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A Scoping Review of International Experiences by U.S. Extension Professionals: Lessons and Opportunities

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Keywords

internationalization, globalization, international Extension experiences, land-grant university engagement

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Abstract

The U.S. Cooperative Extension System (CES) faculty and administrators have contemplated internationalization for decades. A proposed way to support internationalization of CES is international extension experiences. This scoping review assessed the literature from 1980-2020 on direct international extension experiences of Extension professionals. Nineteen articles were included in the study after careful screening. We coded for the benefits that resulted from each article: (a) global/international perspectives, (b) personal belief in the value of international experiences, (c) learning/knowledge gains/skills building, (d) appreciation for diversity, (e) increased perceived value of Extension, (f) self-esteem/reinvigoration, and (g) benefits to domestic clientele. Emergent themes were found from coding the results of included papers, including: (h) networking, (i) opening markets, (j) improved policy, (k) conservation of resources, (l) personal openness to change, (m) problem solving; and, (n) technology. Gaps remain in empirical results that explain the benefits of direct international experiences by U.S. Extension professionals, contributions of such experiences to Extension internationalization, and programmatic elements required for program effectiveness.

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Introduction

Internationalization of the U.S. Cooperative Extension System (CES) has been discussed in Extension scholarly journals for decades (e.g., Erickson et al., 2020; Collins, 2012; Lockett et al., 2014; Rosson & Sanders, 1991; Vergot et al., 2006). When promoting the need for internationalization, scholars have emphasized equipping U.S. Extension professionals with the skills required to support their clientele in the face of increasing globalization, including the influences of global trade on domestic agricultural economies and understanding the changing demographics of communities. Following a period of increased interest in the phenomenon, Ludwig and Barrick (1996) articulated five indicators of an internationalized CES:

(1) clientele develop a fundamental understanding of global and national interdependence; (2) Extension faculty/agents recognize the relationship between basic international issues and the Extension mission; (3) Extension educational programs within the U.S. stress the impact of international economic forces on agricultural markets; (4) Extension educators incorporate international perspectives into on-going activities; and (5) personnel evaluation systems recognize international efforts (p. 45).

In the intervening period, several initiatives focused on CES internationalization. The National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC, 1997), through their Globalizing Agricultural Science and Education for Programs for America (GASEPA) agenda, called for increased competency for global awareness and competitiveness and access to ideas and technology through understanding and promoting international trade and market growth, creating partnerships, and addressing global environmental concerns. Specifically, GASEPA promoted mutually beneficial relationships with international extension counterparts. NASULGC (2002) argued, “the challenge for Extension is to provide leadership to demonstrate local implications and potential consequences of an interdependent world” (p. 2). The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2003) created the National Initiative to Internationalize Extension including a series of conferences, grants, and communications aimed at mobilizing a network to enhance international and global engagement and programming. In 2007, the Joint Council of Extension Professionals held a series of workshops focused on internationalization. In 2019, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy created a workgroup aimed at assisting international universities with outreach (Association of Public and Land-grant Universities [APLU], 2019).

To meet this demand and internationalize extension, it is important for U.S. CES professionals to be equipped with global competence. One effective method for increasing global competence is through immersive international professional development experiences (Miller Foster et al., 2023). Harder et al. (2011) argued enhanced organizational capacity and professional development opportunities for Extension professionals are primary rationales for internationalization. McClure et al. (2014) reported that nearly two-thirds of Extension professionals in the state of Louisiana perceive that an international extension experience would be beneficial to their career. However, these participants had not completed an international experience to provide feedback on the actual benefit. Additionally, many published reflections of international experiences by Extension professionals have been anecdotal in nature. In these accounts, the authors have regaled about the personal benefits and encouraged others to take

advantage of opportunities for international engagement (e.g., Gallagher, 2002; Rogers, 1993; Elliott-Engel, 2023).

