

THE EFFICACY OF A CROSS-CULTURAL IMMERSION PROGRAM: AN ANALYSIS OF A
GEORGIA INITIATIVE

by

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(Under the Direction of Dennis Duncan)

ABSTRACT

As the United States becomes a progressively diverse nation, the need for a broader knowledge base of cultures and populations is imperative for the Cooperative Extension System. The objectives of this study were to explore and learn from the benefits, knowledge gained, and change of attitudes and practices resulting from participation in programs focusing in cross-cultural experiences. This study provides an analysis of a cross-cultural immersion program coordinated by Georgia Cooperative Extension. Cross-cultural immersion experiences provide participants the experience to visit a foreign country for a period of time with the goal of assisting participants in gaining knowledge regarding a specific culture. These immersion programs help participants discover key issues, cultural differences, and basic language skills with the hope that participants will be able to better relate and interact with the targeted population upon their return.

INDEX WORDS: cross-cultural immersion, Cooperative Extension, Hispanic population, effective programming, culture, cultural competence

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DEDICATION

To those who wander and wonder, this thesis is dedicated to you.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Land-grant institutions were founded on the principle that the state funded universities were to serve all individuals within the state regardless of their participation in the university system. “A land-grant college or university is an institution that has been designated by its state legislature or Congress to receive the benefits of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890” (National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, 1995, p. 3). The first Morrill Act designated federal land to each state for the establishment of a public institution. These institutions were designed to provide all individuals with a practical and useful education that directly related to their daily lives, regardless of their involvement with the university classroom. “The underlying philosophy of the system was to ‘help people help themselves’ by ‘taking the university to the people.’ The system evolved into an institution that is responsive to priority needs and focuses its resources on providing quality information, education, and problem-solving programs on real concerns” (Rasmussen, 1989, p. vii). The second Morrill Act (1890) was created to further increase and broaden the access of individuals to university knowledge by providing federal funding to established universities that were specific to minorities, particularly African American students. A key component of the land-grant system was the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 which formed the Cooperative Extension associated with each U.S. land-grant institution. “When President Woodrow Wilson signed the Smith-Lever Act of May 8, 1914, he called it ‘one of the most significant and far-reaching

measures for the education of adults ever adopted by the government” (Rasmussen, 1989, p. vii). Cooperative Extension was then charged with the role of disseminating knowledge created and gained from the university system to those who did not have access or lived in other parts of the state. “The land-grants were to be people’s universities. With the extension function in place by the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, the institutionalized access of ordinary people in the states to their state university was provided for with federal leadership” (McDowell, 2001, p. 7). Cooperative Extension offices were established in most counties, with agents who specialized in youth development, agriculture, and family and consumer science. These agents were given the opportunity to share their specific area of knowledge to their community, based on its needs and population. Over the years the system has increased its knowledge base from purely agriculture to a multifaceted organization that provides resources and information on topics ranging from animal science to youth development. Cooperative Extension agents are called upon daily to provide information and services to an increasingly diverse population.

As the United States becomes a progressively diverse nation, the need for a broader knowledge base of cultures and populations is imperative for the Cooperative Extension System. Everything from language, values, dress, religious persuasion, and family organization is changing before the eyes of Extension educators and agents (Youmans, 2004). With these changes it is simultaneously necessary that leadership within the Extension system provide a welcoming environment to new cultures and new programming to better serve these cultures. With the mission of the universities mainly focused on the population in which it serves, the Land-Grant Universities and

more specifically, Cooperative Extension has morphed and grown into an applicable and diverse breadth of knowledge that pertains specifically to the individuals that it serves.

In a land that was created on the basis of individualism and immigration, the U.S. has grown in recent years into one of the most diverse nations. A specific group of individuals that has increased drastically in the U.S. and the South, more specifically, is the Hispanic population. “As of 2000, the Hispanic population of the United States (excluding the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico) reached 35.3 million, representing 12.5 percent of the total population. Hispanics grew in numbers by 57.9 percent in the last intercensal period, as compared with 13.2 percent for the national population” (Ansley & Shefner, 2009, p. 3). This specific population has been one that Cooperative Extension strives to help and provide effective programming for, even with the distinct dissimilarities between cultures. There are five basic facts that should be noted concerning the immigration of the Hispanic community by Cooperative Extension:

1. “Immigrants from Mexico and Latin America, in general, have become a national presence and not one limited to certain states or regions.
2. During the last decade Latin America in general and Mexico in particular, consolidated their role as the principal reservoir of low-wage labor for the American economy.
3. Efforts to deter this inflow through new legislation and enforcement programs has consistently failed, indicating flawed character of the theories underlying these policies.

4. Latin American immigrant communities have become a major structural factor in the economic and political development of their sending countries.
5. The Latin immigrant population is having a profound influence on the culture and politics of the cities and regions where it concentrates. However, neither the culture nor the political orientation that these immigrants bring is incompatible with integration into American society” (Ansley & Shefner, 2009, p. 3).

This rapid growth of the Hispanic population represents a phenomenon of great importance for Cooperative Extension. As the guidelines mandate, it is imperative for Cooperative Extension to create effective programming and educational opportunities for individuals within specific communities, regardless of their culture or demographic background. This need for effective programming relates specifically to the purpose of Extension, “Cooperation is hallmark of Extension’s relations with people...The education programs it undertakes most often arise as a response to needs identified on the local level” (Rasmussen, 1989, p. 5). This relation with people, specifically every individual that Cooperative Extension, serves is what drives and grounds this study and research.

Recently states with large influxes of diverse populations have established cross-cultural immersion experiences with the hopes of culturally diversifying the staff within its organization. Cooperative Extension, for the purpose of this research project, specifically Georgia Cooperative Extension, has established cross-cultural immersion programs for Extension agents and educators within its system to gain a broader

knowledge of the population that it is serving. With an increase in the Hispanic population, Georgia Cooperative Extension established a cross-cultural immersion experience in 2002 with the hopes of creating more effective agents and employees to better serve the intended population. These experiences allowed participants an immersion in a Latin American country for two weeks. These two weeks focused on the participant's ability to gain a better understanding of the Hispanic population and the needs that Cooperative Extension can meet.

This study is intended to explore the relationship between people and their cultures. It is also to provide an avenue for individuals to speak freely regarding their concerns, hopes, and limitations to serving an intended population. Cooperative Extension educators seek to serve the population which creates and establishes their community, regardless of individual characteristics. Rather the individual characteristics of the community population form create a larger picture of a group of people living and working together within county and state lines, it this group that Cooperative Extension serves.

Statement of the Problem

It is the goal of this research to better define and construct the efficacy of the Georgia Cooperative Extension Cross-Cultural Immersion program. Although there is not necessarily a problem with the system itself or the opportunity that it presents to its participants, it is intriguing to understand and better identify the benefits gained from individual participants, and their current relationship with the Hispanic population in their community. More concisely it should be said:

- For a myriad of reasons, moving to a new place is incredibly challenging for any population;
- People seclude themselves from groups or cultures that are dissimilar to their own;
- People serving diverse populations find it very difficult to relate and establish programming for these populations; and
- Many individuals within Cooperative Extension find that they do not have adequate tools or the correct training for serving a diverse population.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the efficacy of Cooperative Extension within Georgia in its ability to create useful and adequate programming for its constituents. The foundation of Cooperative Extension is to serve the people within its community and state, by assessing their needs and then providing a solution to its constituents.

“Every agency of government is established and budgeted on the premise that the agency serves people. Perhaps different agencies serve different constituencies, but the concept of service to people is fundamental. The agency that loses sight of this basic requirement of service will eventually lose sight of its own purpose and objectives...agencies are meant to be appendages to the people’s will; to be effective, the agency staff must be sufficiently skilled and trained to give dimension and structure to the people’s needs so that they can be defined, articulated, and acted upon” (Veri & Vonder Haar, 1970, p. 1).

The training and skill of Cooperative Extension employees in relation to their ability to serve the Latino population is specifically studied upon their completion of the cross-cultural immersion program. Ideally, this training better equips agents and employees with the ability to reach a diverse population. Specific objectives of this study include the following:

1. To better understand knowledge gained of participants from the cross-cultural immersion trip.
2. Derive a relationship between the Cross-Cultural Immersion program, and the effective programming of Cooperative Extension to diverse, specifically Hispanic, populations within their respective communities.

Limitations of the Study

The following section reflects and expands reasoning for each problems of research identified as limitations to the study.

Availability

Cooperative Extension employees, most of who are pressed for time, sometimes proved very challenging to reach out to and engage in this study. All individuals that helped complete my research had already participated in the cross-cultural immersion program. This created a limitation as some agents and participants felt that there was no tangible benefit to their commitment to this research. Reaching and involving participants that gave adequate time and thought to this study proved sometimes difficult.

Interpretation of Efficacy & Proper Evaluation

Interpretation of an effective program or proper evaluation of the program is indeed limited to personal definitions and abilities as well as the thoughts and perceptions of the participants. Although this is by no means a complete evaluation of the program or broad determination of its efficacy, it is an attempt to better understand the participants' experiences and how that directly relates to their job following their trip. It is the hope of this study that this limitation of mind can still be of assistance to future decisions made concerning the program. More clearly stated, "Evaluation is an aid to training. It is a systematic process of obtaining relevant information and interprets data to facilitate decision making" (Food and Agriculture Organization, 1995, p.3). The final presentation and recommendations concerning this study is an *interpretation* of my own beliefs of and presented through a research-minded individual.

