

Research Progress Report

Over the past summer I was given the opportunity to take a class on economic development in Cape Town, South Africa. The class served as a training course for me to develop my research interests and learn more about international development. The class was titled 'Africa and Global Transformation: The Role of Emerging Powers and a New International Order'. The focus of the course was the role of emerging powers such as Brazil, China, and Russia in developing nations, specifically sub-Saharan Africa. I learned about the various ways that countries were influencing development in nations, economically and culturally.

My time spent in South Africa helped me to realize a number of things. First, that I am very much interested in international research. Being abroad taught me so much about the world around me and my understanding has greatly increased as a result. I also realized that I do not want to do data-centric research. While I am very interested in economic development, quantitative research does not interest me.

I would like to do qualitative research about international economic development. I am considering doing ethnographic/field research, although I recognize that I need to develop proper skills in order for me to complete the research effectively.

I now see my individual research going in a number of directions. I am still interested in the effects of economic development on a local population, and can still see my research at least starting in Africa. Potential topic areas of research include the effects of large events on the local population, effects of a specific tourism industry on the local population, and the perceptions of the local population on the country that is giving them aid. Generally, I can see this research developing in one of two ways. I can pick a single aid-receiving country and research the effects of the different types of aid different countries give it. Alternatively, I can choose a single aid-giving country and research the effects of their aid in different locations

I have two potential areas of research that I have rough ideas for. One idea is looking at the effect of the World Cup on the most immediate local population. I could begin with the World Cup in South Africa, since there is still controversy surround the construction of the stadium in Cape Town and the advertising of the World Cup as 'Africa's' World Cup, not South Africa's. Another idea I have that is not fully developed is researching is the effects of surf tourism on the local population. The rapidly expanding industry is changing surf culture and affecting local populations most immediately.

These research ideas are just in the beginning stages, but I feel that this summer has given me a firm foundation in my thoughts and background knowledge. I will spend the rest of this year developing and fine-tuning my idea and acquiring the skills necessary to conduct my research.