A number of studies report benefits of international engagement by Extension professionals, including: (a) experiences positively impact learning (Harder et al., 2011); (b) Extension professionals believe international extension experiences are beneficial (Crago, 1998; Harder et al., 2011; Lev, 2001; Place, 1998; Place et al., 2008; Richardson & Woods, 1991); (c) longer duration leads to more concern for others, appreciation for diversity, and interconnectedness (Gillian, 1995; Harder et al., 2011; Hett, 1993); (d) participants gained increased global awareness, knowledge, and understanding as well as skill development, reinvigoration, and higher self-esteem; while “near associates” gained international awareness, knowledge, discernment, and involvement from participants (Place et al., 2000); and, (e) participants showed changes in behavior, willingness to work with others, and changes in attitudes—regarding the increased perceived value of Extension and the value of international perspectives (Place et al., 2008). While these benefits have been documented through both anecdotal experiences and individual studies, little research has looked at how U.S. Extension professionals benefit from international extension experiences related to improving Extension practice at home or support intentional internationalization efforts.

Purpose

The purpose of this scoping review was to explore the perceived benefits of international extension experiences for U.S. Extension professionals and how they have been documented in the literature throughout a 40-year timespan. We reviewed how these international extension experiences are being shared with other U.S. Extension professionals and what knowledge gaps exist in the literature (Tricco et al., 2016). We explored changes, if any, in reported benefits of international engagement over time as communicated in the literature. Specific objectives included:

Objective 1: Identify the extent to which the benefits of international extension experiences by U.S. Extension professionals have been explored in relevant journals.

Objective 2: Identify common themes related to the described benefits of international extension experiences for U.S. Extension professionals.

Objective 3: Identify trends in how international extension experiences for U.S. Extension professionals are discussed based on journal articles.

Methods

We conducted a scoping review of content published from 1980 to 2020 in five refereed extension journals: *Journal of Agricultural Education* (JAE), *Journal of Agriculture Education and Extension* (JAE), *The Journal of Extension* (JOE), *Journal of Human Sciences and Extension* (JHSE), and *Journal of International Agricultural and Extension Education* (JIAEE). A scoping review was selected to identify knowledge gaps in the literature (Tricco et al., 2016) and examine how research is conducted on the topic of international extension experiences in the field of U.S. Extension (Munn et al., 2018). Therefore, we selected these journals based on their focus on advancing agricultural extension education and their relevance to U.S. Extension professionals (Table 1). These journals are respected as premier journals and are probable outlets for scholarly dissemination related to the benefits of international extension experiences.

Table 1
Types of Article Submissions Accepted in Select Journals

Journal	Submission Types Accepted
JAE	“The Journal accepts manuscripts in all areas of agricultural education (broadly defined), including <i>extension education</i> , communications, leadership development, teacher education, and other related areas that support the agricultural sciences” (Journal of Agricultural Education, n.d., para. 1).
JAEE	“The Journal accepts three types of manuscripts: original empirical research using appropriate methods and data, reviews of literature that further agricultural education and <i>extension theory</i> and offer new thinking and insights, and book reviews” (The Journal of Agricultural Education and Extension, n.d., para. 4).
JOE	“JOE provides a venue for professionals and students to publish original and applied research findings and to share successful educational applications, scholarly opinions, educational resources, and challenges on issues of critical importance to <i>Extension educators</i> ” (The Journal of Extension, n.d., para. 1).
JHSE	“Topics addressed include human development (e.g., early care and education, youth development); family studies; agricultural education; leadership development; <i>extension</i> ; health and wellness; apparel, textiles, and merchandising; nutrition and dietetics; family resource management; and program and staff development, planning, and evaluation” (Journal of Human Sciences and Extension, n.d., para. 1).
JIAEE	“Articles intended for publication should focus on international agricultural education and/or <i>international extension education</i> ” (Journal of International Agricultural & Extension Education, n.d., para. 2).