List of Terms

- *Cooperative Extension System*: The Cooperative Extension System is a nationwide educational network, established out of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 that combines federal, state and local governments and a state land-grant university. The mission of the Cooperative Extension System is to disseminate research-based information to individuals seeking this information within the state. Every U.S. state and territory has a central state Extension office at its land-grant university. Each state Extension established local or regional offices in counties or communities throughout the state that are staffed by Extension professionals.

- *Chronbach's Alpha*: A measure of internal consistency within data that shows how closely related a set of items are as a group. Santos (1999) explains that alpha coefficients using this procedure range in value from 0 to 1. The higher the score that a group of questions receives, the more reliable the scale is, and "Nunnaly (1978) has indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient" (Santos, 1999, para. 8).
- *Efficacy*: The ability to produce an effect.
- *Extension agents (educators)*: Direct employees of the land-grant Cooperative Extension system. Most reside in their individual counties and serve more directly the community in which they live.
- *Hispanic*: Comes from the Latin word for "Spain" and refers to all Spanish-speaking peoples in both hemispheres.
- *Immersion Programs*: Educational ventures that submerge participants in a different culture for a specific period of time. These programs aim to increase participant's knowledge of unfamiliar cultures and populations.
- *Land-Grant Universities*: Any university established by the Morrill Act of 1862 and 1890. These higher education facilities were appropriated federal land for the establishment of their institution. The main focus of the land-grant universities was to make education more accessible to all individuals.
- *Latino*: Refers more specifically to people of Latin American origin.
- *Othering*: Gomez & White (2010) discuss the concept of othering by noting that individuals naturally discern people who are fundamentally different from (geographical, racial, etc) and about whom they have preconceived ideas.

- *USDA-NIFA (formerly CSREES)*: The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). NIFA was created through the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. NIFA replaced the former Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), which had been in existence since 1994.

Summary

It should be noted that this research examines the participant experience, programming enacted upon completion of the program, and individual assessments of the cross-cultural immersion program. This research does not claim to provide a complete picture of the efficacy of the Georgia Cooperative Extension Cross-Cultural Immersion program, but rather strives to further delineate a snapshot of individuals and their experiences or knowledge gained from participating in the program. It is highly unlikely that a clear picture can be painted with the limited population researched and the community differentiations and needs that each agent faces.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The goal of this study is to further explore the ability of the Georgia Extension System in accomplishing the goals delineated of the Cross-Cultural Studies Program. Since its conception in 2002 agents and Extension professionals have traveled each summer to Mexico, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Ecuador and have returned to the United States with a new perspective on the Hispanic community. By better understanding communities that individuals have resided in before living in the United States, Extension professionals are better able to provide assistance for a selected group of people. “The Cooperative Extension System today is a unique achievement in American education. It is an agency for change and for problem solving, a catalyst for individual and group action with a history of seventy-five years of public service. Extension brings the rewards of higher education into the lives of all segments of our extraordinarily diverse population” (Rasmussen, 1989, p. 3). If a problem or miscommunication is understood between groups, agents are better able to create a welcoming environment for their potential participants. For some program participants additional services such as clothing, family acceptance, and transportation are helpful (Williams, 2001). The goals of the cross-cultural immersion program is further explored alongside key issues and topics associated with cross-cultural immersion experiences.

The Cross-Cultural Immersion Experience

In order for the Cooperative Extension System to remain effective in its position to the nation, Extension leadership must provide an atmosphere that permits professionals to continually develop their cultural competence. “Leadership must provide the environment that allow staff to learn new skills for designing programs and to employ people from historically exclusive groups, while staff has to engage in the personal development work that will build a welcoming environment” (Schauber & Castania, 2001, para. 4). This responsibility of the Cooperative Extension System in Georgia has largely been explored through cultural exchange and immersion programs. Through these programs, recognition of the global community individuals live in and share with others becomes a priority for the state system. These programs are used to engross professionals in a different culture while concurrently creating cultural competence. The University of Georgia began its Cross-Cultural Studies Program in 2002, with its objectives defined as the following (Ames & Atilas, 2008):

1. “To provide participants with a knowledge of social, cultural, and environmental issues of Latin America,
2. To compare and contrast cultural values between Latin America and the United States and to interpret these values relative to the Hispanic and non-Hispanic communities in Georgia,
3. To learn about globalization and its impact on Latin America, and
4. To be exposed to basic Spanish language instruction to improve Extension professional’s language skills.”

Cultural Competence

With this increase in dissimilar cultures, a need for awareness and understanding becomes necessary. Cultural competence is defined by Williams as “the ability of individuals and systems to work or respond effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served” (Williams, 2001, para. 5). This definition spans a broader knowledge than simply being aware of another culture. By becoming culturally competent, it is essential that the Cooperative Extension Service understand and adapt to different cultures in order to better serve its clientele. In order for this definition to be effective, it is vital that the other culture is not simply acknowledged, but also respected, and then that action has been taken to better suit the needs and customs of the culture being explored. Extension personnel need to understand the culture and identity derived from the culture of the population that is being served. With an increasing percentage of the Georgia population identified as Hispanic, it is essential to understand the needs and values of the culture. Extension agents and staff that are culturally competent “are aware and respectful of the values, beliefs, traditions, customs, and parenting styles of the audience being served” (Williams, 2001, para. 5).

By being able to better understand a culture through an immersion experience, agents and Extension professionals see firsthand how an identified population lives, including their interaction with the family unit, means of travel, and daily customs essential to their livelihood. Through understanding these important aspects, agents are better equipped to serve different cultures and become more effective as Extension professionals. By increasing their cultural competence, Extension agents are more

effective in their role in the community and are also open to the ability to grow personally through their involvement in cultural projects or study tours (Ludwig, 2002).

Culture

Before individuals are able to reach a level of cultural competency, individuals are first charged with understanding the fluid and often changing term of culture. Culture is a term that has long been debated, and it still today one that is not certainly defined. The most imperative part in understanding culture for agents, though, is understanding that numerous cultures are embedded in one race or group. The idea that one culture represents a large group, or even a small one, is uneducated and serves no purpose in the Extension system. Agents and professionals of the Extension system need to be willing to learn from experiences and learn more about the youth and people that they serve. Williams argues, "Understanding the cultures of the youth we serve requires more than words and good intentions. The journey toward cultural competence requires the willingness to experience, learn from those experiences, and act" (as cited in Haley, 1999). By understanding culture, Extension is better able to serve the population it represents in a more effective fashion and to better meet the needs of this population. However, agents should not solely lie in the mindset that they are unwilling to change, because it is from those interactions and the quest of understanding a culture that they too will see a change and growth in their own lives and profession.

In order to fully understand the culture of a person, a family, or a larger group, our own culture must be understood in what establishes the ways that we react,

interact, and act in daily situations. Schauber and Castania present a list of four essential understandings necessary to obtain cultural competency in serving others, “The personal skills of navigating and communicating across differences include intercultural competency skills that entail:

1. An awareness of one’s own cultural communication style, which reflects one’s perceptions, assumptions, norms, beliefs, and values;
2. An awareness of other valid cultural communication styles, which reflect different perceptions, assumptions, norms, beliefs, and values;
3. An understanding of historical power differences and the present-day behaviors that result from the history of a group’s survival; and
4. The ability to empathize cross-culturally, to take multiple perspectives, to observe mindfully while reserving judgments, and to adapt one’s communication style to others” (Schauber & Castania, 2001, para. 12).

Othering of Cultures

Gomez & White (2010) discuss the concept of othering by noting that individuals naturally discern people whom they are fundamentally different from (geographical, racial, etc) and about whom they have preconceived ideas. Through the ability to understand what constitutes our own culture, Extension professionals are better able to identify and highlight the main differences between their own culture and another and understand the basic differences in “world view” between the two cultures. This understanding, first of differences, and then of similarities is essential when providing services to clientele. Without an understanding of one’s own culture, and subsequently of another culture, Extension is unable to fully serve its role as a disseminator of

knowledge and services through the community, state, and further the nation. “Because the changes to Georgia’s population are so recent, policymakers and service providers in Georgia lack sufficient data regarding the needs of the Latino population in the state” (Atiles & Bohon, 2002, p. 1). Culture is often a fluid word that means different things to different people or groups, for this purpose, specifically regarding the Hispanic population. “Due to the diverse nature of the Latino presence, misunderstandings, misconceptions, and miscommunications abound both within and outside Latino communities” (Mantero, 2008, p. 55). It is therefore more of a journey of willingness to understand similarities and differences among people that Extension will have to participate in rather than “defining” and thus limiting, or othering, groups because of their background or origin. Cultural immersion programs used by the Georgia Extension System are an ideal way to prevent othering of cultures and create an understanding environment for different cultures to become involved and participants in the Extension System.

Diversity

Diversity remains an important concept in the notion of cultural competence and is vital for better understanding different groups and culture. As professionals it is important to understand that diversity is essential not only to the population that they serve, but finds a place in the hiring of staff to represent the Extension System. As the population being served becomes more diverse, such grows the need of diversity among the staff. By creating a more diverse office environment, differences are encouraged and professionals are exposed to different cultures and backgrounds through the daily work space or place. “Managing diversity requires a new set of skills

and an institutional framework for change. We need to provide intercultural competency training for staff and hire professionals who have skills to work with diverse audiences” (Schauber & Castania, 2001, para. 1). It should be noted that diversity is not necessarily “managed” but rather through inclusion and a wide base of knowledge, better understanding and services can be provided through the Cooperative Extension System.

