as a synonym for "civilization". In the 20th century, anthropologists began theorising about culture as an object of scientific analysis. Some used it to distinguish human adaptive strategies from the mostly instinctive adaptive strategies of animals, including the adaptive strategies of other primates and non-human hominids, whereas others used it to refer to symbolic representations and expressions of human experience, with no direct adaptive value. Both groups understood culture as being definitive of human nature.

According to many theories that have gained wide acceptance among anthropologists, culture exhibits the way that humans interpret their biology and their environment. According to this point of view, culture becomes such an integral part of human existence that it is the human environment, and most cultural change can be attributed to human adaptation to historical events. Moreover, given that culture is seen as the primary adaptive mechanism

in human beings and takes place much faster than human biological evolution, most cultural change can be viewed as culture adapting to itself.

Although most anthropologists try to define culture in such a way that it separates human beings from other animals, many human traits are similar to those of other animals, particularly the characteristics of other primates. For example, chimpanzees have big brains, but human brains are larger than chimpanzees. Similarly, bonobos exhibit complex sexual behaviour, but human beings exhibit much more complex sexual behaviours. As such, anthropologists often debate whether human behaviour is different from animal behaviour in degree rather than in kind; they must also find ways to distinguish cultural behaviour from sociological behaviour and psychological behaviour.

CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION: A BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Cross-cultural communication is a field of study that looks at how people from differing cultural backgrounds communicate, in similar and different ways among themselves, and how they endeavour to communicate across cultures. However, the study of cross-cultural communication is fast becoming a global research area. As a result, cultural differences in the study of intercultural communication can already be found.

In years during and preceding the Cold War, the United States economy was largely self-contained because the world was polarised into two separate and competing powers: the east and the west. However, changes and advancements in economic relationships, political systems, and technological options began to break down old cultural barriers. Business transformed from individual country capitalism to global capitalism. Thus, the study of cross-cultural communication was initially found within companies and the government both seeking to expand globally. Businesses began to offer language training to their employees. Companies found that their employees were ill-equipped for overseas work in the globalising market. Programs developed to train employees to understand how to act when abroad. With this also came the development of the Foreign Service Institute, or FSI, through the Foreign Service Act of 1946, where government employees received training and prepared for overseas posts (Rogers, Hart & Miike, 2002). The implementation of a "world view" perspective in the curriculum of higher education was then proposed by Professor Marvin Bartell in 2003 in his article titled "Internationalization of Universities: A University Culture-based Framework." In 1974, the International Progress Organization, with the support of UNESCO and under the auspices of Senegalese President Léopold Sédar Senghor, held an international conference on "The Cultural Self-comprehension of Nations" (Innsbruck, Austria, 27-29 July 1974). It called upon United Nations member states "to organise systematic and global comparative research on the different cultures of the world." However, it also suggested, "to make all possible efforts to a more intensive training of diplomats in the field of international cultural co-operation ... and to develop the cultural aspects of their foreign policy" (Hans K. 1978).

In the past decade, there has become an increasing pressure for universities across the world to incorporate an intercultural and international understanding and knowledge into the education of their students. International literacy and cross-cultural understanding have become critical to a country's cultural, technological, economic, and political health. It has become essential for universities to educate, or more importantly, "transform", to function efficiently and comfortably in a world characterised by close multi-faceted relationships and permeable borders. Students must possess a certain level of global competence to understand the world they live in and how they fit into this world. This level of global competence starts at ground level- the university and its faculty- with how they generate and transmit cross-cultural knowledge and information to students (Bartell, M. 2003).

Cross-cultural communication tries to bring together such a relatively unrelated areas as cultural anthropology and established areas of communication. Its core is to create and understand how people from different cultures communicate with each other. Its charge is also to produce some guidelines with which people from different cultures can better communicate with each other. Cross-cultural communication, as in many scholarly fields, is a combination of many other areas. These areas include anthropology, cultural studies, psychology and communication. The field has also moved both toward the treatment of interethnic relations and toward the study of communication strategies used by co-cultural populations, i.e., communication strategies used to deal with the majority or mainstream communities.

The study of languages other than one's own cannot only serve to help us understand what we as human beings have in common, but also assist us in understanding the diversity which underlies not only our languages, but also our ways of constructing and organizing knowledge, and the many different realities in which we all live and interact. Such understanding has profound implications on developing a critical awareness of social relationships. Understanding social relationships and the way other cultures work is the groundwork of successful globalisation business efforts.