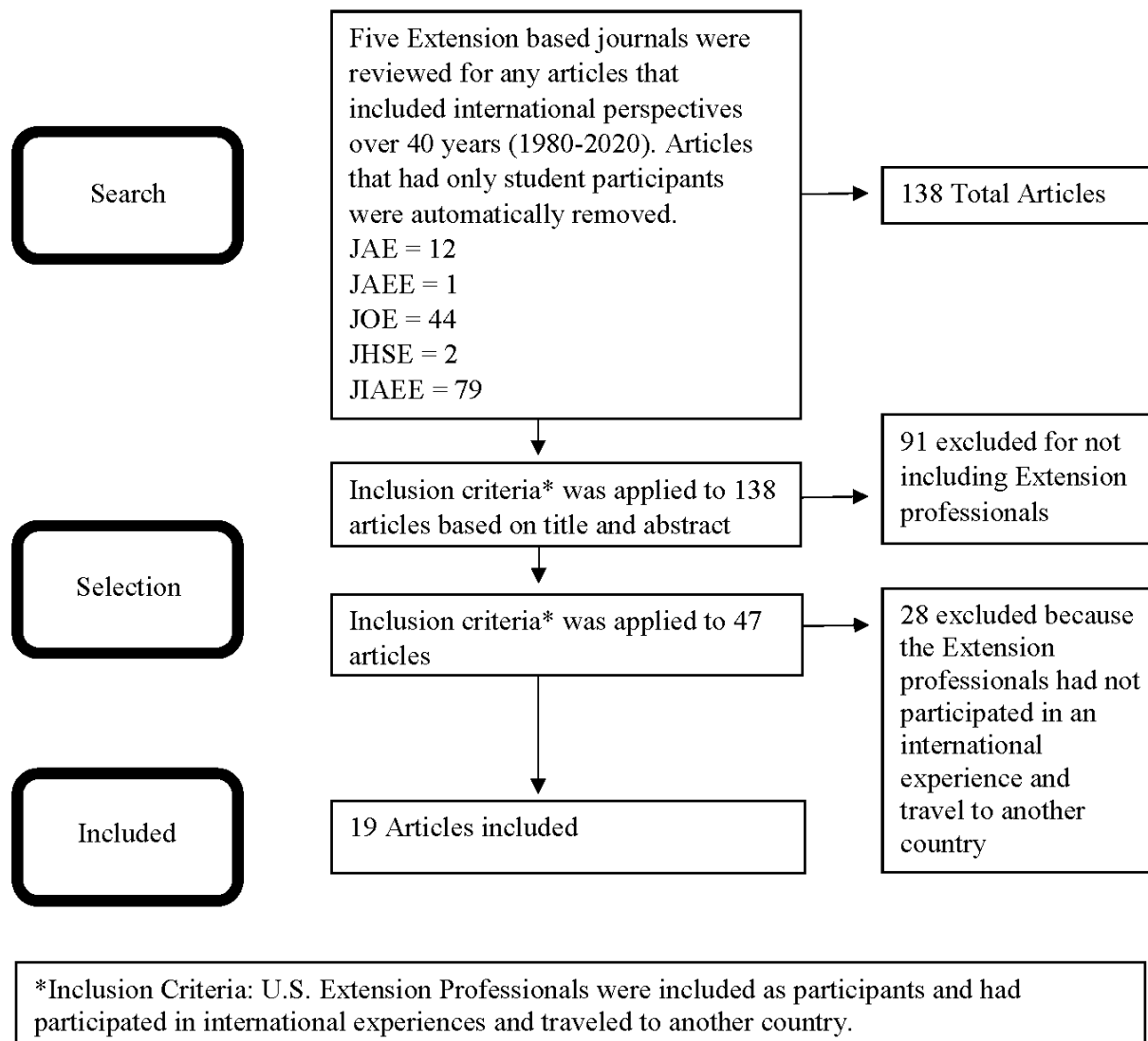
Note. Italics added by the authors for ease of reference.

In the pre-planning phase, we conceptualized and predetermined inclusion criteria to answer our overarching research purpose (Lockwood et al., 2019). Prior to data collection, we used the PRISMA-ScR checklist (Tricco et al., 2018) to create inclusion and eligibility criteria-based recommendations. This included making decisions related to the eligibility criteria, information sources, search strategy, selection process, data collection process, and data items (Page et al., 2021). We designed a protocol (Lockwood et al., 2019) and determined the eligibility criteria to include articles that comprised of U.S. Extension professionals as participants in international extension experiences who had traveled to a foreign country. For our information sources and search strategy, we selected to review all articles published in five refereed Extension journals from 1980 to 2020. We decided to initially collect all articles published that discussed international extension perspectives, but automatically removed any article that only included students as participants. We then reviewed all the titles and abstracts of the articles for inclusion of Extension professionals as the population and sample of focus. Finally, we conducted a full review of all the remaining articles to determine if the Extension professionals had traveled to another country as a part of the experience. This protocol was designed to match the data items needed to meet our aim (Page et al., 2021).