In a daily routine Extension professionals and educators encounter a diverse group of people based on their age, gender, culture, values, and history. This diversity should be included not only in the staff and professionals but also in volunteers, youth, parents, and club organizers. Youth development practitioners will have to increase their knowledge base and breadth of diversify in order to broaden their ability of accomplishing cross-cultural competence (Williams, 2001). Through this wider knowledge base, professionals can design programs available to individuals that are culturally inclusive of diverse groups.

Immersion

The University of Georgia is at the forefront of Cultural Immersion and Exchange Experiences. These experiences leave Extension professionals and educators with a unique experience that is unforgettable and allows individuals to immerse themselves in a new perspective and way of life. Funding for cross-cultural seminar participants is provided in part by the USDA-CSREES International Science and Education Competitive Grants Program. This funding allows participants the freedom to experience a different culture without the burden of expenses. A typical cross-cultural experience through the University includes a trip to a local University in the host country, numerous

agricultural sites, social service agencies, public health clinics, and rural schools. The intention of visiting these various sites is to give participants a broad set of cultural experiences so that they can better understand, communicate with, and ultimately work more effectively with Latinos in Georgia when they return to the United States. Ideally, these travel experiences give the ability to Extension professionals to be fully immersed in a new culture and therefore develop their own leadership capacity with diverse cultures. Upon their return participants are expected to expound upon their current programs and share their experiences with other Extension educators across the state to encourage excitement and interest in the program. It should be noted that immersion experiences are invaluable to these professionals and provide them with an opportunity and occurrence that they would not be able to achieve in the United States: “Submersion into another culture provides a perspective that, in some ways is difficult to transfer” (Marsden, 2000, para. 4).

Immersion in a new place generates the ability of the participant to grasp a larger understanding of culture and is more easily accessible by being in the culture rather than learning about it. Place often lends itself greatly to ability of understanding and defines what is normative in a culture. The culture or norm of the United States varies greatly from that of a Latin American country. What is right as defined by place or space may not be the norm in a different place. The power of place in cultural and social practice should not be overlooked by the Cooperative Extension System. These immersion experiences lend themselves well to a larger discussion of the interaction between cultural groups, and create a more welcoming environment to include different groups and their beliefs in the current but every changing system of Extension.

The notion of immersion experience is not a new one, but rather an effective excursion that should be included in all facets of the workplace that is becoming increasingly diverse. “Initiating the concept of leadership development in a global context and human capacity building might start with traveling outside the United States” (Ludwig, 1999, para. 16). Through immersion and cross-cultural experiences the Cooperative Extension System builds upon a heritage of relevant knowledge and inclusion of various groups and their individual history.

Self-Education

Without change, Extension workers in the near future will be invaluable to the audience that they find themselves serving. Skills and experience are necessary for productive outreach and engagement of diverse audiences. This practice of better understanding behaviors and groups that many Extension professionals may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with is imperative to the existence and growth of the Cooperative Extension System. “Extension workers must themselves welcome and participate in self-education and change in order to build the sensitivities and skills necessary for effective and productive outreach and engagement” (Youmans, 2004, para. 10). This self-education is available to agents through the immersion experience and can be used as a productive means to better the discussion of culture and inclusion within the state of Georgia.

Global Community

In a time of constant expansion and simultaneous inclusion, it is vital to understand the global community that individuals are only a minute part of. The changing cultural landscape within the state poses challenges to Extension workers.

“Latinos are clearly an essential part of Georgia’s social, economic, and cultural landscape...as with any rapid influx of a new population to a society, however, many challenges confront policymakers, legislators, educators, service providers, law enforcement agencies, and industries in meeting the needs of this population” (Atilas & Bohon, 2002, p. 46). It is the hope that cross-cultural studies programs are the answer to a larger inclusion and better understanding of the role that the Cooperative Extension system will play in the world. “The new millennium will offer many challenges to Extension. Recognition of the global community we inhabit and share with partners around the world will become an increasing priority” (Ludwig, 1999, para. 20).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of a Cross-Cultural Immersion Program on participants, both professionally and personally. By gaining insight into their experiences both during and after the trip, recommendations can be organized for increased efficacy of the program for future trips. Chapter three will describe the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and the measures and scoring.

Research Design

The methodology utilized in this study is the survey research design. The Tailored Design Method was also used during the development to “create respondent trust and perceptions of increased rewards and reduced costs for being a respondent, which take into account features of the survey situation and have as their goal the overall reduction of survey error” (Dillman, 2000, p. 27). This design enabled the researcher to collect information from Cross-Cultural Immersion participants regarding their experiences and increased the sense of reward for participants as their contributions would be recognized and further relayed in recommendations to Cooperative Extension regarding future Cross-Cultural Immersion programs. The survey was designed according to the relevant principles derived from the Tailored Design Method listed below to reduce error and increase trust.

1. “Principle 11.10: Introduce the web questionnaire with a welcome screen that is motivational, emphasizes the ease of responding, and instructs respondents about how to proceed to the next page.
2. Principle 11.12: choose for the first question an item that is likely to be interesting to most respondents, easily answered, and fully visible on the welcome screen of the questionnaire.
3. Principle 11.13: Present each question in a conventional format similar to that normally used on paper self-administered questionnaires.
4. Principle 11.14: Restrain the use of color so the figure/ground consistency and readability are maintained, navigational flow is unimpeded, and measurement properties of questions are maintained.
5. Principle 11.16: Provide specific instructions on how to take each necessary computer action for responding to the questionnaire, and give other necessary instructions at the point where they are needed.
6. Principle 11.18: Do not require respondents to provide an answer to each question before being allowed to answer any subsequent ones.
7. Principle 11.23 Exercise restraint in the use of question structures that have known measurement problems on paper questionnaires, such as check-all-that-apply and open-ended response questions.” (Dillman, 2000, pg. 377-398).

As most participants completed the program more than a year ago, the basic premise was to gain pertinent information regarding the usefulness of the program, and offer suggestions and guidance for future programs. Before the survey was constructed, in

the spring of 2009, seven participants and Cooperative Extension administrators were interviewed in a pilot study in order for the researcher to collect a better understanding of the program. Seven questions were asked of the participants:

Pilot Study – Analysis of Cross-Cultural Studies Experiences

1. Prior to your trip, did you feel there was a need for increased cross-cultural programming in your area/county and discipline/program?
2. How did you prepare for your trip, and did you have any specific goals that you wanted to achieve through this trip?
3. What aspects of your cross-cultural studies experience (trip) proved to be beneficial to you/your job? Do you have any suggestions for improvement/enhancement of cross-cultural studies programs/trips?
4. What barriers do you encounter with the Latino Community (or other communities) as an Extension/education professional? Have these barriers changed or do they look different to you as a result of your participation in the cross-cultural studies program/trip?
5. Do you find that your programs have become inclusive of different cultures as a result of your participation in the cross-cultural studies program/trip? Have there been any changes in your professional practice/programming directly or indirectly triggered by your participation in the cross-cultural studies program? Can you give some examples?
6. How can others learn from your experience and your programs? Are there any practices/ideas/strategies you would like to share with other education/extension professionals to enhance their cross-cultural programming?
7. In a moment of drastic budget cuts, it is difficult to continue or include many people in cross-cultural studies programs and trips. What would be your recommendation regarding these programs? If you had to suggest alternatives, what would you suggest?

These interviews were recorded and then transcribed and analyzed to form pertinent and meaningful questions for the survey. Reoccurring themes were coded into categories that were later used to create constructs for the survey used in this research.

Population

The population of this study included 53 Cross-Cultural Immersion participants with Georgia Cooperative Extension. An administrator of the program provided basic contact information, including email addresses, for participants from the 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 Cross-Cultural Immersion Programs. Of the 53 prior participants, 6 were regarded as coverage error as they had retired from the University system and were unable to be contacted. This allowed for a total population of 47 participants.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire was constructed in December 2009 to be provided to previous participants to evaluate the personal and professional benefits, and program implementations or modifications exhibited by extension/outreach professionals after attending the Cross-Cultural Studies Program. The survey was constructed on the website *Survey Monkey* and consisted of 32 questions. Twenty-one questions were traditional Likert items (Questions 1-21), 5 questions included yes, no, and unsure as responses (Questions 22-26), 3 questions were open-ended responses (Questions 26-28), and 5 questions were pertaining to demographics (Questions 28-32). The Likert items were based on a typical five-level system and included the responses Not Very, Somewhat, Fairly, Very, and Extremely. Correlating values were given with 1 representing Not Very, and 5 representing Extremely. Each respondent was allowed to

answer all or none of the questions, and there were no restrictions on progressing to the next question before answering the previous question.

Data Collection Procedures

Following the Tailored Design Method, an email was sent to all participants on February 12th, 2010, informing the selected population that they would be asked to participate in a survey on February 15th, 2010. This email gave full information regarding the research, and included the expected length of time the survey would take. A second email was sent on February 15th to all participants created from the cover letter of the survey, which included a link to the questionnaire on the *Survey Monkey* website. Reminder emails were sent on February 19th and March 5th. A follow-up email was sent to participants on March 8th. Participants were given 6 weeks to complete the survey before it was closed and results were analyzed. Early respondents were identified as completing the survey before March 1st, 2010 and late respondents were regarded as completing the survey on or after March 1st, 2010.

