Hello my name is Leo Newton, and in this recording, I will be sharing some of the sociological concepts and theories that resonated with me deeply through my studies and personal experiences. Specifically, I will touch upon Sociological Imagination, Culture, and Norms, and how these have played a pivotal role in shaping my understanding of the world around me.

Starting with Sociological Imagination, a term coined by C. Wright Mills, it's the ability to see the connection between individual experiences and the wider society. A personal application of this concept came during my travels when I encountered various forms of social inequalities. By leveraging my sociological imagination, I could contextualize these issues within the societies' historical, cultural, and economic frameworks, rather than viewing them as isolated incidents. This perspective has been invaluable in both my personal reflections and my approach to discussing social issues on broader platforms.

Moving on to Culture, which encompasses the beliefs, behaviors, and objects that define a society or group. My travels have exposed me to an array of cultures, making me more perceptive and adaptable to different cultural norms and practices. Professionally, this exposure has been incredibly beneficial, especially when working in diverse teams. Understanding that my colleagues come from different cultural backgrounds allows for a more inclusive and harmonious work environment.

Norms, the unspoken rules that govern behavior in particular contexts, are another area of focus. Adapting to local norms during my travels, from simple gestures of respect to communication styles, has been crucial in building connections and fostering relationships across different cultures. This adaptability has proved essential in my professional life as well, especially in negotiating and collaborating with international partners, where understanding and respecting cultural norms can significantly influence the outcome.

One concept that stands out in improving my skills, specifically relationship building, is my understanding of Culture. In a globalized world, the ability to navigate and embrace cultural differences is indispensable. This understanding has fostered empathy within me towards colleagues and collaborators from varied backgrounds, allowing for more effective communication and stronger professional relationships. It's a skill that goes beyond mere tolerance, encouraging a genuine appreciation and celebration of diversity.

Regarding the research question I am keen on exploring: "How does exposure to multiple cultures through travel influence one's sociological imagination and empathy towards global issues?" This question stems from a curiosity about the transformative power of travel on an individual's sociological perspective and emotional intelligence.

To answer this question, I plan to approach it systematically using the scientific method. Initially, I will conduct a thorough review of existing literature to identify gaps and frame my hypothesis—that travel indeed expands one’s sociological imagination and fosters greater empathy. The next phase would involve gathering data through surveys and in-depth interviews with frequent travelers, aiming to capture qualitative and quantitative insights into their experiences and perspectives. The final step would involve analyzing this data to identify patterns or correlations that either support or refute the hypothesis, with the aim of contributing to a deeper understanding of travel's impact on sociological and empathetic development.