In the data collection process (Figure 1), our search began by reviewing every article published from 1980 to 2020 in JAE, JAEE, JOE, JHSE, and JIAEE for each article that included international perspectives. This search yielded 138 articles. Next, we employed our inclusion

criteria which required that articles included U.S. Extension professionals who participated in an international extension experience and traveled abroad to the title and the abstract of each of the 138 articles. Of these articles, 91 were excluded for not including Extension professionals. Of the remaining 47 articles, we applied our inclusion criteria in a read through of the entire article. We excluded an additional 28 articles because Extension professionals had not participated in an international experience with travel to another country. This process resulted in 19 articles for data analysis.

Figure 1
Inclusion Flowchart



We coded the 19 articles (JOE = 10; JIAEE = 9) that met our inclusion criteria. We developed a predetermined codebook for benefits previously identified in the literature. The predetermined codebook included seven codes: global perspectives, personal belief in the value of international experiences, increased perceived value of Extension, learning and skill building, appreciation for diversity, benefits to domestic clientele, and self-esteem/reinvigoration. Further

explanation of the supporting literature of the predetermined codes is provided in the *a priori* table (Table 2).

Table 2

A Priori Table of International Extension Experience Benefits

Predetermined Code	Supporting Literature
Global/international perspectives	Harder et al., 2011; Lockett et al., 2014; Place et al., 2000; Smith et al., 2010
Personal belief in value of international experiences	Crago, 1998; Harder et al., 2011; Lev, 2001; Place, 1998; Place et al., 2008; Place et al., 2002
Learning/knowledge gains/skill building	Harder et al., 2011
Appreciation for diversity	Harder et al., 2011; Hett, 1993
Increased perceived value of Extension	Place et al., 2008
Self-esteem/reinvigoration	Place et al., 2008
Benefits to domestic clientele	Place et al., 2000

Each article was coded by three researchers using a descriptive analysis process. The researchers identified new benefits not reflected in the *a priori* codes resulting in additional discrete codes. We then engaged in a collaborative meaning making discussion and analyzed intercoder reliability to be 91.98%. When there were discrepancies between coders we discussed until agreement was formed and data was coded into an existing or new code.

Results and Discussion

From the journals, 138 articles had international perspectives, but only 19 included U.S. Extension professionals with international extension experience who traveled abroad. Eight articles did not relay benefits from the international extension experience and primarily focused on international experiences and CES internationalization. Eleven articles talked about the benefits of international extension experiences. Of the 19 (see Table 3), only six explicitly evaluated the benefits of international extension experiences by participants who had completed an international extension experience. Another five articles included reflection by Extension professionals, but not rigorous research.

A Priori and Emergent Coded Benefits

Based on the *a priori* coding the benefits included: global perspectives ($n = 10$), learning and skill building ($n = 10$), benefits to domestic clientele ($n = 9$), appreciation for diversity ($n = 6$), personal belief in value of international experiences ($n = 6$), self-esteem/reinvigoration ($n = 6$), and increased perceived value of Extension ($n = 5$). Emergent benefits are (Table 3): networking ($n = 5$), opening markets ($n = 3$), improved policy ($n = 3$), conservation of resources ($n = 2$), personal openness to change ($n = 2$), problem solving ($n = 2$); and technology ($n = 1$).

Table 3*Benefit Received from International Extension Experience by Article in Chronological Order*

Article by Year, Chronologically Left to Right with Code Results																			
Article	43	33	37	25	29	41	28	39	22	40	27	31	34	8	9	2	10	3	5
Year Published	'91	'93	'93	'99	'00	'01	'02	'02	'04	'05	'06	'06	'06	'08	'10	'10	'11	'13	'14
Code																			
Global international perspectives	x		x		x		x	x				x	x	x				x	x
Personal belief in value of international experiences	x		x		x		x					x	x						
Learning/ knowledge gains/skill building	x		x		x	x	x					x	x	x				x	x
Appreciation for diversity					x			x				x		x				x	x
Increased perceived value of Extension					x			x				x		x				x	
Self-esteem/ reinvigoration			x		x	x	x	x						x				x	
Benefits to domestic clientele	x		x		x	x	x					x	x	x					x