Data Analysis Procedures

All data was collected in an excel spreadsheet from *Survey Monkey* and transferred into SPSS, version 17.0, for further analysis. Frequencies were calculated for all demographic information, including gender, amount of education completed, age, current job title, and years attended (Questions 28-32). The survey included four constructs: Program Objectives, Personal versus Professional Gain, Extension Programming, and Ability to Serve the Hispanic Population (Questions 1-21) which were created from the four dominant domains that emerged from the preliminary interview transcription data. Each construct's reliability was tested using Chronbach's

alpha. This recognizes a scaling of importance from 0 to 1 which expresses the relationship among items. Cronbach's alpha levels above 0.70 are generally accepted as being of sufficient internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). Five additional questions (Questions 22-26) were asked concerning the participants experience, with the response options of yes, no, and unsure. Frequencies were calculated for each of these five questions. An additional 3 open-ended questions (Questions 27-29) were asked on the questionnaire. Open-ended responses were transferred into a word document where they were analyzed. This qualitative data was analyzed and grouped into 6 dominant domains, for each question, based on the frequency of the response. Early and late respondents were compared statistically using t-tests, with a significance level of alpha = 0.05 set a priori.

Summary

The researcher utilized Dillman's Tailored design method. The purposive sample used for this study included 47 previous Georgia Cooperative Extension Cross-Cultural Immersion participants. Participants were contacted via email a total of 5 times during the 6 weeks that the online survey was live and able to be accessed by participants. *Survey Monkey* was used as the host website for the survey, and results were compiled in excel and then analyzed in SPSS, version 17.0. The survey consisted of 32 questions and 4 constructs were identified including, Program Objectives, Personal versus Professional Gain, Extension programming, and Ability to Serve the Hispanic Population, (based on the dominant domains identified in the qualitative interview data), each construct was tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha prior to creating

summated scale scores within constructs. Chapter 4 will further delineate the findings and results from the responses collected.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter outlines the research findings. The purposive sample consisted of 47 previous Cross-Cultural Immersion participants. Of these 47 participants invited to take part in this study, 33 questionnaires were collected online, yielding a response rate of 70.2%. Findings that are described include: 1) Identified demographic characteristics, including gender, level of education completed, year born, current job title, and year attended Cross-Cultural Immersion Program, 2) Are identified goals of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program achieved and acknowledged by participants? 3) Did Cross-Cultural Immersion Participants receive more of a personal or professional gain in their experience? 4) Did the participants' extension programming change because of their experience in this program? 5) How confident are the participants in their ability to serve the Latino population in their community. 6) As a direct result of their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program have participants experienced a professional change? 7) Identify if any significant response differences exist between early and late respondents. 8) What one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program most influenced the participant? 9) What suggestions do the participants have for the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program organizers? 10) What additional comments do the participants have regarding their Cross-Cultural Immersion experience? Based on the data collected from the 33 respondents results were categorized and presented according to the correlated research finding of the study.

Research Finding 1: Describe identified demographic characteristics, including gender, level of education completed, year born, current job title, and year attended Cross-Cultural Immersion Program.

Demographic information for the participants of the purposive sample chosen for this study are further examined below. Gender of the participants is presented in Table 4.1. The respondents for this question included 32 previous Cross-Cultural Immersion participants, with 16 males and 16 females.

Table 4.1

Gender of Participants (n=32)

Gender	<i>f</i>	%
Male	16	50
Female	16	50

Table 4.2 identifies the amount of education completed by the respondents. Education was defined based on 6 different levels which included High School, Technical/Vocational School, Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, Doctoral Degree, and Professional Degree. Of the 31 responses, 54.8% ($n=17$) indicated that they had completed a Masters Degree, 32.3% ($n=10$) had achieved a Bachelors Degree, and 12.9% ($n=4$) had obtained a Doctoral Degree.

Table 4.2

Amount of Education Completed (n=31)

Education Level	<i>f</i>	%
High School	0	0
Technical/Vocational School	0	0
Bachelors Degree	10	32.3
Masters Degree	17	54.8
Doctoral Degree	4	12.9
Professional Degree	0	0

Table 4.3 illustrates the age of the respondents. On the survey, participants were asked to provide the year that they were born. Once responses were collected, age was further defined by the decade in which the participant was born to simplify the data analysis. Of 30 responses, 40% ($n=12$), were born between 1950 and 1959, 23.3% ($n=7$) were born between 1960 and 1969, 16.7% ($n=5$) were born between 1980 and 1989, 13.3% ($n=4$) were born between 1970 and 1979, and 6.7% ($n=2$) were born between 1940 and 1949.

Table 4.3

Age of Participants (n=30)

Year Born	<i>f</i>	%
1940-1949	2	6.7
1950-1959	12	40
1960-1969	7	23.3
1970-1979	4	13.3
1980-1989	5	16.7

Table 4.4 shows the responses regarding the question *What is your current title?* In the online survey, respondents were allowed to type their response, without any options. Of the 33 responses, 75.8% ($n=25$) were categorized as Non-Administrator, some responses included *County Extension Agent, County Extension Coordinator, 4-H Agent, Extension Specialist, Public Service Assistant, and Professor and Extension Vegetable Specialist*. Six respondents, or 18.2%, were denoted as Administrators where responses included *Center Coordinator, County Director, Director of County Operations, Director of International Special Projects OVPPSO, Family and Consumer Sciences Program Development Specialist, and Program Development Coordinator*. 6% ($n=2$) were grouped into the third category in which they indicated that they were retired.

Table 4.4
Current Job Title (n=33)

Job Title	<i>f</i>	%
Administrator	6	18.2
Non-Administrator	25	75.8
Retired	2	6

Table 4.5 identifies the year in which the respondent attended the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program. Respondents were again allowed to type in their response with no options given, and 27 participants responded to this question. Ten respondents, 37%, indicated that they attended the program in 2008, 33.3% ($n=9$) attended in 2007, 14.8% ($n=4$) participated in 2006, 7.4% ($n=2$) attended in 2002, 3.7% ($n=1$) participated in 2004, and 3.7% ($n=1$) responded that they had attended the program 2 years.

Table 4.5

Year Attended Cross Cultural Immersion Trip (n=27)

Year Attended	<i>f</i>	%
2 Years	1	3.7
2002	2	7.4
2004	1	3.7
2006	4	14.8
2007	9	33.3
2008	10	37

Research Finding 2: Are identified goals of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program achieved and acknowledged by participants?

Table 4.6 illustrates Research Findings 2 through 5 of this section. This table was created to illustrate the reliability and summated scores of each of the constructs. The reliability of each of the 4 constructs was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha. Santos (1999) explains that alpha coefficients using this procedure range in value from 0 to 1. The higher the score that a group of questions receives, the more reliable the scale is, and “Nunnally (1978) has indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient” (Santos, 1999, para. 8). Research Finding 2 pertains to Construct 1 which identifies if respondents acknowledge and concur with the identified program goals of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program. For the survey’s purpose, these goals were re-iterated immediately before Questions 1 through 6 on the questionnaire. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .825 was given with a mean response of 23.88(SD=3.48) out of a possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6. This shows that in general respondents agreed that the program goals were aligned with the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program, and they agreed with these goals.

Table 4.6

Construct Reliabilities & Summated Scale Scores

Items(n)	Construct Name	Reliability	Summed Score(SD)	Min/Max
1-6(6)	Program Objectives	.825	23.83(3.48)	6/30
7-12(6)	Personal vs. Professional	.898	21.09(4.28)	6/30
9-10, 12(3)	Professional Only	.830	10.33(2.217)	3/15
7-8, 11(3)	Personal Only	.806	10.76(2.278)	3/15
13-18(6)	Programming	.938	15.77(6.22)	6/30
19-21(3)	Ability to Serve	.833	10.13(2.5)	3/15

Research Finding 3: Did Cross-Cultural Immersion Participants receive more of a personal or professional gain in their experience?

Table 4.6 shows similar data for Research Finding 3. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .898 was given with a mean response of 21.09(SD=4.28) out of a possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6 out of the whole construct that consisted of 6 questions. Upon further analysis, this construct was broken down into 2 further constructs consisting of 3 questions each, regarding either personal or professional gain. The professional gain construct consisted of questions 9-10 and 12 on the survey and analyzed results show that a reliability score of .830 was given with a mean response of 10.33(2.217) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. The personal gain construct consisted of questions 7-8 and 11 on the survey and analyzed results show that a reliability score of .806 was given with a mean response of 10.76(2.278) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. These constructs indicated that respondents felt that they received equally both personal and professional gain equally from the Cross-Cultural Immersion program.

Research Finding 4: Did the participant's extension programming change because of their experience in this program?

Table 4.6 illustrates the results for Research Finding 4. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .938 was given with a mean response of 15.7(SD=6.22) out of a possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6. These responses had more variability than other items, as reflected by the standard deviation. Overall respondents indicated for Questions 13 through 17 that their programming had changed somewhat since their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program with individual item mean scores of 2.45(1.18), 2.71(1.1), 2.32(1.32), 2.26 (1.24), and 2.65(1.25) respectively. Question 18 resulted in an overall higher response concerning the participants increased confidence in working with the Georgia Latino population with a mean of 3.39(.98).