INCORPORATING CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS INTO UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

With the increasing pressures and opportunities of globalisation, the incorporation of international networking alliances has become an “essential mechanism for the internationalisation of higher education” (Teather, 2004). Many universities from around the world have taken great strides to increase intercultural understanding through processes of organisational change and innovations. In general, university operations revolve around four broad dimensions which include: organisational change, curriculum innovation, staff development, and student mobility (Rudzki, 1995). Ellingboe (1998) emphasises these four major dimensions with his specifications for the internationalisation process. His specifications include: (1) college leadership, (2) faculty members' international involvement in activities with colleagues, research sites, and institutions worldwide, (3) the availability, affordability, accessibility, and transferability of study abroad programs for students, (4) the presence and integration of international students, scholars, and visiting faculty into campus life, and (5) international co-curricular units (residence halls, conference planning centers, student unions, career centers, cultural immersion and language houses, student activities, and student organizations).

Above all, universities need to make sure that they are open and responsive to changes in the outside environment. For internationalisation to be fully effective, the university (including all staff, students, curriculum, and activities) needs to be current with cultural changes, and willing to adapt to these changes (Cameron, 1984). As stated by Ellingboe (1998), internationalisation “is an ongoing, future-oriented, multidimensional, interdisciplinary, leadership-driven vision that involves many stakeholders working to change the internal dynamics of an institution to respond and adapt appropriately to an increasingly diverse, globally focused, ever-changing external environment.” New distance learning technologies, such as interactive teleconferencing, enable students located thousands of miles apart to communicate and interact in a virtual classroom (Bartell, 2003).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

SOURCES OF DATA AND SAMPLE DESIGN

This study has used primary data collected through a set of a structured questionnaire distributed amongst all 12 UMT students who have already completed the world culture course in the preceding academic semester. The lecturer of the course has sent out the questionnaire to every student via email. Students were requested to fill in the questionnaire and then return it to the teacher within two weeks. Since all students responded positively to the survey request made by their respected lecturer, the sampling technique used in the study is considered random.

TECHNIQUES FOR ANALYSIS

At the first stage of data analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation have been calculated for all 22 variables in the original questionnaire. The one sample t-test has then been employed for all the variables to see whether there is any significant difference between the actual and observed responses given by the students concerning their learning and perception toward the course. In fact, we have drawn a random sample from the student population and then compared the sample meant with the population mean and made a statistical decision as to whether or not the sample mean is different from the student population. One of the essential requirements for the one sample t-test is that the sample size should be less than 30. With a sample was taken from 12 student populations this study clearly fulfils such requirement. Some other essential requirements for one sample t-test includes the variables should be distributed, samples drawn from the population should be random, cases of the samples should be independent, and population mean must be known, which have also apparently been fulfilled in the present study. For every variable, however, both null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis were tested, and the mathematical forms of both hypotheses are shown below:

$$H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

$$H_1 : \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

In one sample t-test, null hypothesis assumes that there are no significance differences between the population mean and the sample mean while the alternative hypothesis assumes that there is a significant difference between the population mean and the sample mean. Hence, the calculation of the standard deviation for one sample t-test was done using the following formula:

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})^2}{n - 1}}$$

Where, S = Standard deviation for one sample t-test, \bar{X} = Sample mean, and n = number of observations in the sample.

The calculation of the value of one sample t-test was the computed using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X} - \mu}{S} \sqrt{n}$$

Where, t = one sample t-test and μ = population mean.

All the above statistical tests and estimations were conducted using computer software SPSS version 15.0.

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Responses of students to whether the course has created their awareness of global cultural diversity.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		Mean	N
Valid	N0	1	8.3	8.3	8.3		.9167
	Yes	11	91.7	91.7	100.0	Std. Deviation	.28868
	Total	12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean	.08333

All the respondents were asked whether the course has created their awareness of global cultural diversity course. However, out of all, 91.7% students perceived the course positively contributed to their knowledge while only 8.3% students observed against it.

Table 2: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on awareness of global cultural diversity.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Awareness of Global Cultural Dimensions	-1.000	11	.339	-.08333	-.2667	.1001

Since two-tailed t-test generated a non-significant probability value ($P>0.01$) so, it is apparent that students' responses of whether their awareness of global cultural diversity course do not differ significantly. This just means that almost all the students perceived the course positively contributing to their knowledge. This could be because students are learning world cultures, especially the cultures of both developing and developed the world while undertaking their core undergraduate studies in Malaysia. This gives them the opportunity to interact with their counterparts from those countries and also learn from them not only about those cultures but also about many other social and educational issues. This learning through active interaction has undoubtedly contributed to their awareness of global culture course as evidenced by our empirical results obtained through paired-samples t-test. The same finding was also obtained by Murad (2015, p. 4) in the case of Bangladesh where he found that most students consider any foreign culture course as positively contributing to their learning and getting exposure to international culture.