Article by Year, Chronologically Left to Right with Code Results																			
Article	43	33	37	25	29	41	28	39	22	40	27	31	34	8	9	2	10	3	5
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Code																			
Additional codes	Networking, Problem solving Networking Personal openness to change Personal openness to change Networking, Conservation of resources Opening Markets, Networking Opening Markets Networking Opening Markets Networking Opening Markets, Networking Networking Opening Markets, Improved policy, Technology, Conservation of resources																		

Note. 19 journal articles included (Franklin et al., 2004; Gallagher, 2002; Harder et al., 2010; Lev, 2001; Ludwig, 1999; Lundy et al., 2006; Place et al., 2000; Place et al., 2002; Place et al., 2006; Richardson & Woods, 1991; Rogers, 1993; Selby et al., 2005; Smith et al., 2010; Stevens et al., 2014; Strong & Harder, 2011; Sundermeier, 2006; Treadwell et al., 2013; Teeter et al., 1993; Vergot et al., 2006)

The benefits derived from international extension experiences for Extension professionals were not universal across the articles. To support the trustworthiness of the coding of articles by the a priori codes we present supporting quotes by code in Table 4. Codes are represented in order of the number of articles that referenced the benefit, from most represented to least.

Table 4

Supporting Quotes from the Literature by A Priori Code in Order of Number of Articles

A priori Code (Number of Articles with Code)	Supporting Quotes
Global perspectives (<i>n</i> = 10)	“A greater understanding of the necessity to continue to work locally and internally to solve issues that impact the world” (Place et al., 2008, p. 7-8). “Extension agents with international experience were more globally minded compared to the Extension agents without any international experience” (Smith et al., 2010, p. 59) “In my role as an environmental educator in Florida, I know that changing my student’s behavior is hard due to costs, perceptions, and time. I never dreamed it would have been even more difficult to do the same in Thailand” (Strong & Harder, 2011, p. 76).
Learning and skill building (<i>n</i> = 10)	“Global training enhances language skills, the ability to deal with diversity, communicating messages succinctly to new audiences, team-building” (Treadwell et al., 2013, p. 3). “Increased ability to relate to Hispanic audiences and promote international awareness” (Place et al., 2008, p. 7). “They returned to the U.S. with improved skills, new knowledge, renewed enthusiasm, and greater commitment to Extension education” (Place et al., 2000, p. 14).
Benefits to domestic clienteles (<i>n</i> = 9)	“Commissioners noted how important an experience like this is to extension agents to enable them to reach out to and provide educational programs to Hispanic clienteles” (Place et al., 2008, p. 8). “As part of their involvement, a great number of participants showed that they had incorporated an international dimension into their Extension efforts in the past” (Franklin et al., 2004, p. 52) “Participants reviewed and discussed their newly gained international knowledge and developed ideas and specific plans for educational programs for relevant publics in North Carolina” (Richardson & Woods, 1991, p. 2).
Appreciation for diversity (<i>n</i> = 6)	“Living with a family for even 3 days exposed participants to the richness and diversity of life that is otherwise hidden to the visitor” (Treadwell et al., 2013, p. 2). “[Once they return] they better understand different people and contrasting ways of life” (Place et al., 2000, p. 14)

Supporting Quotes from the Literature by A Priori Code in Order of Number of Articles

	“[Extension Agents] learn from one another by gaining a much greater appreciation for values, beliefs, roles and responsibilities at home and abroad” (Place et al., 2008, p. 9).
Personal belief in the value of international experience ($n = 6$)	“Most IETP participants recommended that rather than the existence of an ideal time in one’s career to participate in an international assignment, this type of involvement should be promoted often, regularly and anytime” (Vergot et al., 2006, p. 24). “This study has substantiated the importance of international involvement for enhancing global knowledge and understanding, and subsequently, the effect among Extension professionals, colleagues, clientele and family members” (Place et al., 2002, p. 20). “In rating the international experience for information gained, on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 as useless and 10 as outstanding, the mean rating was 9.39” (Richardson & Woods, 1991, p. 2).
Self-esteem/reinvigoration ($n = 6$)	“I came back full of enthusiasm for agricultural marketing methods that I had a chance to examine in France” (Lev, 2001, p. 2). “As the other commentators predicted, I am more motivated to serve and better able to focus on how and what to serve” (Place et al., 2002, p. 20). “My international travel experience has changed my priorities for Extension programming that I deliver” (Sundermeier, 2006, p. 3)
Increased perceived value of Extension ($n = 5$)	“Most significantly, the county commissioners gained a much great appreciation for extension overall as well as the importance of ensuring an international component into its mission” (Vergot et al., 2006, p. 25). “much greater understanding and appreciation for Extension (Place et al., 2006, p. 8). I had no stronger "aha!" from the visit than "Extension is a very powerful and valuable concept” (Gallagher, 2002, p. 2)