Research Finding 5: How confident are the participants in their ability to serve the Latino population in their community

Table 4.6 also identifies the results for Research Finding 5. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .833 was given with a mean response of 10.13(SD=6.25) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. All 3 questions in this construct aimed to understand how confidently participants felt in working with and creating programs for the Georgia Latino population. This construct shows that in general participants felt fairly confident in their ability to work with and create programs for the Georgia Latino population after their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program.

Research Finding 6: As a direct result of their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program have participants experienced a professional change?

Research Finding 6 correlates with Questions 22 through 26 on the survey. For each of these questions participants were given the option of 3 responses: Yes, No, and Unsure.

Table 4.7 illustrates the responses to Question 22: *Do you feel that you have been given all the tools to serve the Latino population successfully?* Of the responses, 43.8% (n=14) answered Unsure, 31.3% (n=10) responded Yes, and 25% (n=8) indicated No.

Table 4.7
Survey Question 22 Responses (n=32)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	10	31.3
No	8	25
Unsure	14	43.8

Table 4.8 shows the responses to Question 23: *As a direct result of your participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program have you implemented new or more successful programming in your county/community?* Of the responses, 54.8% (n=17) answered Yes, 35.5% (n=11) responded No, and 9.7% (n=3) indicated No.

Table 4.8
Survey Question 23 Responses (n=31)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	17	54.8
No	11	35.5
Unsure	3	9.7

Table 4.9 shows the responses to Question 24: *As a direct result of your participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program has your daily job been affected or changed?* Of the responses, 43.8% ($n=14$) answered Yes, 43.8% ($n=14$) responded No, and 12.5% ($n=4$) indicated No.

Table 4.9

Survey Question 24 Responses (n=32)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	14	43.8
No	14	43.8
Unsure	4	12.5

Table 4.10 shows the responses to Question 25: *Would you suggest the Cross-Cultural Immersion program to other agents?* Of the responses, 100% ($n=32$) answered Yes.

Table 4.10

Survey Question 25 Responses (n=32)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	32	100
No	0	0
Unsure	0	0

Table 4.11 shows the responses to Question 26: *Would you participate in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program again?* Of the responses, 96.9% ($n=31$) answered Yes, 3.1% ($n=1$) responded No, and 0% ($n=0$) indicated No.

Table 4.11

Survey Question 26 Responses (n=32)

Response	<i>f</i>	%
Yes	31	96.9
No	1	3.1
Unsure	0	0

Research Finding 7: Identify if any significant response differences exist between early and late respondents.

Table 4.12 illustrates T-test values for the four identified constructs, comparing answers from early and late respondents. Early respondents were identified as completing the survey before March 1st, 2010 and late respondents were regarded as completing the survey on or after March 1st, 2010. Early and late respondents were compared using t-tests and no significant differences were identified as all corresponding p-values were .05 or less.

Table 4.12

Early and Late Respondent T-Test Values

Items (n)	Construct Name	P-Value	T-Value	Degrees of Freedom
1-6(6)	Program Objectives	.138	-1.521	31
7-12(6)	Personal vs. Professional	.839	.204	31
13-18(6)	Programming	.549	.607	29
19-21(3)	Ability to Serve	.550	.605	28

Research Finding 8: What one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program most influenced the participant?

Research Finding 8 identifies responses from Question 27: *Please provide an example of one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion program that greatly influenced you.* This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format.

Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories using domain analysis: Homestay, Learning About the Culture, In-Field Visits, Learning the Language, Programming, and Miscellaneous. Below each category is presented with a response from a participant that conveys the general responses in that category.

Domain 1: Homestay

Evidence...

“The homestay aspect of the program is one of the most valuable parts of the program. It allows for participants to get a more true picture of the culture.”

Domain 2: Learning About the Culture

Evidence...

“Understanding – The CCI is a great way for Agents to understand where our immigrants are coming from and why they do what they have to. The experience is very eye-opening and creates compassion for the struggles and difficulties that are immigrants face.”

Domain 3: In-Field Visits

Evidence...

“The visits to the social service agencies in Mexico have helped me with programming here in GA. I have a better understanding of social service agencies and what it means for the immigrant community in GA.”

Domain 4: Learning the Language

Evidence...

“I was greatly influenced to learn Spanish and have enrolled in Spanish classes.”

Domain 5: Programming

Evidence...

“After participating in CCI I applied for two different grants that targeted culturally diverse audiences and was awarded both. I have expanded my research and outreach to address Georgia changing demographics.”

Domain 6: Miscellaneous

Evidence...

“Our trip to Ciudad Palmas De Abajo was very important to the trip for me. It really allowed our group to see firsthand the effects of migration on rural Mexico. In the US we see migration in the form of population increase, in Mexico it is the reverse in population decrease. Palmas De Abajo was an example of this, as around 80% of their male work force had migrated to the US for work. The effects this took on their community, families, society, and culture was a hard thing to observe and had an effect on me in my understanding of migration, NAFTA, and globalization. While their city had money coming in from remittances, and it afforded them opportunities they may not have had, it still was devastating to their city. As one lady in the community told our group ‘it is better to be poor and have family, than be rich and have no family’.”

Research Finding 9: What suggestions do the participants have for the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program organizers?

Research Finding 9 identifies responses from Question 28: *What is one suggestion that you have for the organizers of the Cross-Cultural Immersion program?* This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format. Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories using domain analysis: Language Classes, Continuation of the Program, Additional Preparation for the

Trip, Planning for Post-Trip Implementation, Free Time/Flexibility in Schedule, and Miscellaneous. Below each category is presented with a response from a participant that conveys the general responses in that category.

Domain 1: Language Classes

Evidence...

“I would highly suggest that more language learning be incorporated so that more fluid conversations be had and allowing more conversations to be had and understood. There was a language barrier that limited the experience.”

Domain 2: Continuation of the Program

Evidence...

“Please continue- it is so valuable with our current increase in Latino peoples in the U.S.”

Domain 3: Additional Preparation for the Trip

Evidence...

“Info of how to prepare for the trip to get greater benefit from the experience.”

Domain 4: Planning for Post-Trip Implementation

Evidence...

“Include a contract or obligatory agreement that states that the participant will develop a new or adapt a program that can demonstrate application of lessons learned through participation in CCI.”

Domain 5: Free Time/Flexibility in Schedule

Evidence...

“I always felt we were on the go and I wish we could have had some more time to experience the culture outside of our schedule.”

Domain 6: Miscellaneous

Evidence...

“Include some type of community service aspect.”

Research Finding 10: What additional comments do the participants have regarding their Cross-Cultural Immersion experience?

Research Finding 10 identifies responses from Question 29: *Is there anything else you would like to share about the CCI program and your CCI experience?* This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format. Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories using domain analysis: Great Experience, Professional Benefit, Personal Benefit, Globalization, Expansion and Continuation, and Miscellaneous. Below each category is presented with a response from a participant that conveys the general responses in that category.

Domain 1: Great Experience

Evidence...

“I am now retired after 30 years with UGA and I can say that this was the best (bar none) travel and training experience of so many I have participated in over the years.”

Domain 2: Professional Benefit

Evidence...

“The greatest benefit of the program is how agents and colleagues have expanded programming for the Latino community in GA.”

Domain 3: Personal Benefit

Evidence...

“It was hard, challenging, exhausting, insightful, and very educational. Provided me with a new world view about policy, education, family relationships and community.”

Domain 4: Globalization

Evidence...

“The opportunity opened my eyes to our global world. It makes me appreciate the privileges we have here in the US.”

Domain 5: Expansion and Continuation

Evidence...

“I think the CCI program is great and provides for a better understanding of the distinct needs of people. I would like to see it continue in Latino countries but encompass more of the Caribbean and African countries. The U.S. is an ever growing melting pot of many distinct people varieties where our civilization is being impacted regularly. It will help me broaden my program design and initiatives.”

Domain 6: Miscellaneous

Evidence...

“I would like to be an advocate for the program wherever and whenever possible.”

Summary

Chapter 4 presented the results related to the research study’s findings. Findings that were described include 1) Identified demographic characteristics, including gender, level of education completed, year born, current job title, and year attended Cross-Cultural Immersion Program, 2) Are identified goals of the Cross-Cultural

Immersion Program achieved and acknowledged by participants? 3) Did Cross-Cultural Immersion Participants receive more of a personal or professional gain in their experience? 4) Did the participant's extension programming change because of their experience in this program? 5) How confident are the participants in their ability to serve the Latino population in their community. 6) As a direct result of their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program have participants experienced a professional change? 7) Identify if any significant response differences exist between early and late respondents. 8) What one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program most influenced the participant? 9) What suggestions do the participants have for the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program organizers? 10) What additional comments do the participants have regarding their Cross-Cultural Immersion experience? Chapter 5 will serve to expand further upon the analysis of the presented data, as well as provide conclusions and make recommendations based on the results.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Land-grant institutions were founded on the principle that the state funded universities were to serve all individuals within the state regardless of their participation in the university system. “The underlying philosophy of the system was to ‘help people help themselves’ by ‘taking the university to the people.’ The system evolved into an institution that is responsive to priority needs and focuses its resources on providing quality information, education, and problem-solving programs on real concerns” (Rasmussen, 1989, p. vii).

Cooperative Extension offices were established in most counties, with agents who specialized in youth development, agriculture, and family and consumer science. These agents were given the opportunity to share their specific area of knowledge to their community, based on its needs and population. Over the years the system has increased its knowledge base from purely agriculture to a multifaceted organization that provides resources and information on topics ranging from animal science to youth development. Cooperative Extension agents are called upon daily to provide information and services to an increasingly diverse population.