Table 3: Responses of students to whether the course has increased their understanding and tolerance of global cultural diversity.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Valid	Yes	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	.00000	.00000

In response to whether the course has increased their understanding and tolerance of global diversity, all the respondent students agreed that this course has positively contributed to their understanding and tolerance toward global cultural diversity. As defined by Endacott and Bowels (2013) "Culture" means the behaviours, beliefs, values, traditions, institutions, and ways of living together of a group of people. However, students may believe that this course has replenished their thoughts of culture by a thoughtful discussion of the norms, beliefs,

values traditions of other students of the participating universities. While undergoing this course they might also have had enormous opportunities to share and unfold numerous new aspects of global cultures. They also considered that knowledge of the world culture is imperative for their future. Gregg and eBray (2007, p 4)) also found the same context where they pronounce that intercultural understanding acts as a foundation for successful future in study abroad and international business as well. However, respondents are reasonably agreed that the outcomes of the global culture course helped them in building their confidence to study abroad or work in cultural diversity. Onyemenem and Jones (1988) also found that intercultural adaptation is a crucial part of a student pursuing an education in global cultural diverse society.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 4: Responses of students to whether the course has developed their sense of appreciation of global cultural diversity.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valid	Yes	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	.00000	.00000

Students were asked whether the course of global cultural diversity has developed their sense of appreciation of world cultural diversity. The response shows that 100% of the total respondents considered that this course had developed their sense of appreciation of global cultural diversity. It may because they comprehend this course as to lower their sensitivity regarding foreign cultures. They might also think that the international cultural diverse course has immensely influenced their thoughts and beliefs. Klak and Martin (2003 p. 462) stated that to respond to the sensitivity of the students on global cultural issues universities can undertake some celebration intending to representing the diversity of world cultures. However, students understood that by offering the world culture course, universities bestow the best to address the sensitivity of students to global cultures.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 5: Responses of students to whether there is more freedom in the Malaysian culture compared to the cultures of the USA and Namibia.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	N
Valid	No	9	75.0	75.0	75.0	.2500
	Yes	3	25.0	25.0	100.0	Mean Std. Deviation
Total		12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean

When the students were enquired whether there is more freedom in the Malaysian culture compared to the USA and Namibian culture, the majority of the respondents (75%) perceived that Malaysian culture offers less freedom compare to the USA and Namibian culture. On the other hand, 25% of the total respondents pronounced the opposite, and they are of Malaysian culture.

Table 6: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on comparative cultural freedom in the three countries.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Freedom in Malaysian culture	-5.745	11	.000	-.75000	-1.0374	-.4626

As the 2-tailed t-test created a significant probability value ($p \leq 0.1$), so it is indicated that the students' responses to relative cultural freedom in the three countries differ significantly. It could be just because the majority of the participating students live by Malaysian culture which is mostly dominated by Islamic laws & values in which it ties them in a more conservative way. Whereas, they perceived that culture in the USA and Namibia is more liberal in comparison with Malaysian culture. Respondent students might also have strived for freedom during their lifetime at any stage. Therefore, they do not think Malaysian culture offers more freedom in compare to the USA. Cultural freedom is also sometimes resolute by the socio-economic and political conditions

of that particular location. Usually, people think the way people live and merge on the existing lifestyle. According to Wilson et al., (2014 pp. 1-5) when people think inward it puts them in default-mode processing, and it has now been the focus of lots of attention in human behaviour. Human Rights Watch (2015) reported that Malaysian citizens enjoy limited freedom which was indicated by the quote of Yap Swee Seng, former executive director of Suara Rakyat Malaysia, (Suaram), Kuala Lumpur, April 14, 2015,

“They are creating a culture of fear. If you engage in any talk of public interest, the police may come to your house; you may be arrested, taken to the police station, remanded. Even members of Parliament are treated that way.”

However, the Malaysian culture shows the most relevant characteristics of a collective society which is coinciding collectivism, one of the sixes, dimension of Prof Dr Hofstede's national culture theory. On the other hand, USA culture reveals the individualism dimension in great extent.