Journal Specific Trends

Nineteen articles were published that met our criteria in the forty-year period that was reviewed; 10 in JOE and nine in JIAEE. This reflects the assumption that Extension professional experiences are being reported in journals that report Extension professionals’ professional development competencies and the direction of the Extension system. Notably, the other key Extension journals did not include international extension experience reports despite a rich literature being relayed about international exchange experiences for academic faculty, students, and capacity-building efforts conducted by U.S. land-grant university faculty and staff across all of these journals. Additionally, the data is split; JOE articles reflect an anecdotal nature with peer-to-peer encouragement while JIAEE articles have been demonstrably more empirical.

Trends Across Years

Empirical accounts of the benefits have come in waves, with no reports in the 1980s, a smattering of articles in the 1990s, and a few more in the 2000s and 2010s. Consistency of benefits have not been reported across the small collection of literature. From 1991 to 2001 there was an emphasis on technical skills for markets, trade, policy, and technology. This is unsurprising given the U.S. government's emphasis on international trade in the 1990s with the execution of numerous bilateral and free trade agreements, such as NAFTA. Around 2000, the focus shifted to interpersonal competency development (e.g. networking, diversity), problem solving for global issues, and increasing credibility with diverse U.S. audiences. Perhaps this change in emphasis can be attributed to the accelerating pace of demographic change in the U.S. in the beginning of the 21st century. The benefit to U.S. domestic clientele was the only consistent benefit across the decades. Yet, the literature was unclear on how the international experiences were developed, executed, and followed up to ensure the experiences were effective in improving Extension practice or professional competencies for domestic clientele.

Multiple codes emerged that were not established in the a priori coding table (Table 2). The emergent benefits were networking, opening markets, improved policy, conservation of resources, personal openness to change, problem solving, and technology (see Table 5 for supporting quotes). Of these themes, there were two distinct trends. The opening markets theme emerged in 1991 and disappeared in 2001. Whereas, problem solving and personal openness to change emerged in 2008. These two trends juxtapose an economically-conceived benefit to a personal leadership development benefit. The presence of networking codes co-located across these two phases reflects the value of relationships across both paradigms.

Table 5

Supporting Quotes from the Literature by Emergent Code in Order of Number of Articles

A priori Code (Number of Articles with Code)	Supporting Quotes
Networking ($n = 5$)	"Through my experience in the Ukraine, I now have several new colleagues with whom I trust I will be working with for years to come--and the Web makes regular communication so easy" (Gallagher, 2002, p. 4).
Opening markets ($n = 3$)	"Successful programs expanding international markets for North Carolina farm products have been implemented, and programs that focus on product quality reflect the knowledge gained" (Richardson & Woods, 1991, p. 3).
Improved policy ($n = 3$)	"Issues studied included EC agricultural trade and research policies, plus a wide array of issues in the individual countries such as animal welfare, plant protection, water quality, the changing patterns of agriculture, declining numbers of farmers, agricultural research capabilities, and changing agricultural information systems, that is, Extension Services" (Richardson & Woods, 1991, p. 2).
Conservation of resources ($n = 2$)	"I concluded that even though our countries are very different, our concern for the conservation of our land is similar" (Sundermeier, 2006, Making Friends, para. 1).

Personal openness to change ($n = 2$)	“Agents should not be afraid to “jump in” the proverbial deep end of the pool” (Harder et al., 2010, How to Get Involved para. 5).
Problem solving ($n = 1$)	“Agents are coming face-to-face with the challenges of a rapidly growing population brought the fragility of our shared society forward, and highlighted the need for shared solutions” (Stevens et al., p. 8)
Technology ($n = 1$)	“I shared the successes of conservation tillage technology research in my home county by giving a presentation” (Sundermeier, 2006, Making Friends, para. 1).