As the United States becomes a progressively diverse nation, the need for a broader knowledge base of cultures and populations is imperative for the Cooperative Extension System. Everything from language, values, dress, religious persuasion, and family organization is changing before the eyes of Extension educators and agents (Youmans, 2004). With these changes it is simultaneously necessary that leadership

within the Extension system provide a welcoming environment to new cultures and new programming to better serve these cultures. With the mission of the universities mainly focused on the population that it serves, the Land-Grant Universities and more specifically, Cooperative Extension have morphed and grown into an applicable and diverse breadth of knowledge that pertains specifically to the individuals that it serves.

Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of Cooperative Extension within Georgia in its ability to create useful and adequate programming for its constituents. The foundation of Cooperative Extension is to serve the people within its community and state by assessing their needs and then providing a solution to its constituents.

“Every agency of government is established and budgeted on the premise that the agency serves people. Perhaps different agencies serve different constituencies, but the concept of service to people is fundamental. The agency that loses sight of this basic requirement of service will eventually lose sight of its own purpose and objectives...agencies are meant to be appendages to the people’s will; to be effective, the agency staff must be sufficiently skilled and trained to give dimension and structure to the people’s needs so that they can be defined, articulated, and acted upon” (Veri & Vonder Haar, 1970, p. 1).

The training and skill of Cooperative Extension employees in relation to their ability to serve the Latino population is specifically studied upon their completion of the cross-cultural immersion program. Ideally, this training better equips agents and employees

with the ability to reach a diverse population. Specific objectives of this study include the following:

1. To better understand knowledge gained of participants from the cross-cultural immersion trip.
2. Derive a relationship between the Cross-Cultural Immersion program, and the effective programming of Cooperative Extension to diverse, specifically Hispanic, populations within their respective communities.

Review of Methods

The researcher utilized Dillman's tailored design method. The purposive sample used for this study included 47 previous Georgia Cooperative Extension Cross-Cultural Immersion participants. A questionnaire was constructed in December 2009 to be provided to previous participants to evaluate the personal and professional benefits, and program implementations or modifications exhibited by extension/outreach professionals after attending the Cross-Cultural Studies Program. The survey was constructed on the website *Survey Monkey* and consisted of 32 questions. Twenty-one questions were traditional Likert items (Questions 1-21), 5 questions included yes, no, and unsure as responses (Questions 22-26), 3 questions were open-ended response (Questions 26-28), and 5 questions were pertaining to demographics (Questions 28-32). The Likert items were based a typical five-level system and included the responses Not Very, Somewhat, Fairly, Very, and Extremely. Correlating values were given with 1 representing Not Very, and 5 representing Extremely. The survey consisted of 32 questions and 4 constructs were identified including Program Objectives, Personal

versus Professional Gain, Extension programming, and Ability to Serve the Hispanic Population.

Participants were contacted via email a total of 5 times during the 6 weeks that the online survey was live and able to be accessed by participants. Results were compiled from *Survey Monkey* into Excel and then analyzed in SPSS, version 17.0. Frequencies were calculated for all demographic information, including gender, amount of education completed, age, current job title, and year attended (Questions 28-32). The four identified constructs' (Questions 1-21) reliability was tested using Chronbach's alpha. This recognizes a scaling of importance from 0 to 1 which expresses the relationship among items which have a Chronbach's alpha greater than 0.7 as very high, and 0.5-0.69 as substantial. Five additional questions (Questions 22-26) were asked concerning the participants experience, with the response options of yes, no, and unsure. Frequencies were calculated for each of these five questions. An additional 3 open-ended questions (Questions 27-29) were asked on the questionnaire. Open-ended responses were transferred into a word document where they were analyzed. This qualitative data was analyzed and grouped into 6 dominant domains, for each question, based on the frequency of the response. Early and late respondents were compared statistically using t-tests, with a significance level of alpha = 0.05 set a priori.

Summary of Findings

Findings that were described in Chapter 4 include 1) Identified demographic characteristics, including gender, level of education completed, year born, current job title, and year attended Cross-Cultural Immersion Program, 2) Are identified goals of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program achieved and acknowledged by participants? 3)

Did Cross-Cultural Immersion Participants receive more of a personal or professional gain in their experience? 4) Did the participant's extension programming change because of their experience in this program? 5) How confident are the participants in their ability to serve the Latino population in their community. 6) As a direct result of their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program have participants experienced a professional change? 7) Identify if any significant response differences exist between early and late respondents. 8) What one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program most influenced the participant? 9) What suggestions do the participants have for the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program organizers? 10) What additional comments do the participants have regarding their Cross-Cultural Immersion experience?

Demographic information for the participants of the purposive sample chosen for this study are further examined below. The gender of respondents included 32 previous Cross-Cultural Immersion participants, with 16 males and 16 females. Education was defined based on 6 different levels which included: High School, Technical/Vocational School, Bachelors Degree, Masters Degree, Doctoral Degree, and Professional Degree. Of the 31 responses, 54.8% ($n=17$) indicated that they had completed a Masters Degree, 32.3% ($n=10$) had achieved a Bachelors Degree, and 12.9% ($n=4$) had obtained a Doctoral Degree. On the survey, participants were asked to provide the year that they were born. Once responses were collected, age was further defined by the decade in which the participant was born. Of 30 responses, the majority of respondents, 40% ($n=12$), were born between 1950 and 1959, 23.3% ($n=7$) were born between 1960 and 1969, 16.7% ($n=5$) were born between 1980 and 1989, 13.3%

(n=4) were born between 1970 and 1979, and 6.7% (n=2) were born between 1940 and 1949. In the online survey, respondents were allowed to type their response to *What is your current title?* Of the 33 responses, 75.8% (n=25) were categorized as Non-Administrator, some responses included *County Extension Agent, County Extension Coordinator, 4-H Agent, Extension Specialist, Public Service Assistant, and Professor and Extension Vegetable Specialist*. 18.2% (n=6) were denoted as Administrators where responses included: *Center Coordinator, County Director, Director of County Operations, Director of International Special Projects OVPPSO, Family and Consumer Sciences Program Development Specialist, and Program Development Coordinator* . Two respondents, or 6%, were grouped into the third category in which they indicated that they were retired. Respondents were again allowed to type in their response with no options given regarding the year that they participated in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program, and 27 participants responded to this question. Ten respondents, 37%, indicated that they attended the program in 2008, 33.3% (n=9) attended in 2007, 14.8% (n=4) participated in 2006, 7.4% (n=2) attended in 2002, 3.7% (n=1) participated in 2004, and 3.7% (n=1) responded that they had attended the program 2 years.

Research Objective 1: To better understand knowledge gained of participants from the cross-cultural immersion trip.

Research Finding 2 pertains to Construct 1 which identifies if respondents acknowledge and concur with the identified program goals of the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program. For the survey's purpose, these goals were re-iterated immediately before Questions 1 through 6 on the questionnaire. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .825 was given with a mean response of 23.88(3.48) out of a

possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6. This shows that in general respondents agreed that the program goals were aligned with the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program, and they agreed with these goals.

Research Finding 3 seeks to establish if respondents felt more of a personal or professional gain following their Cross-Cultural Immersion trip. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .898 was given with a mean response of 21.09(SD=4.28) out of a possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6 out of the whole construct that consisted of 6 questions. Upon further analysis, this construct was broken down into 2 further constructs consisting of 3 questions each, regarding either personal or professional gain. The professional gain construct consisted of questions 9-10 and 12 on the survey and analyzed results show that a reliability score of .830 was given with a mean response of 10.33(2.217) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. The personal gain construct consisted of questions 7-8 and 11 on the survey and analyzed results show that a reliability score of .806 was given with a mean response of 10.76(2.278) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. These constructs indicated that respondents felt that they received equally both personal and professional gain equally from the Cross-Cultural Immersion program.

Research Objective 2: Derive a relationship between the Cross-Cultural Immersion program, and the effective programming of Cooperative Extension to diverse, specifically Hispanic, populations within their respective communities.

Research Finding 4 seeks to identify if the participant's extension programming changed because of their experience in the program. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .938 was given with a mean response of 15.7(6.22) out of a possible maximum score of 30 and a minimum score of 6. Overall respondents indicated for

Questions 13 through 17 that their programming had changed somewhat since their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program with mean scores of 2.45(1.18), 2.71(1.1), 2.32(1.32), 2.26 (1.24), and 2.65(1.25) respectively. Question 18 resulted in an over higher response concerning the participants increased confidence in working with the Georgia Latino population with a mean of 3.39(.98). This data shows that through their Cross-Cultural Immersion experience, participants have taken aspects of their trip and directly transformed this into the willingness to learn from their experience by creating new programming, altering existing programming, for the intended population. “The journey toward cultural competence requires the willingness to experience, learn from those experiences, and act” (as cited in Haley, 1999).

Research Finding 5 shows how confident participants are in their ability to serve the Latino population in their community. Analyzed results show that a reliability score of .833 was given with a mean response of 10.13(6.25) out of a possible maximum score of 15 and a minimum score of 3. All 3 questions in this construct aimed to understand how confidently participants felt in working with and creating programs for the Georgia Latino population. This construct shows that in general participants felt fairly confident in their ability to work with and create programs for the Georgia Latino population after their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program which is in accordance with the literature. Without change, Extension workers in the near future will be invaluable to the audience that they find themselves serving. Skills and experience are necessary for productive outreach and engagement of diverse audiences. This practice of better understanding behaviors and groups that many

Extension professionals may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable with is imperative to the existence and growth of the Cooperative Extension System.