Table 7: Responses to which culture has more freedom by students who indicated Malaysian culture does not have more freedom.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valid	USA	10	83.3	100.0	100.0	1.0000	.00000
Missing	System	2	16.7				
Total		12	100.0				

Some of the respondent students have indicated that Malaysian culture does not have more freedom. They were asked which culture has more freedom. In response, all the respondent students ponder that the USA culture offers more freedom than Malaysia. The similar finding also can be obtained from Human Right Watch (2015) report on the freedom in Malaysia where the organisation has expressed their concern over massive human rights violation in Malaysia. Therefore, students do not think Malaysian culture offers more freedom but the USA. On the other hand, after exploring the culture and societies of USA during their coursework and their acquired lifetime knowledge, they have clearly observed that there is more freedom in the USA.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 8: Responses of students to whether culture plays a major role in their belief and living system.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	N
Valid	No	1	8.3	8.3	8.3	Mean .9167
	Yes	11	91.7	91.7	100.0	Std. Deviation .28868
	Total	12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean .08333

In response to whether culture plays a significant role in their belief and living system. Amongst all the respondents, 91.7% students perceived that culture has an important role in their faith and lifestyle. Whereas, 8.3 % of the interviewees did not consider that culture plays an influential role in their belief and living system.

Table 9: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on the role of culture in their belief and living system.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Important role of culture in belief and living system	-1.000	11	.339	-.08333	-.2667	.1001

Since the two-tailed t-test generated a non-significant probability value ($P>0.01$) so, it is assumed that students' responses of whether culture plays an important role in their belief and living system do not differ significantly. The majority of the respondent students perceived that culture plays an important role in every sphere of their life. They realise that because of the interference of prevailing culture, they are to adjust themselves to the society. Although culture does not outline the belief and lifestyle, it has a substantial effect on knowledge &

living system. Faith and lifestyle with culture, in turn, build a society. Stroop (2011) finds that beliefs appeal people toward community mindedness because a person cannot live alone without a society.

Table 10: Responses of students to whether culture regulates how humans interact with the living world through practices, ethics, and philosophy.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valid Yes	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0000	.00000

When the students were asked whether culture regulates how human interact with the living world through practices, ethics and philosophy, all the respondent students perceived that culture controls way to interact with the living world through practices, ethics and philosophy.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 11: Responses of students to whether a sustainable culture is one that reflects the living world.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	N
Valid No	3	25.0	25.0	25.0	Mean .7500
Yes	9	75.0	75.0	100.0	Std. Deviation .45227
Total	12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean .13056

A total of 12 students were questioned to respond whether a sustainable culture is the one that reflects the living world. The majority (75%) of total respondent students believed that a sustainable culture is one that reflects the life world. On the other hand, a total of 03 (25%) students out of 12 disagreed with that.

Table 12: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on the fact that a sustainable culture is one that reflects the living world.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Sustainable culture reflects living world	-1.915	11	.082	-.25000	-.5374	.0374

However, the 2-tailed t-test was done, and it initiated a non-significant probability value ($p>0.01$). It means the perception of the respondent students on the fact that a sustainable culture is one that reflects the living world does not differ significantly. It is because they firmly found that the culture which does not reflect the living world cannot sustain anymore. Culture is another form of social practices and social practices eventually lead to life. So it is important for them to have the knowledge and meaning of life that can motivate them in their social interactions. However, it ultimately becomes a concept of sustainable culture. Hansen (2015) also characterised the necessity for lifestyle changes as subjective wellbeing which includes pleasure, comfort, emotions, meaning of life and social relations. Meaning to say that culture that does not reflect the living world is not a sustainable culture.

Table 13: Responses of students to whether learning from world culture course diverted them from their culture.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	N
Valid No	7	58.3	58.3	58.3	Mean .4167
Yes	5	41.7	41.7	100.0	Std. Deviation .51493
Total	12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean .14865

In replies to whether learning from world culture course diverted them from their culture, 53.8% of total responded students noticed that world culture course did not divert them from their culture. On the other hand, 41.7% of total responder observed that learning of the global culture course diverts them from their culture.

Table 14: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on the fact that learning from world culture course diverted them from their culture.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Learning from World Culture course diverted from own culture	-3.924	11	.002	-.58333	-.9105	-.2562

In this regard to the fact that learning from world culture course diverted them from their culture, 2-tailed t-test reveals a significant probability value ($p \leq 0.01$). It means, students' respond to whether learning from world culture diverted them from their culture differs significantly. It is because there might have some student amongst the respondent students who had either the chance to expose into world culture previously or they discovered it as a need for a universal culture that causes them a noticeable diversion from their culture. According to Endacott and Bowels (2013), understanding demands parallel in thinking irrespective of the perceptions of culture and cultural universals. Nevertheless, another group of students found this course just a tool of learning other culture and did neither accept nor reject it. Therefore, the learning of world culture could not divert them from their culture. The perception of the all respondent students is very nearly opposite and different which has been proven by the empirical t-test result.