The GASEPA (1997) agenda called for an increased competency for global awareness and competitiveness and access to ideas and technology, through understanding and promoting international trade and market growth, creating partnerships, and addressing global environmental concerns. Reviewing the literature, we find that opening markets appeared three times between 1991 and 2001. In the intervening period, benefits were related to personal and professional networking, respect for the work of improving communities, and stewarding our environment. Although GASEPA emphasized access to technology, the only article that referenced that benefit was published prior to that agenda, in 1991.

Our review reaffirms there has been sustained interest in international extension experiences in pockets of the literature; anecdotal evidence from individuals may be useful in encouraging other Extension professionals to consider international extension experiences; and, the need for additional research remains. The literature published showcased consistent benefits of international extension experiences for those who participated, reflecting the sentiment that international extension experiences are valuable to Extension professionals. The professional and personal benefits of international experiences reported in the literature for Extension professionals confirmed (a) growth in global perspective; (b) learning and skill building; (c) benefits to domestic clientele; (d) personal belief in the value of international experiences; (e) appreciation for diversity; (f) self-esteem/reinvigoration; and (g) an increased perceived value of Extension. After coding the benefits expanded to include networking, opening markets, improved policy, conservation of resources, personal openness to change, problem solving, and technology. The reported benefits of international extension experiences pose a considerable opportunity to enhance requisite skills required by U.S. Extension professionals (e.g., intercultural competencies (Diaz et al., 2021) and appreciation of diversity (Elliott-Engel et al., 2021). Further exploration is required to inform strategy for using international extension experiences to build competencies and inform retention through the self-esteem/invigoration benefits. Further exploration of intentional evidence-based strategies to enhance, foster, or ensure these benefits remain open for investigation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Over the last four decades global travel and communications have increased the frequency with which people interact internationally. There is an opportunity to update our shared understanding of the value of firsthand international extension experiences as a component of internationalization of Extension. To bolster evidence for international extension experiences as a component of internationalization, we recommend more rigorous evaluation of international extension experiences by U.S. Extension professionals who have undertaken

international extension experiences. This more rigorous evaluation will advance the literature from a common set of benefits to an understanding of the phenomenon and ensure clarity in our definitions, and development of a taxonomy of the values and terms used to describe the benefits of international extension experiences will improve our praxis. We suggest a large-scale empirical study of participants and/or alumni of the benefits of international extension experiences by U.S. Extension professionals to provide current information on this critical aspect of internationalization.

Finally, we are left with a number of questions and recommendations for future research. We pose these questions for further consideration. While the interest in internationalization has been sustained over the years, to what extent has the lack of consistent justifications or benefits impacted the investment in internationalization by state extension systems or the U.S. CES as a whole? In what ways do international extension experiences impact Extension practice with domestic clientele? How do international extension experiences contribute to intentional internationalization efforts for U.S. Extension systems? How might the changing geopolitical climate over the last several years in response to a global pandemic, political instability, and increased concern over food security change the way international engagement is justified? To what extent are the benefits of international experiences also realized through domestic interactions with diaspora, immigrant populations, or across cultures?

Conducting this scoping review after the COVID global pandemic means that the impact of the changing nature of work, engagement with virtual training and exchange experiences (i.e., use of Zoom), and an increased awareness of global connectedness is not yet fully known in regards to global exchanges for Extension services and undergraduate student experiences (i.e., Davis et al., 2021; Elliot et al., 2022). These emerging considerations are still to be documented in the literature in the context of international extension experiences. We hope that this scoping review contributes to the current understanding of the value of international extension experiences by U.S. Extension professionals.

This scoping review establishes the literature has consistency in benefits to Extension professionals from international extension experiences. However, gaps in the literature remain. There is a need to emphasize the longitudinal outcomes of U.S. domestic impacts from these types of programs. At a bigger system scale, there remains a need to assess if international extension experiences are contributing to internationalizing U.S. CES. Further, exploration needs to move beyond proposed benefits to measuring Extension professionals' competencies and the reinvigoration and engagement with their work that results from these experiences; and do these experiences build a global perspective and network that delivers opportunities for Extension professionals to support communities as they experience a more globalized society? Such continued study may lead to a typology of benefits, leading to additional clarity as researchers and program planners advance program design intentionality and improve effectiveness through further research.

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