Research Finding 6 correlates with Questions 22 through 26, which seek to find if as a direct result of their participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program on respondents have experienced a professional change. The Cross-Cultural Immersion program permits professionals to continually develop their cultural competence and leadership in a professional capacity “Leadership must provide the environment that allow staff to learn new skills for designing programs and to employ people from historically exclusive groups, while staff has to engage in the personal development work that will build a welcoming environment” (Schauber & Castania, 2001, para. 4). For each of these questions participants were given the option of 3 responses Yes, No, and Unsure. Of the responses to Question 22: *Do you feel that you have been given all the tools to serve the Latino population successfully?* 43.8% (n=14) answered Unsure, 31.3% (n=10) responded Yes, and 25% (n=8) indicated No. Of the responses to Question 23: *As a direct result of your participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program have you implemented new or more successful programming in your county/community?* 54.8% (n=17) answered Yes, 35.5% (n=11) responded No, and 9.7% (n=3) indicated No. Of the responses to Question 24: *As a direct result of your participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program has your daily job been affected or changed?* 43.8% (n=14) answered Yes, 43.8% (n=14) responded No, and 12.5% (n=4) indicated No. Of the responses Question 25: *Would you suggest the Cross-Cultural Immersion program to other agents?* 100% (n=32) answered Yes. Of the responses to Question 26: *Would you participate in the Cross-Cultural Immersion program again?* 96.9% (n=31) answered Yes,

3.1% ($n=1$) responded No, and 0% ($n=0$) indicated No. In hindsight this portion of the questionnaire would have been simply dichotomous answer options of yes or no, or would have been reformatted to fit the Likert scale items. The response option of unsure creates the researcher too much room to conjecture what unsure might mean to the respondent. Responses in the unsure category could include respondents who were not sure of the question, respondents who didn't know how to gauge their answer, and respondents who simply chose not to answer with a definitive response. This proved problematic in reporting findings for the data from this portion of the questionnaire.

Research Finding 7 seeks to find any significant response difference between early and late respondents. T-test values for all 21 questions within the four identified constructs of early and late respondents. Respondents were identified as completing the survey before March 1st, 2010 and Late Respondents were regarded as completing the survey on or after March 1st, 2010. A p-value of .05 or greater illustrates that there is no significant difference between the early and late respondents. Of 21 questions, only 2 questions (Question 2 and Question 15) produced a p-value of less than .05 indicating some difference in responses between early and late respondents. Question 2 and Question 15 are illustrated for further clarification. Question 2: *How effective do you think your Cross-Cultural Immersion experience was in helping you understand cultural values?* Question 15: *Has the clientele of your extension programs changed because of the changes you implemented as a result of your CCI experience?*

Research Finding 8 identifies responses from Question 27: *Please provide an example of one particular aspect of the Cross-Cultural Immersion program that greatly influenced you.* This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format.

Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories through domain analysis: Homestay, Learning About the Culture, In-Field Visits, Learning the Language, Programming, and Miscellaneous.

Research Finding 9 identifies responses from Question 28: *What is one suggestion that you have for the organizers of the Cross-Cultural Immersion program?*

This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format. Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories through domain analysis: Language Classes, Continuation of the Program, Additional Preparation for the Trip, Planning for Post-Trip Implementation, Free Time/Flexibility in Schedule, and Miscellaneous. Specifically the domain, Continuation of the Program, coincides with literature that suggests “Submersion into another culture provides a perspective that, in some ways is difficult to transfer” (Marsden, 2000, para. 4).

Research Finding 10 identifies responses from Question 29: *Is there anything else you would like to share about the CCI program and your CCI experience?* This question was presented to respondents in an open-ended format. Responses from this question were further analyzed and delineated into 6 categories through domain analysis: Great Experience, Professional Benefit, Personal Benefit, Globalization, Expansion and Continuation, and Miscellaneous.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It has been concluded from this study that although respondents had a broad array of thoughts and feelings about their Cross-Cultural Immersion trip, the general consensus of the data is that this program is a positive force for education and change among Cooperative Extension and further proves that “The new millennium will offer

many challenges to Extension. Recognition of the global community we inhabit and share with partners around the world will become an increasing priority” (Ludwig, 1999, para. 20). Georgia Cooperative Extension has made vast strides with their Cross-Cultural Immersion program to recognize and reorganize their Extension agents and professionals to become more accepting and tailored to the global community that we inhabit. From the research conducted with this survey, recommendations will be made to further improve the Cross-Cultural Immersion program for Georgia Cooperative Extension. Below are recommendations:

1. It is recommended that future research be conducted both pre and post Cross-Cultural Immersion trip to gauge the participants change as a direct response to the program.
2. It is recommended that further qualitative research be conducted with prior Cross-Cultural Immersion participants as a follow-up to this research study.
3. It is recommended that continued research be conducted regarding both the personal and professional gain that participants receive. Qualitative data from the preliminary interviews suggests that participants received more personal than professional gain from this experience, while the results from this survey indicate that participants received similar amounts of both personal and professional gain.
4. It is recommended that a competitive selection process, which could include an interview and in-depth application, be implemented for the Cross-Cultural Immersion program. This process might eliminate agents or professionals who do not actively seek to create more effective programming for the Latino

- populations within their community or county. Proactive Extension agents and professionals that would implement programming after their trip would only be accepted to the program.
5. It is recommended that research be conducted on how to implement effective programming for Latino population post-trip. Data from this research study shows that participants did not know how, or were not given the tools, to implement new programming, or alter existing programming, following their Cross-Cultural Immersion trip.
 6. It is recommended that participants be held accountable for their trip to create buy-in from participants. Suggested methods could include proof of additional programming, follow-up interviews or progress forms, and informational presentations to other Cooperative Extension agents and professionals to promote the program and further disseminate knowledge gained from the experience.
 7. It is recommended that post trip meetings be established with all prior participants to provide a larger network of knowledge transfer. This could provide an avenue for participants to share success stories, problems, and further communicate concerning the Cross-Cultural Immersion program in general.
 8. It is recommended that additional training, education, and tools be provided to Cooperative Extension agents and professionals that will aid their endeavor to assist the Latino population in Georgia.

9. It is recommended that Georgia Cooperative Extension continue to seek funding for this project.

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APPENDICES

Preliminary Interview Letter of Request

Dear Cross-Cultural Participant,

You are receiving this letter as a previous participant in a cross-cultural studies program. During the spring of 2009, my graduate assistant and I will be conducting interviews regarding cross-cultural experiences. This research will be conducted through the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication of the University of Georgia. It is our goal to better understand your experience, and the value of these programs through our research.

This interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will give us a more in-depth look into your trip and participation in the program. During the interview you will answer questions about your experience from participation in a cross-cultural experience program, and explain how your participation in the program has affected your professional practice.

The reason for this research study is to explore and learn from the benefits, knowledge gained, and change of attitudes and practices resulting from participation in programs focusing in cross-cultural experiences. Your interview is completely voluntary and will serve as a priceless asset to our research. It is our hope that this interview will help you reflect on your cross-cultural experience and programmatic response. We hope to learn more about positive cross-cultural experiences, suggest new ideas for the UGA Cross-Cultural Studies Program, and share with extension and education community examples of successful cross-cultural programming.

We will be contacting you in the next few weeks, and hope that you will agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions concerning this interview or would like to contact us, please feel free to reach us through email or via the phone with the information provided below. Your experience, thoughts, and information regarding the program are invaluable to us, and we thank you in advance for your time and interest.

Kind Regards,

Maria Navarro, PhD
University of Georgia – ALEC
mnavarro@uga.edu
706-583-0225

Jenna Brown
University of Georgia – ALEC
jbrown10@uga.edu
270-535-5198

Preliminary Interview Consent Form

I, _____, agree to participate in a research study titled "Analysis of Cross-Cultural Studies Experiences" conducted by Jenna Brown and Maria Navarro from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication of the University of Georgia. I understand that my participation is voluntary. I can refuse to participate or stop taking part at anytime without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I can ask to have all of the information about me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The reason for this research study is to explore and learn from the benefits, knowledge gained, and change of attitudes and practices resulting from participation in programs focusing in cross-cultural experiences. If I volunteer to take part in this study, I will be asked to:

1. Answer questions about my experience during my participation in a cross-cultural experience program, and explain how my participation in the program has affected my professional practice. The audiotaped interview will take about 45 minutes.
2. Participate in a follow-up interview of about 10 minutes if the researchers consider it necessary.

The benefits for me are that the interview will help me reflect on my cross-cultural experience and programmatic response. The researcher hopes to learn more about positive cross-cultural experiences, suggest new ideas for the UGA Cross-Cultural Studies Program, and share with extension and education community examples of successful cross-cultural programming.

No risk or discomfort is expected for myself or any other participants from this interview, and no incentives will be given to any participants including myself.

No individually-identifiable information about me, or provided by me during the research, will be shared with others without my written permission. All responses will be compiled and reported as a group. No identifiable information will be kept in the interview notes or audio tapes, and all information contained on the tapes will be erased following transcription of the results.

The investigators will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project. The researchers can be reached at 270-535-5198 (Jenna Brown) or 706-583-0225 (Maria Navarro) for any questions concerning the research or the process.