Table 15: Responses to whether knowledge of world culture is now richer by students who indicated that taking of the course diverted them from their culture.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Valid Yes	4	33.3	100.0	100.0	1.0000	.00000
Missing System	8	66.7				
Total	12	100.0				

Students' responses to whether knowledge of world culture is now richer by students who indicated that taking of the course diverted them from their culture, ultimately agreed that the world culture course had increased their knowledge of global culture immensely.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 16: Responses of students to whether learning from world culture course causes a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	N
Valid No	4	33.3	33.3	33.3	Mean .6667
Yes	8	66.7	66.7	100.0	Std. Deviation .49237
Total	12	100.0	100.0		Std. Error Mean .14213

The question was asked whether learning from world culture course causes a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture. However, out of 12 students, a total of 8 students responded that learning from world culture course has caused a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture, whereas, four students disagreed with that.

Table 17: T-test results are showing differences in responses given by students on the fact that learning from world culture course causes a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
Learning from World Culture course shifts in views and values of world culture	-2.345	11	.039	-.33333	-.6462	-.0205

Since two-tailed t-test generated a non-significant probability value ($P \leq 0.05$) so, it is evident that students' responses of whether learning from world culture course cause a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture do not differ significantly. It means that the majority of the students perceived that the course causes a fundamental shift in their views and values of the world culture. After studying this course, they know lot more about world culture which obviously refined their views & values in great extent. Now they find themselves more tolerant of another culture. However, some of the students did not perceive this course in that manner or they yet to notice any significant changes regarding their tolerance and acceptance of world culture.

Table 18: Responses of students to whether a truly sustainable culture must be place-specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative	Mean	N
			Percent	Percent		
Valid	No	5	41.7	41.7		.5833
	Yes	7	58.3	58.3	Std. Deviation	.51493
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	Std. Error Mean	.14865

Students were asked to respond whether a genuinely sustainable culture must be place-specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region. However, 41.7% of total respondent students considered that truly sustainable culture must not place specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region. On the other hand, 58.3 % of total respondent students believed that a truly sustainable culture must be place-specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region.

Table 19: T-test results are showing differences in responses to the fact that a truly sustainable culture must be place-specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Sustainable culture must be place specific	-2.803	11	.017	-.41667	-.7438	-.0895

As the 2-tailed t-test generated a significant probability ($p > 0.1$), so the responses of respondent students on the fact that a truly sustainable culture must be place-specific, reflecting the natural landscape of its region differ significantly. It may because a significant segment of those respondents might have discovered the sustainable culture as a universal culture. Therefore, they do not consider that the idea of a global culture cannot place oriented. The second group of respondent students underpins the cultural sustainably within a regional portrait. They might have understood the culture as the reflection of human necessities in a particular geographical location. In 1983, 'Brundtland Commission' defines sustainability that involves efforts to focus on meeting current human demands without conceding the ability of future generations to fulfil their needs (Scammon, 2012).

Table 20: Responses of students to whether they consider their culture 'sustainable'.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative	Mean	N
			Percent	Percent		
Valid	No	2	16.7	16.7		.8333
	Yes	10	83.3	83.3	Std. Deviation	.38925
	Total	12	100.0	100.0	Std. Error Mean	.11237

In reply to the question to whether they consider their culture sustainable, a total of 10 students out of 12 respondent students believed that their culture is sustainable, meaning to say that their culture reflects the meaning of life. Whereas, rest of the 02 students out of the total 12 respondent students considered that their culture is not sustainable. Hofstede (1973) Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO) index of Malaysia is 41 (itim, 2012). Higher LTO index proofs the link of culture to past with the current and future. It means people in Malaysian culture have strong attachment and respect towards their culture and traditions, and therefore, respondents strongly believed that their culture is sustainable.