My signature below indicates that the researcher(s) have answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I consent to volunteer for this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Researcher	Signature	Date
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Telephone: 270-535-5198 (Jenna Brown)
Telephone: 706-583-0225 (Maria Navarro)
Email: jbrown10@uga.edu or mnavarro@uga.edu

Name of Participant	Signature	Date
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Consent of the participant for audiotaping the interview (initials only)
YES _____ NO _____

Please sign both copies, keep one and return one to the researcher.

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Preliminary Interview Questions

Analysis of Cross-Cultural Studies Experiences

1. Prior to your trip, did you feel there was a need for increased cross-cultural programming in your area/county and discipline/program?
2. How did you prepare for your trip, and did you have any specific goals that you wanted to achieve through this trip?
3. What aspects of your cross-cultural studies experience (trip) proved to be beneficial to you/your job? Do you have any suggestions for improvement/enhancement of cross-cultural studies programs/trips?
4. What barriers do you encounter with the Latino Community (or other communities) as an Extension/education professional? Have these barriers changed or do they look different to you as a result of your participation in the cross-cultural studies program/trip?
5. Do you find that your programs have become inclusive of different cultures as a result of your participation in the cross-cultural studies program/trip? Have there been any changes in your professional practice/programming directly or indirectly triggered by your participation in the cross-cultural studies program? Can you give some examples?
6. How can others learn from your experience and your programs? Are there any practices/ideas/strategies you would like to share with other education/extension professionals to enhance their cross-cultural programming?
7. In a moment of drastic budget cuts, it is difficult to continue or include many people in cross-cultural studies programs and trips. What would be your recommendation regarding these programs? If you had to suggest alternatives, what would you suggest?

Participant Email: First Request

Dear former participant of the Cross-Cultural Studies Program,

I am a graduate student in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) at the University of Georgia (UGA). You are invited to participate in a research study titled "Analysis of Cross-Cultural Immersion Experiences." This study is part of my Master's Thesis, which I am doing under the direction of Dr. Maria Navarro.

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the personal and professional benefits, and program implementations or modifications exhibited by extension/outreach professionals after attending the Cross-Cultural Studies Program. You are being contacted because you are a former participant of the program. It is expected that this research will provide information valuable to enhance efforts to continue offering and enhance the Cross-Cultural Studies program at the University of Georgia, or help develop similar endeavors.

If you should choose to participate in this study, your participation will involve the following:

1. Complete the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/crossculturalimmersion>. The questionnaire covers questions regarding your experience in the Cross-Cultural Studies Program, your perception regarding the personal and professional effects that the program had on you and your extension programming, and some information about yourself. Completion of the questionnaire is expected to take about 30 minutes.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study and all individual responses will remain confidential. Individual responses will only be seen by the researchers, will be grouped and not reported individually, and no identifying information will be released. Please note that Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. Under the responsibility of the principal investigator, completed questionnaires, and all other research records, data, and documents, will be kept for at least three years after the completion of the study in a staffed and locked office. If you are not comfortable with the level of confidentiality provided by the Internet, please feel free to print out a copy of the survey, fill it out by hand, and mail it to Dr. Maria Navarro at the address given below, with no return address on the envelope.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time or skip any questions you may not want to answer without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you have any questions concerning this questionnaire or would like to contact us, please feel free to reach us by email (mnavarro@uga.edu, jennifer.brown921@gmail.com) or by phone

(706 – 583 0225 or 270 – 535 5198). Your questionnaire responses are invaluable to us, and we thank you in advance for your time and interest.

Kind Regards,

Jenna Brown
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105 Four Towers building
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Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu

Participant Email: Follow-Up

Dear former participant of the Cross-Cultural Studies Program,

About a week ago, I contacted you asking for your participation in a research study titled "Analysis of Cross-Cultural Immersion Experiences." I would like to ask again for your participation in the study. I am a graduate student in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES) at the University of Georgia (UGA), and this study is part of my Master's Thesis, and I am hoping for a high response rate. If you do not wish to participate, let me know by e-mail and I will not contact you again with reminder notifications.

The purpose of this research study is to evaluate the personal and professional benefits, and program implementations or modifications exhibited by extension/outreach professionals after attending the Cross-Cultural Studies Program. You are being contacted because you are a former participant of the program. It is expected that this research will provide information valuable to enhance efforts to continue offering and enhance the Cross-Cultural Studies program at the University of Georgia, or help develop similar endeavors.

If you should choose to participate in this study, your participation will involve the following:

1. Complete the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/crossculturalimmersion>. The questionnaire covers questions regarding your experience in the Cross-Cultural Studies Program, your perception regarding the personal and professional effects that the program had on you and your extension programming, and some information about yourself. Completion of the questionnaire is expected to take about 30 minutes.

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts associated with this study and all individual responses will remain confidential. Individual responses will only be seen by the researchers, will be grouped and not reported individually, and no identifying information will be released. Please note that Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the technology itself. Under the responsibility of the principal investigator, completed questionnaires, and all other research records, data, and documents, will be kept for at least three years after the completion of the study in a staffed and locked office. If you are not comfortable with the level of confidentiality provided by the Internet, please feel free to print out a copy of the survey, fill it out by hand, and mail it to Dr. Maria Navarro at the address given below, with no return address on the envelope.

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time or skip any questions you may not want to answer without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you have any

questions concerning this questionnaire or would like to contact us, please feel free to reach us by email (mnavarro@uga.edu, jennifer.brown921@gmail.com) or by phone (706 – 583 0225 or 270 – 535 5198). Your questionnaire responses are invaluable to us, and we thank you in advance for your time and interest.

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Cross-Cultural Immersion Questionnaire

Thank you for your support to the research regarding your experience in the Cooperative Extension Cross-Cultural Immersion Program. This questionnaire seeks to find information about your individual experience, knowledge you have gained, and programming you have implemented following your participation in the Cross-Cultural Immersion Program.

As outlined by program documents, the defined objectives of the program are:

1. To provide participants with a knowledge of social, cultural, an environmental issues in [designated country];
2. To compare and contrast cultural values between [designated country] and the U.S. and to interpret these values relative to the Latino and non-Latino communities in Georgia;
3. To learn about globalization and its impact on [designated country]; and
4. To expose participants to basic Spanish language instruction and to improve language skills.

Part I: Please respond to the following questions regarding the UGA Extension Cross Cultural Immersion program goals and your experience in the program.					
	Not Very	Somewhat	Fairly	Very	Extremely
How satisfied were you with your cross cultural immersion (CCI) program?					
How effective do you think your CCI experience was in helping you understand cultural values?					
How effective do you think your CCI experience was in helping you understand cultural issues?					
How effective do you think your CCI experience was in helping you understand more about globalization?					
How effective do you think your CCI experience was in helping you learn basic Spanish?					
How clearly were the goals of the program explained to you?					
Part II: Please respond to the following questions regarding your personal and					

professional experiences related to the cross cultural immersion program.

	Not very	Somewhat	Fairly	Very	Extremely
How much do you feel that you have changed since your CCI experience (because of your CCI experience)?					
Did you find that your CCI experience served as an avenue for personal transformation?					

Part II: Please respond to the following questions regarding your personal and professional experiences related to the cross cultural immersion program (continued)

	Not very	Somewhat	Fairly	Very	Extremely
Did you find that your CCI experience served as an avenue for professional transformation?					
Do you feel that you view your job differently as a result of your CCI experience?					
Do you feel you view your community differently as a result of your CCI experience?					
Do you feel you are more confident in your job as a result of your CCI experience?					

Part III: Please respond to the following questions regarding the effect of the cross cultural immersion program in your extension programming.

	Not very	Somewhat	Fairly	Very	Extremely
Have the type/number of extension programs you offer changed(or increased) because of changes you implemented as a result of your CCI experience?					
Have the results, quality, or success of your extension programs changed because of changes you implemented as a result of your CCI experience?					
Has the clientele of your extension programs					

changed because of changes you implemented as a result of your CCI experience?					
Has the number of Latino participants in your programs increased because of changes you implemented as a result of your CCI experience?					
Have your ability to develop programs for the Georgia Latino population increased because of your participation in the CCI program?					
Has your confidence in working with the Georgia Latino population increased because of your participation in the CCI program?					

Part IV: Please respond to the following statements related to your ability to serve the Latino population effectively by checking the appropriate box.

	Not very	Somewhat	Fairly	Very	Extremely
How confident do you feel when working with Latino populations?					
How confident do you feel in developing programs for Latino populations?					
How effectively do you feel that you serve the Latino population in your county/community?					

Part V: Please respond to the following questions in the appropriate box

	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you feel that you have been given all the tools to serve the Latino population successfully?			
As a direct result of your participation in the CCI program have you implemented new or more successful programming in your county/community?			
As a direct result of your participation in the CCI program has your daily job been affected or changed?			

Would you suggest the CCI program to other agents?			
Would you participate in the CCI program again?			

Please provide an example of one particular aspect of the CCI program that greatly influenced you.	
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What is one suggestion that you have for the organizers of the CCI program?	
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Is there anything else you would like to share about the CCI program and your CCI experience?	
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Demographics

Please let us know more about you:

1. What is your sex? M F
2. In what year were you born? 19__
3. What amount of schooling have you completed (please select your highest level)?

High School	Technical/Vocational School	Bachelors Degree
Masters Degree	Doctoral Degree	Professional Degree
4. In what year did you participate in the immersion program? 20__
5. What is your current title? _____