Table 21: T-test results are showing differences of perception among students toward sustainability of their culture.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Consider own culture sustainable	-1.483	11	.166	-.16667	-.4140	.0807

We can see that the 2-tailed t-test generated a non-significant probability value ($p>0.1$), so the perceptions of the respondent students towards sustainability of their culture do not differ significantly. It might be because the human being starts their life only knowing their culture and they always consider their culture is sustainable unless otherwise an acute exposure to another rich culture. This universal tendency of inner human thoughts is identified as 'ethnocentrism' (Tiandis, 2008). Campbell and Levine (1968) and Brewer and Campbell (1976) also found that ethnocentric people outline the customs and traditions of their culture as 'natural' and 'correct' and those of other cultures as 'unnatural' and 'immoral.' Ward et al., (2005, p. 269) also found that when people in cultural dilemma, there are some individuals who rejoin to the other culture but steadfast in their culture of origin.

Table 22: Responses of students to whether they took the course to share their culture with global students and to learn about their cultures.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative	Mean	Std. Deviation
			Percent	Percent		
Valid Yes	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	1.0000	.00000

On asking of whether they took the course to share their culture with international students and to learn about their cultures, 100% of the students agreed that they choose the world culture course to learn the global culture and share their culture with international students.

T-test for the above responses cannot be computed because the standard deviation is 0.

Table 23: Responses of students to whether there was new information about their culture.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
			Percent	Percent			
Valid No	3	25.0	25.0	25.0			.7500
Yes	9	75.0	75.0	100.0		Std. Deviation	.45227
Total	12	100.0	100.0			Std. Error Mean	.13056

Students were asked whether there was new information about their culture. In response, 25 % of the total respondent students found nothing new in this course about their culture, but on the other hand, 75% of the total respondent students believed that they had discovered new information about their culture.

Table 24: T-test results are showing differences on the fact that there was new information about their culture.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
There was new information about own culture	-1.915	11	.082	-.25000	-.5374	.0374

Hence, the 2-tailed t-test created a significant probability value ($p\leq 0.1$), so it indicates that the students' responses to on the fact that there was new information about their culture differ significantly. Because the majority of the respondent students undertook this course to learn something new out of it, they investigated their culture in comparison with other culture and eventually they discovered their culture from a new perspective which they knew not before and however, it has ultimately enlarged their understanding of own

culture towards a new horizon. Besides, a small portion of the students did not undergo this course sparingly, and they just focused on global culture. As a result, they missed uncovering their culture through different windows.

Table 25: Responses of students to whether the taking of the course has increased their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture.

Valid	No	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent	Mean	N
	No	2	16.7	16.7	16.7	.8333	
	Yes	10	83.3	83.3	100.0	.38925	
	Total	12	100.0	100.0		.11237	

Students were asked whether the taking of the world culture course has increased their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture. Out of 12 students, ten students considered that their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture had been increased because of undergoing this course. However, 02 students amongst the 12 respondent students did not agree that the world culture course has increased their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture.

Table 26: T-test results are showing differences of perception among students whether the taking of the course has increased their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture.

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
				Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Increased appreciation toward Malaysian or own cultures	-1.483	11	.166	-.16667	-.4140	.0807

Since the 2-tailed t-test generated a non-significant probability value ($p>0.1$), so the responses of the students whether the taking of the course has increased their appreciation towards the Malaysian culture do not differ significantly. The majority of the student enjoined their culture with global culture and got the idea of appreciating their culture in a new befitting manner. Perhaps, they have identified the new prospects in their culture while studying and comparing their culture with world culture. However, another group of students might have already known their culture in details and could not find anything new throughout this course.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Although, a small number of studies have been done on this topic, but this empirical research on global cultural course provides a sound conceptual context for understanding the global culture from different point of view. It is found that there are students who learn international culture but steadfast on their culture of origin. Another cluster renounces their culture while considering the USA culture offers more freedom than the Malaysian culture. We also found some of the students who always try to synthesis the best elements of both cultural traditions and become interceding persons. After careful interpretation of all the responses, it is determined that people in Malaysian culture have strong connection and respect towards their culture and traditions, and as a result, they firmly consider their culture is sustainable. Malaysian culture also demonstrates the most relevant characteristics of a collective society as it offers less freedom which lies with collectivism. On the other hand, USA culture reveals the individualism in great extent. Therefore, on a thoughtful appraisal of applicable exhibits, it is concluded that our findings are corresponding with the two main dimensions (Individualism vs. collectivism (IDV), and Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO) of national culture dimensions developed by Prof Dr Hofstede. Therefore, it is evidenced that offering a global cultural course in University level is a real-world realisation where students can share their culture with a relatively large number of people around the globe whose culture differs significantly. This study conforming the finding of Gregg and eBray (2007, p. 11) as well where they claim that intercultural understanding provides a unique platform for successful future both in education and business.

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